

# Policy and Procedure 8-1

## Human Resources General Policies (DHRM Policies 1.01 - 1.90)

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<b>Codes/Mandates:</b>	Code of Virginia <a href="#">§2.2-2817.1</a> State agencies to establish alternative work schedules; reporting requirement.		
<b>References:</b>	<a href="#">Department of Human Resources (DHRM) Policies</a> <a href="#">DHRM Employee Handbook</a> <a href="#">DHRM Employee Recognition Program Handbook</a> <a href="#">DOF Alert System Member Portal</a>		
<b>Forms:</b>	DHRM Certificate of Receipt – Employee Handbook DHRM <a href="#">Certificate of Receipt – Summary of the Commonwealth of Virginia's Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs, Attachment I</a> DHRM <a href="#">Certificate of Receipt – Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media, Attachment A</a> DHRM L-1 <a href="#">Commonwealth of Virginia Notice of Layoff or Placement Form</a> DHRM <a href="#">Standard Telework Agreement</a> <a href="#">4.6 Part-time Fire Personnel Time and Mileage Report</a> <a href="#">8.1 Emergency Contact Information</a> <a href="#">8.5 Alternative Work Schedule Agreement</a> <a href="#">8.13 Volunteer/Student Time Sheet</a> <a href="#">8.16 Time Report</a> <a href="#">8.51 Intent to Retire Notice</a> <b>Performance Planning and Evaluation:</b> <a href="#">Employee Work Profile (EWP) – Acknowledgement of Extraordinary Contribution</a> <a href="#">Employee Work Profile (EWP) – Notice of Improvement Needed/Substandard Performance</a> <a href="#">Employee Work Profile (EWP) – Performance Evaluation</a> <a href="#">Employee Work Profile (EWP) – Interim Progress Review</a> <a href="#">Employee Work Profile (EWP) – Employee Self-Assessment</a> <a href="#">Employee Work Profile (EWP) – Work Description and Performance Plan</a>		

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## PURPOSE

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To provide employees to appropriate Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) policies in regard to the topics covered. DHRM policies are applicable to all executive agency state employees. In addition, this policy and procedure will provide DOF-specific application of the DHRM policies.

## POLICY

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The Virginia Department of Forestry is committed to observing and following all policies issued by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management and Virginia Department of Forestry. All DOF employees are responsible for following DHRM policies and further DOF policy and procedure specified below.

## DEFINITIONS

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“Agency” and “DOF” means the Virginia Department of Forestry.

**“Agency Staff”** means all Virginia Department of Forestry classified, restricted and wage personnel, consultants, contract personnel and other non-employees, such as volunteers or interns.

**“Alternate Work Schedule”** means schedules that differ from the standard 40-hour work week schedule. Alternative work schedules may include, but are not limited to, four 10-hour days, rotational shifts, flexible hours and job sharing.

**“Basepoint”** means the DOF office to which an employee is officially assigned. Depending on an employee’s unique duties and responsibilities, the basepoint may be the employee’s home.

**“Classified Employee”** means an employee who is filling a classified position.

**“Classified Position”** means a salaried position assigned to an Occupational Family and Career Group based on duties and responsibilities, and to a Role Code based on the compensable factors of Complexity, Results and Accountability.

**“Commonwealth”** means the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**“Commuting Time”** means the time an employee normally spends traveling (i) from his/her home to his/her basepoint before the start of the workday, and (ii) from his/her basepoint to his/her home at the end of the workday.

**“Designated Employees”** means supervisors with delegated authority may designate different employees as necessary for different situations. An employee’s “non-designated” status may be changed to “designated” as agency managers/supervisors determine the necessity. Employees will be notified of their status as soon as practicable after any such change in status.

**“DHRM”** means Department of Human Resource Management.

**“Emergency Firefighters”** means seasonal wage employees hired under a Blanket Emergency Exemption for firefighting.

**“Exempt Employee”** means employees are not covered by the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the FLSA.

**“Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)”** establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping and child labor standards affecting full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in Federal, State and local governments.

**“HR”** means Human Resources.

**“Non-Exempt Employee”** means employees are covered by the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the FLSA.

**“Probationary Period”** means the period (normally 12 months) following hire or re-hire into a classified position during which the covered employee does not have access to the grievance procedure.

**“Restricted Position”** means a classified position with at least 10% of its funding from non-continuous or non-recurring funding sources, such as grants, donations, contracts, capital outlay projects or higher education auxiliary enterprise revenues.

**“Teleworking”** means a work arrangement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their central workplace.

**“Third Party”** means any person who does not meet the definition of an employee or non-employee (ie., family member, hitchhiker, person friend, employee of other local, state or federal government agency, etc.)

**“Wage Employee”** means an employee who is filling a wage position Wage employees are sometimes referred to as hourly or P-14 employees.

**“Wage Position”** means a position that receives pay for hours working rather than a fixed salary. Wage positions are sometimes referred to as hourly or P-14 positions. Wage employment is intended to cover peak workloads and seasonal or short-term needs.

**“Workplace”** means any state-owned or leased property including, but not limited to, buildings and other structures, parking lots, open spaces or any site regardless of ownership where agency staff performs official duties.

**“Workplace Violence”** is any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse occurring in the workplace by employees or third parties. It includes, but is not limited to, beating, stabbing, suicide, shooting, rape, attempted suicide, psychological trauma, such as threats, obscene phone calls, an intimidating presence and harassment of any nature, such as stalking, shouting or swearing.

## PROCEDURES

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### General

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DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.01- Introduction](#) to promote equitable and consistent human resource policies that specifically prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, veteran status, political affiliation, genetics or disability. This policy addresses the rights and responsibilities of Executive Branch agency employees covered by the Virginia Personnel Act (“classified employees”).

The DHRM policies and procedures provide general statements of policy but not detailed procedural guidelines for each policy. DOF will use DHRM policies, the Employee Recognition Program Handbook and the Health Insurance Manual, as an integrated system for delivering human resource policies and procedures.

Where needed, DOF will elaborate or clarify DOF application of these guidelines and may develop additional HR policies as needed, which do not conflict with state policies or procedures.

### Emergency Contacts

All employees will maintain emergency contact information on file with his or her immediate supervisor and the DOF Human Resources Office.

- ◆ Emergency contact information should be updated annually or when information changes and recorded in Cardinal HCM.
- ◆ Utilize [Form 8.01 Emergency Contact Information](#) to submit contact information.
  - Copy – Supervisor
  - Copy – Regional Office or Unit Office
  - Original – Human Resources Office

### Employee Handbook

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Employees shall sign the “[Certificate of Receipt of Employee Handbook](#)” in orientation or within a week of beginning employment with the agency. This form is to be returned to the Human Resources Office and kept in the employee’s official personnel file.

Any changes to DHRM’s policies or employee handbook, including any specific DOF addendums or conditions shall be disseminated to all current DOF employees and updated on the agency’s intranet.

The [DHRM Employee Handbook](#) serves as a quick reference for many issues relating to one’s employment with the Commonwealth of Virginia and contains other miscellaneous topics that are not covered in a separate policy. The Handbook treats most topics briefly and provides links to the Department of Human Resource Management’s policies and other sources of information. Topics covered in the employee handbook are: general conditions of employment; compensation; performance management and evaluation; benefits and programs; equal employment opportunity; disciplinary process; employee relations’ issues, and miscellaneous topics.

Miscellaneous topics addressed in the handbook that are not covered by a DHRM policy:

- ◆ Information About Your Paycheck
- ◆ Statement of Public Accountability
- ◆ Group Life Insurance - See the VRS web site at [www.varetire.org](http://www.varetire.org)
- ◆ State Health Benefits Program - See <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/employeebenefits.html>.
- ◆ Employee Assistance Program
- ◆ Long-Term Care Insurance
- ◆ Employee Suggestion Program
- ◆ Savings Programs.
  - Flexible Benefits – See Health Benefits web site at <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/employeebenefits.html>

- Deferred Compensation Plan – See <http://www.varetire.org/Members/BenefitPlans/DefComp.html>
- ◆ Wellness Program – See <http://www.commonhealthva.com>.
- ◆ Work/Life Programs – See <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/worklife/worklifetoc.html>
- ◆ Retirement Benefits – See [www.varetire.org](http://www.varetire.org)
- ◆ Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign
- ◆ Gifts, Gratuities and Rewards
- ◆ Intellectual Properties
- ◆ Nepotism
- ◆ Political Activity
- ◆ Smoking

## Alcohol and Other Drugs

- ◆ DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.05 – Alcohol and Other Drugs](#) addressing employee’s possession, use of, and impairment due to alcohol, marijuana, cannabis and other drugs (lawful or unlawful) in the Commonwealth’s workplaces to include state vehicles or alternate work locations while conducting business for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Thus, establishing and maintaining a work environment free from the adverse effects of alcohol and other drugs to include marijuana and marijuana products, cannabis oil and cannabis products, and to ensure the fair and equitable application of policy requirements.
- ◆ As a result, DOF is required to take immediate action when notified of a criminal conviction as specified in the “Reports Convictions” section of this policy or of any other violation of this policy. The effects of alcohol and other drugs in the workplace could undermine the productivity of the Commonwealth’s workforce and create a serious threat to the welfare and safety of fellow employees and to Virginia’s citizens.
- ◆ Employees are required to sign the [Certificate of Receipt – Summary of the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs](#) upon being hired.

Note: For the purposes of this policy, the term marijuana will be inclusive of marijuana products, and the term cannabis will be inclusive of cannabis oil and cannabis products.

- ◆ DOF employees who are hired into positions that require a Commercial Driver’s License will be drug tested and must register with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s (FMCSA) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse. <http://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov>
- ◆ DOF Human Resources will conduct an FMCSA Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse background check at the time of hire and annually thereafter for each employee who is required to hold a CDL.
- ◆ **Pre-employment Drug Testing** – As a condition of employment, all classified and select wage employees hired into a safety sensitive, CDL required positions will be drug tested prior to starting their position at DOF.
- ◆ **Random Drug Testing** – Employees hired into a safety-sensitive, CDL-required position will be subject to random drug testing per the FMCSA Guidelines. A minimum of 50% of DOF CDL holders will be required to submit to random drug testing each year. Once selected for random drug testing, the DOF employee will have 48 hours to complete the drug test. Failure to comply within 48 hours or positive testing results will result in disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal.
  - Part-time employees who are selected for random testing will be compensated two hours for travel time.
- ◆ **Post-Accident Drug Testing** – Employees will be tested any time they are involved in an on-the-job commercial vehicle accident resulting in a citation for moving violations arising from an accident that requires: (1) a vehicle to be towed; (2) an injury requiring immediate medical attention away from the scene, or (3) resulting in a fatality. The drug and alcohol tests must be conducted within 32 hours of the accident. Classified employees are prohibited from using alcohol or controlled substances following an accident until after they have been tested. Further, the failure to report a vehicle accident is a violation of the Standards of Conduct. If the accident results in the death of the employee, blood/urine samples will be tested for the presence of drugs/alcohol.

- ◆ **Reasonable Suspicion Drug Testing** – All DOF employees will be subject to reasonable suspicion drug testing if their behavior or appearance causes the supervisor to question the employee’s ability to perform his/her duties safely. Employees who appear to be under the influence will be driven to the nearest testing facility at the time of the impairment. Positive drug or alcohol testing will result in disciplinary actions in accordance with the [DHRM Policy 1.60 Standards of Conduct](#).

## Agency-Owned Lodging Facilities/Agency Property

- ◆ The unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of alcohol is prohibited at agency-owned lodging facilities or agency property connected to a lodging facility during regular business hours.
- ◆ After regular business hours, responsible use of lawful alcohol at agency-owned lodging facilities is permissible. Proper discretion needs to be followed in alcohol use under this circumstance – employees cannot drink to excess and may not consume alcohol openly in public areas.

## Service Recognition

DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.15 – Employee Recognition and Engagement](#) when designing programs for the recognition of employees for their state service.

- ◆ DOF employees will receive a certificate when reaching their first- and third-year anniversaries.
- ◆ DOF employees will receive a service award pin and certificate when reaching five years of service and every subsequent fifth year thereafter.
- ◆ As long as funds are available, DOF shall host an annual service award event for employees reaching 25 years of state service, and every fifth year thereafter.

## Employee Recognition Programs

VDOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.15 – Employee Recognition and Engagement](#) for the provision of programs that recognize an employee's contributions to the overall objectives of the agency and state government.

## Retirement/Separating Employees

- ◆ Planned recognition honoring separating employees may be conducted during business hours and on agency property. Employees shall be given reasonable time to travel to and from the event and up to two hours to attend the event. The agency will not bear any other costs associated with hosting the event; however, funds can be solicited from employees who plan to participate. Retiring employees will receive a certificate and token of appreciation from the agency.

## Hours of Work

DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.25 – Hours of Work](#) to provide a schedule of reasonable and flexible work hours for employees as well as to provide convenient and consistent hours for citizens to transact business with the Commonwealth.

- ◆ The standard work week for all full-time, classified positions in the DOF shall consist of five 8-hour days within a traditional Monday to Friday work week between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. unless an alternate work schedule is approved by the employee’s supervisor.
- ◆ Employees authorized to work an alternate work schedule have several schedule options. The alternate work hours must include 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If the alternate schedule includes any partial days, the work hours must fall within the standard work hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. These options are outlined on the [Form 8.5 Alternate Work Schedule Agreement](#).

- Examples for an employee who works four 10-hour days: Employee works 6:30a.m. –5:00p.m.; 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; 8 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
  - Examples for an employee who works four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day: Employee works 7 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday and 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Friday; 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Tuesday – Friday and 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday.
  - Examples for an employee who works eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day (exempt employees only): Employee works 7 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday both weeks and 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. the second Friday; 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Tuesday – Friday and 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. the first Monday.
  - Scheduling outside of these requirements will be based on agency requirements of specific positions and subject to approval by a member of the Executive Leadership Team.
- ◆ The work week starts at 12:00 am on Monday and ends at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday.
  - ◆ On weeks with holidays in them, employees can adjust their schedules using their leave per [DHRM's Pay Calculation Guide for Alternate Work Schedules](#) or work a temporary schedule adjustment approved by their supervisor.

## Pay Days

### Classified Employees

- ◆ Paydays for classified employees are usually on the 1st and the 16th of each month. The exact pay date is set by the Department of Accounts and the pay schedule is available on the [Department of Human Resource Management Website](#).

### Wage Employees

- ◆ Paydays for wage employees are two weeks after the close of the respective pay cycle.

## Direct Deposit

- ◆ All employees must have their earnings direct deposited to a checking and/or savings account at a financial institution. Please contact Payroll or Human Resources for a direct deposit form or obtain it online at <http://www.doa.virginia.gov/Payroll/Forms/DirectDeposit.pdf>.
- ◆ Employees who do not have a checking or savings account may receive their earnings on a debit card called the Virginia Debit MasterCard®. The debit cards may be used at any business that accepts MasterCard or Maestro debit cards. Cash withdrawals from the cards may be made at any ATM or banking location displaying the MasterCard or Cirrus brand marks. The enrollment form along with additional information is available online at [https://www.eppicard.com/vaedcclient/pdf/VA\\_Payroll\\_Enrollment\\_Form.pdf](https://www.eppicard.com/vaedcclient/pdf/VA_Payroll_Enrollment_Form.pdf).

## Earnings Notices

- ◆ Use of Payline for earning notices is mandatory for all classified employees with access to the Internet. Payline is an Internet-based system managed by the Department of Accounts. On it, employees may view their pay information and also print out pay stubs. Employees are also able to view their W-2s before hard copies are mailed out each year. See Payline at <https://payline.doa.virginia.gov>.

## Meal Break

- ◆ A meal break of at least 30 minutes MUST be afforded for each six hours of work. Compensable meal periods are the exception and not the rule.
- ◆ In situations where emergency response personnel and incident support personnel (i.e., office dispatch for regional, county or headquarters) cannot be relieved from performing work and must remain at a post of duty due to an emergency (i.e., fire, hurricane, flood, snow), a meal period may be recorded as time worked for which compensation shall be allowed and documented. The determination of necessity will be the responsibility of the incident commander in conjunction with the regional forester and/or chief of fire and emergency response.

Therefore, it is in the employee's best interest to get prior approval for skipping a meal break. Careful consideration for proper rest of the employee should be taken into account before allowing employees to work through a meal/break period.

## Physical Fitness Time

- ◆ Fighting wildland fires is physically demanding and dangerous work. Fireline personnel need to be in good physical condition to meet the strenuous demands of this job requirement. The DOF has a physical fitness requirement for its employees with active wildland firefighting duties. The goal is to maximize the agency's efforts to ensure employee safety, limit liability and increase employee awareness of the need to stay physically fit.
- ◆ Employees having primary, active wildland firefighting duties in his or her Employee Work Profile are required to meet the agency's physical fitness requirements. Active wildland firefighting duties are defined as work on the actual fire line – this includes mop-up duties and prescribed burns. Dispatch and other wildland fire support functions are not considered active wildland firefighting duties.
- ◆ The positions that have primary, active wildland firefighting duties are classified as Responders in the DOF [Policy and Procedure 4-3 Readiness and Mobilization Plan](#). All individuals in positions defined as having primary, active wildland firefighting duties are eligible to utilize work time for physical fitness activities as outlined below.
  - Employees eligible to utilize work time for physical fitness activities may utilize up to three hours of work time each week during normal business hours for the purpose of exercising.
  - The object of a fitness readiness program is to ensure continual endurance to perform the functions or roles of the position. Therefore, an employee is only allowed to use one-hour of fitness time per day, for up to three days per work week to effectively improve readiness and fitness stamina.
  - The authorized fitness hour must be combined with at least one-hour of duty for a given day. Under no circumstances can an employee use fitness time credit during a non-duty day. Additionally, the fitness hour must be used at the start of a duty day or combined with an employee's lunch break or at the end of an employee's duty day.
  - The allowed three hours per week must be used for active physical fitness activities, which may include walking, jogging, weightlifting, aerobic exercise, etc. According to the American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons, inappropriate physical fitness activities include team sports, golf, bowling and activities that have a high risk of injury, such as skating, snow sports, gymnastics, contact sports, ball sports, mountain climbing and motorized sports.
  - The agency will not pay for gym memberships or exercise equipment for employees. The allowed three hours includes time spent traveling between the work site and fitness facilities.
- ◆ Supervisors reserve the right to limit any employee's wildland firefighting duties based on the needs of the agency, safety concerns and other factors at any time.
- ◆ The chief human resources officer may publish interim policy that opens participation to all DOF employees regardless of duties to encourage programs that improve retention and seek to promote healthier work environments. If necessary, redefined guidelines and clear eligibility requirements will be published in advanced to ensure equitable participation.

## Travel Time

- ◆ During regularly scheduled workdays, including those occurring on weekends or holidays, the number of hours worked shall not include commuting time.
- ◆ When called to respond outside normal work hours to an emergency such as a wildfire or hurricane, the hours worked:
  - Start immediately when the employee leaves home and begins to respond to the emergency, whether in a private or a state vehicle, and
  - End when the employee reaches home or an alternative destination after the emergency.



## Time Reporting

To assist Finance with accounting for grants, it is imperative that all time spent on grant projects be keyed into Cardinal HCM regardless of the employee's position within the agency.

### **Non-Exempt Employee**

- ◆ All non-exempt employees must use Cardinal HCM and when applicable chartfields to report all regular time worked.
- ◆ Extra hours worked, outside of the regular work schedule, resulting in earning compensatory time or overtime must be reported in Cardinal HCM. Certain codes result in time and a half pay instead of leave.

### **Exempt Employee**

- ◆ All exempt employees must use Cardinal HCM to report all regular time worked for grant purposes, utilizing chartfields as necessary.
- ◆ Extra hours worked, outside of the regular work schedule, resulting in earning compensatory time must be reported in Cardinal HCM. Certain codes used in emergency situations result in time and a half pay instead of leave for area forester positions and hour-for-hour pay for other exempt employees (not in area forester positions).

### **Wage Employee**

- ◆ All wage employees, except emergency firefighters, must use Cardinal HCM to report all regular time worked.
  - Wage employees without a computer and Cardinal HCM access will need to submit a completed paper [Form 8.16 Time Report](#) to Finance for non-emergency hours. Form 8.16 Time Report should be completed by the employee, signed and then submitted to their supervisor for approval. Once approved, the form should be faxed to Finance for processing.
- ◆ Mileage will be reimbursed upon submission of a Travel Voucher. {See [DOF Policy and Procedure 3-2 Travel Regulations and Guidance](#).}

### **Emergency Firefighters**

DOF is authorized to hire wage employees as emergency firefighters under a Blanket Emergency Exemption for firefighting. These emergency firefighters are hired on an as needed basis.

- ◆ Emergency firefighters report all time for active fires and other emergencies on a [Form 4.6 Part-Time Fire Personnel Time and Mileage Report](#).
  - Non-fire hours to be paid (i.e., standby crews or tractor operators that earn time for training) are also reported using a Form 4.6 Part-Time Fire Personnel Time and Mileage Report.
- ◆ Mileage reported on the Form 4.6 Part-Time Fire Personnel Time and Mileage Report will be paid in the payroll system.
- ◆ Finance will monitor emergency firefighter time for more than 40 hours in a work week since all time in a week may be submitted on multiple Form 4.6 Part-Time Fire Personnel Time and Mileage Reports.

### **Volunteer**

- ◆ Volunteers will document their time on a [Form 8.13 Volunteer/Student Time Sheet](#).
- ◆ Forms will be submitted to supervisor or coordinator in charge of the volunteer for approval. At the end of their service to DOF, all forms are sent to HR.

## Layoff

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DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.30 – Layoff](#), which permits agencies to implement reductions in the workforce according to uniform criteria when it becomes necessary to reduce the number of employees or to reconfigure the workforce including change of positions from full-time to part-time status.

The decision to implement layoff must be nondiscriminatory and must comply with the provisions of [DHRM Policy 2.05, Equal Employment Opportunity](#) and [DHRM Policy 1.57, Severance Benefits](#).

- ◆ The state forester in conjunction with the Executive Leadership Team determines when reductions in the workforce and/or elimination of positions are required; the number, type and location of the positions affected, and the effective date for the reductions.
- ◆ The chief human resources officer is consulted regarding the employees affected by the reductions.
- ◆ Employees are notified of the layoff by the chief human resources officer and/or deputy state forester.
- ◆ Affected employees are given the [Commonwealth of Virginia Notice of Layoff or Placement form \(DHRM Form L-1\)](#).

## Emergency Closings

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DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.35 – Emergency Closings](#) to provide guidelines for compensating employees for absences during emergency closings of agency operations.

- ◆ The Virginia Department of Forestry is an emergency response agency. Therefore, DOF staff members remain on-call during inclement weather as needed to respond to weather-related emergency situations as requested by the Department of Emergency Management.

## Decision Authority

- ◆ The following supervisors are delegated the authority to make appropriate decisions at their area in the administration of this policy and are accountable for the fair and equitable application of this policy:
  - **Headquarters** – deputy state forester, chief of administration or assistant state forester
    - Decision submitted to executive assistant to put out notice in DOF Alert System.
  - **Regional Offices/Field Offices** – regional foresters or deputy regional foresters
    - Decision submitted to regional program support technician to put out notice in DOF Alert System.
  - **Nurseries** – state lands manager or nursery manager
    - Decision submitted to appropriate regional program support technician to put out notice in DOF Alert System.
  - **State Forests** – state lands manager, state forest superintendent or assistant state forest superintendent
    - Decision submitted to appropriate regional program support technician to put out notice in DOF Alert System.
- ◆ Supervisors of overlapping office locations will collaborate on office closure decisions for shared office locations.
- ◆ Office closure decisions will generally be made and notification sent a minimum of 2 hours prior to the regular office opening time (general agency business hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.). If the situation is evolving, it is advised to implement a late opening and reassess for the need to close fully.

## Employee Notification

- ◆ In the event of inclement weather or other unforeseen emergencies, the authorized supervisors for the Headquarters Office, Regional Offices/Field Offices, State Forests and Nurseries will determine if his or her office will open late, close early and/or close for the day.

## DOF Alert System

- ◆ When it is determined there is a need for an office or offices to open late, close early or close for the day, the DOF Alert System will be activated. Authorized supervisors will notify appropriate DOF Alert System personnel to initiate a message through the DOF Alert System to affected areas.
- ◆ All DOF staff are responsible for ensuring that their contact information in the [DOF Alert System Member Portal](#) is current and that the phone number or email provided will receive messages during and after work hours.
- ◆ The executive assistant will send a registration email for the DOF Alert System Member Portal to all new staff as they onboard and remove staff as they leave.
- ◆ The authorized supervisors will ensure that a proper message is put on the main telephone answering service to alert the public.

## Guidelines

- ◆ Employees are encouraged to check local television and radio stations for current weather/driving conditions and take appropriate actions. Safety is the responsibility of each employee, and in certain situations, some roads may be clear while others remain impassable for days. Communicate with your supervisor if you are going to be late or unable to report to work.

## Office Closure Time

- ◆ Employees eligible to telework are expected to telework when inclement weather forces the closure of their office. If an employee chooses not to telework, they will need to use personal leave time.
- ◆ Employees non-eligible to telework will be paid for the closure absence. Employees who are on pre-approved leave with pay for an authorized inclement weather closure day will not be charged leave for the day.
- ◆ Employees may be released from work early or authorized to come in late because of existing or anticipated inclement weather or other circumstances beyond the control of DOF. Employees (regardless of telework eligibility) are not required to telework and do not have leave deducted for time not worked due to early release or late openings. Employees are compensated as if they had worked the time.
- ◆ If an employee takes leave prior to an official inclement weather closing for non-designated employees, he or she is only charged for time taken before the closing.
- ◆ Employees who choose not to leave the workplace at the time of official closing will not be credited with compensatory leave.
- ◆ Employees who choose to come in early on days their offices are opening late will not be credited with compensatory leave.
- ◆ When employees arrive at work late because of general transportation difficulties caused by inclement weather, the first two hours of the lost time does not have to be made up or deducted from leave balances if the employee works at least six hours that day and the supervisor approves the lost time. When employees do not meet this requirement, the full period of absence is charged to an earned approved leave type, or, if the employee has no leave balance, to leave without pay.
- ◆ Employees assigned to special projects or work details will follow the office closing in the region/unit where they are assigned the day of office closure.

## Performance Planning and Evaluation

DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.40 – Performance Planning and Evaluation](#) for the establishment and communication of employees' performance plans and procedures for evaluating employees' performance. Specifically:

## Employee Work Profiles (EWP)

- ◆ The Work Description/Performance Plan will be completed by the employee’s supervisor and signed by the reviewer prior to presenting to the employee. Employees are given an opportunity to review and give feedback on the final version. Any revised form must be signed by the supervisor and reviewer prior to sending to the Human Resources Office or posting to the “H” drive as described below.
  - **Note** – Any expectations that relate to improving a deficiency in performance should be captured as instructed in Part III – Employee Development Plan. However, it is to be kept as a separate document and not uploaded into the HR file. It should be used throughout the year to guide employee improvement and evaluation.
- ◆ Electronic copies of finalized Performance Plans will be uploaded to the “H” drive by the supervisor no later than the date communicated each year by HR and placed into the folder that corresponds to the employee’s work area.
- ◆ Managers will keep all electronic and hard copies of original performance plans.

## Performance Evaluations

- ◆ Directors and managers are responsible for:
  - Setting due dates for employee self-evaluations.
  - Self-evaluations are completed using the Employee Self-Assessment form.
  - Ensuring that the proper reviewers have signed the Performance Evaluations.
  - Scheduling and completing feedback sessions with employees, allowing enough time for feedback to be incorporated into the final version prior to sending to HR.
  - Providing final signed ORIGINAL HARD COPIES or digitally signed copies of the current Performance Evaluations to HR.
- ◆ DOF will use the following 3-point scale for performance measures:

Rating
Extraordinary Contributor
Contributor
Below Contributor

## Probationary Period

DOF will apply [DHRM Policy 1.45 – Probationary Period](#) for the application of employee probationary periods.

All persons who begin either original employment or re-employment in classified positions must serve 12-month probationary periods effective from the dates of their employment.

## Severance Benefits

DOF will utilize [DHRM Policy 1.57 – Severance Benefits](#) in the treatment of severance settlements for eligible full-time classified and restricted employees and for eligible part-time classified and restricted employees who have been involuntarily separated from state service by [DHRM Policy 1.30 – Layoff](#).

## Standards of Conduct

DOF requires employees to conduct themselves in a manner that will contribute to the success of the Agency and is deserving of the public trust by adhering to the actions outlined in [DHRM Policy 1.60 – Standards of Conduct](#).

- ◆ **If an employee** has been **notified of alleged** civil or criminal charges, he or she **must** notify his or her supervisor within 24 hours.

## Teleworking

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DOF will recognize [DHRM Policy 1.61 – Teleworking](#) with its provisions to allow for telework as a viable means of achieving general work efficiencies by the Agency, as a recruitment and retention tool, and for supporting Continuity of Operations Plans.

- ◆ DOF senior managers will review the positions within their units and determine those that are appropriate and eligible for telework.
- ◆ Positions eligible for telework will be indicated on the employee's Employee Work Profile. However, telework is completely voluntary and at the request of the employee.
- ◆ Employees in positions eligible for telework may make a written request to their director or senior manager through their supervisor to telework. Employees requesting the right to telework must have the required office equipment and office space in their home. The Department of Forestry will not provide any equipment, phone lines, furniture, etc., to employees for this purpose.
- ◆ Employees approved to telework are required to work 40 hours per week. Teleworking generally may be done one day per week.
  - Employees in field operations: district forester, area forester, forest technician, forest inventory specialist (FIA), water quality specialists, water quality engineers and community forestry specialist positions, in first responder duties are authorized full-time remote office operations, and are not subject to the telework policy; these employees are assigned an agency vehicle and mobile workstations.
- ◆ Employees approved to telework will complete [DHRM's Standard Telework Agreement](#) detailing the terms and conditions of the arrangement. This agreement must be completed and approved by proper authority prior to the start of teleworking.
- ◆ Telework schedules may be adjusted as needed by DOF due to meetings the employee is required to attend, fire duty and other agency business needs.
- ◆ Telework agreements may be cancelled at any time by the agency. Telework schedules do not change the conditions of employment or required compliance with state and DOF policies and procedures.

## Temporary Workforce Reduction

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DOF follows [DHRM Policy 1.65 – Temporary Workforce Reduction](#) to reduce employees' work hours and pay temporarily or to place employees in a non-working status temporarily. Such reductions are limited to no more than 690 work hours in a 365-day period. Certain employee benefits are protected during the period of reduced-hours or non-working status.

## Termination/Separation from State Service

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DOF follows [DHRM Policy 1.70 – Termination/Separation from State Service](#) to identify the types of separation from state service and their related procedures, and to advise terminating employees of benefits to which they may be entitled.

## DOF Retirement Planning

The Human Resources Office provides assistance to eligible employees to begin pre-retirement planning up to one year from an employee's desired retirement date. The goal is to assist and advise employees as they prepare to transition from state service. Employees will be scheduled to attend seminars and educational programs to aid in understanding retirement income and benefits. Employees will also have the opportunity to share interest on a retirement celebration and opt to participate in mentorship opportunities that support forestry careers and our mission. Retirement-eligible employees shall complete [Form 8.51 Intent to Retire Notice](#) and email to the HR benefits specialist.

## Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media

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DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 1.75 – Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media](#) to ensure the appropriate, responsible and safe use of electronic communications and social media by employees. This policy establishes minimum standards for all state employees. Agencies may supplement this policy as necessary, as long as such supplement is consistent with this policy.

- ◆ Upon hiring, and annually thereafter, all DOF staff shall sign [DHRM Certificate of Receipt – Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media, Attachment A](#). New hires shall sign a paper copy that will be kept in their respective personnel file. Subsequent annual certificates of receipt may be processed electronically via the agency's Commonwealth of Virginia Learning Center (COVLC).

## Civility in the Workplace

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DOF will follow [DHRM Policy 2.35 – Civility in the Workplace](#) to foster a culture that demonstrates the principles of civility, diversity, inclusion and equity. In keeping with this commitment, workplace harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying (including cyber-bullying) and workplace violence of any kind are prohibited in state government agencies. Pursuant to the policy, employees violating the policy's prohibited conduct will be subject to disciplinary action under [DHRM Policy 1.60, Standards of Conduct](#), up to and including termination, based on the situation; and, violent acts of employees occurring outside the workplace also may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Prohibited conduct/behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Injuring another person physically;
- ◆ Engaging in behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person;
- ◆ Threatening to damage or vandalize or intentionally damaging or vandalizing property;
- ◆ Making threats to injure another person;
- ◆ Assaultive behavior such as pushing, shoving, grabbing, hitting, kicking or spitting toward another person;
- ◆ Cornering people or blocking egress;
- ◆ Invading personal space;
- ◆ Stalking;
- ◆ Possessing, brandishing or using a weapon that is not required by the individual's position while on state premises or engaged in state business;
- ◆ Subjecting others to communication or innuendoes of a sexual nature;
- ◆ Demonstrating behavior that is rude, inappropriate, discourteous, unprofessional, unethical or dishonest;
- ◆ Behaving in a manner that displays a lack of regard for others and significantly distresses, disturbs and/or offends others;
- ◆ Making disparaging remarks, spreading rumors or making innuendos about others in the workplace;
- ◆ Raising one's voice inappropriately or shouting at another person;
- ◆ Swearing or using obscene language or gesture toward another person;
- ◆ Making obscene phone calls or delivering obscene messages to another person;
- ◆ Humiliating others; making public statements with the intent of embarrassing a targeted person; impugning one's reputation through gossip;
- ◆ Making unwelcome or suggestive comments or jokes;

- ◆ Displaying symbols associated with hostile/violent groups or inappropriate sexual connotations toward another person;
- ◆ Making culturally insensitive remarks; displaying culturally insensitive objects, images or messages;
- ◆ Making demeaning/prejudicial comments/slurs or attributing certain characteristics to targeted persons based on the group, class or category to which they belong;
- ◆ Retaliating against one who, in good faith, reports a violation of this policy or participates in related investigations;
- ◆ Posting or discussing sensitive, private information about someone to others;
- ◆ Pretending to be someone else online in order to make that person look bad;
- ◆ Using photo shop tools to create harassing images; posting videos to intimidate or harass someone;
- ◆ Publishing jokes or demeaning comments electronically about another person;
- ◆ Sending e-mails or using social medial to convey inappropriate messages about someone.

## Workforce Planning

DOF follows [DHRM Policy 1.90 – Workforce Planning](#) for a workforce planning approach that supports agencies in acquiring, engaging, developing and retaining the workforce talent necessary to meet agency goals and objectives, and fulfill the requirements of the Virginia Performs scorecard.

## AUTHORITY

This policy and procedure is issued by the Virginia state forester.

## INTERPRETATION


The chief human resources officer and deputy state forester are responsible for the interpretation of this policy and procedure.

## APPROVAL

I certify that this policy and procedure is approved and ready for publication.


John Habel

Chief Human Resources Officer Name (Print)

DocuSigned by:  
  
 3/19/2024  
 Chief Human Resources Officer Signature

Ed Zimmer

Deputy State Forester Name (Print)

DocuSigned by:  
  
 3/19/2024  
 Deputy State Forester Signature