

Employee Communication re Recruitment and Retention Reform Implementation

Good Morning,

We'd like to update you on the efforts taken by the Department of Administration's Division of Personnel Management (DPM) and Human Resource (HR) professionals around the state to modernize Wisconsin's recruitment and retention tools so they are more clear, concise, and consistent.

Legislation was signed in February 2016 to give State agencies more efficient, effective and streamlined tools to manage a changing workforce. With 40% of state employees' eligible to retire within 10 years, we must have a system that expedites the hiring process, rewards outstanding performance, and creates consistent and clear rules to be followed across state government.

Since the signing of the bill, more than 200 HR professionals from agencies around the state have participated in discussions about how to implement the changes set to take effect on July 1, 2016.

It's important to note the legislation did not impact the foundational principles of civil service. Employees still serve in classified positions and there are no changes to employee benefit programs. While many of the provisions included in the legislation may never impact you as a state employee, the highlights of the changes being implemented include:

Hiring

The expected hiring timeline will shorten from the current 105 days to 60 days. Most of you have participated in this lengthy hiring process and understand the frustration of applicants. The hiring process will remain open, competitive and based on merit. Some specifics include:

- All hiring processes will require an application and a resume. Agencies may still create and administer civil service exams if they determine that is the best method of evaluation. DMA HR specialists (Allisa Brown and Steve Janisch) will work with supervisors to determine the most effective and efficient selection processes from application through interview.
- Recruitments already in process will continue using current hiring processes. Some hiring times, such as security officers or fire crash positions with extensive background checks, will continue to take longer than 60 days.
- On July 1, you will notice minor changes to wisc.jobs and to the DPM website (formerly the OSER website). New technology and recruiting strategies are being developed and we expect to launch a new hiring website and mobile interface in March 2017.

Work Rules

Work rules will become consistent across state government so employees have consistent expectations. These rules will be fair, reasonable and clearly communicated with all employees. DMA SHR is in the process of identifying if any new policies will be written.

- All changes to work rules and agency specific policies will be effective by September 1, 2016. Employees will be provided notice of the new work rules and receive a copy prior to implementation. (For your immediate information, a copy of the standard work rules is attached to this message.)
- Due process and just cause remain key components of the disciplinary process.
- All agencies will now use the same progression system for discipline with one track for all types of infractions (attendance and misconduct).
 - The progression is as follows:
 - 1 day suspension
 - 3 day suspension
 - 5 day suspension
 - Separation
 - All employees with current discipline on file will receive a letter identifying where they will be placed on the new progression.
 - Employees are able to earn back levels of discipline. One level is earned back for each year the employee receives no further discipline.
 - Written reprimands are no longer included as part of the discipline process. An employee who has only received a written reprimand will be considered to have no formal misconduct under the new progression system.

- Letters of disciplinary suspension will be placed in the employee's personnel file and may not be removed except through the process of appeal, etc. Discipline on file remains with the employee if the employee moves between agencies.
- Nine serious acts of misconduct have been identified in statute. A violation of these rules may lead directly to separation from State service – no progressive discipline is required. (A copy of these nine serious acts is attached.)
- Letters of expectation regarding performance or behavior may be issued, but require review and prior approval of HR. Issued letters will be placed in the employee's personnel file and may not be removed.

Grievance

The grievance procedures have remained nearly the same. To make the process more efficient, timelines for each step are shorter and the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) is required to make a decision within 120 days of an appeal. Grievance forms will be available in electronic form within the next 30 days. All forms of adverse employment decisions specifically covered in the statute (demotion, suspension, involuntary transfer, etc.) continue to be grievable. Denial of a hazardous duty claim under s.230.36 is appealable directly to the WERC. Conditions of employment remain grievable. Employees may still raise any concerns to their supervisors or their HR specialist for discussion.

Finally, when requested in advance, agencies are required to allow 30 minutes of conference or preparation time for the grievant and personal representative. This time will occur directly prior to the grievance hearing and is in without loss of pay status.

Additional Changes

- **Transfers.** Agencies will continue to manage an internal transfer process. The final vacancy must be posted for open competition with the public. Agencies will not be allowed to conduct service-wide transfer announcements.
- **Probation.** All new original, promotional, supervisory, and management positions will require a one year probationary period. This change does not impact any employee hired with an effective date prior to July 1, 2016 with a different probationary period. Career executives will continue to serve a two year trial period.
- **Probation.** Permissive probation (when you move between agencies or parts of your agency) will be 12 months, with the ability to waive after six months.
- **Reinstatement.** Employees who left state service without misconduct prior to July 1, 2016 may continue to apply as a reinstatement candidate for five (5) years from the date they left. Effective July 1, 2016, this provision is eliminated and candidates who leave state service will apply through the regular recruitment process.
- **Reinstatement for Layoff.** Beginning July 1, 2016, any employee laid off from state service will have reinstatement eligibility for three (3) years from the effective date of the layoff.
- **Restoration.** Restoration is a mandatory right of appointment and has always been very limited. Employees laid off prior to July 1, 2016, who were given restoration rights will continue to have restoration right for three (3) years from the date of the layoff. Restoration continues with no changes upon return from military leave or service to an unclassified appointment.
- **Layoff.** Layoff processes will require a 60 day period with no separate at risk process. Performance is the primary factor in determining order of layoff and is followed by seniority and ability. Changes to this process require extensive revision to WI Administrative Code. As those changes are still underway, additional information will be provided at a future date.

Thank you for your attention to this message. FAQs will be available shortly to help address questions. This document as well as the FAQs will be placed on the DMA website at <http://dma.wi.gov/DMA/humanresources/statehr>

Please direct any questions to this email address: DMASHRFeedback@wisconsin.gov