



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

DJ Stadtler
Executive Director

919 East Main Street, Suite 2400
Richmond, Virginia 23219

(804) 303-8700
www.vpra.virginia.gov

Jennifer DeBruhl
Chairperson

RESOLUTION OF THE VIRGINIA PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY BOARD

May 23, 2022

MOTION

Made By: Ms. Bulova Seconded By: Mr. Cardwell

Action: Motion Carried, Unanimously

Title: Adoption of Modifications to VPRA Employee Manual

WHEREAS, Section 33.2-290 of the Code of Virginia requires the Board to develop and adopt personnel rules, policies, and procedures with respect to employees of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (“VPRA”); and

WHEREAS, on January 25, 2020, the Board adopted a document titled *Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Human Resources Policies & Procedures Manual* (the “2020 Manual”) as the initial set of personnel rules, policies, and procedures to begin hiring VPRA staff; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed the document titled *Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Employee Manual* (updated May 2022) attached hereto as **EXHIBIT A**, which document was developed by VPRA and is proposed to supersede and replace the 2020 Manual.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby approves and adopts the document titled *Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Employee Manual* in the form attached hereto as **EXHIBIT A** for use by VPRA and authorizes the VPRA Executive Director make necessary modifications and updates to such document as he may deem appropriate from time to time.

EXHIBIT A

[SEE ATTACHED]

####



Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Employee Manual

Updated May 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME.....	1
MISSION AND VISION	2
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY	3
BACKGROUND CHECKS.....	5
EMPLOYMENT-AT-WILL	6
IDENTIFICATION CARDS	7
IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE	8
INTRODUCTORY PERIOD	9
CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT	10
PERSONNEL RECORDS & REFERENCES.....	11
DISABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE	12
STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.....	15
DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT	17
GRIEVANCE PROCESS.....	20
CORRECTIVE ACTION	22
PAY PERIODS	26
TIME KEEPING.....	27
OVERTIME	28
PAYROLL WITHHOLDINGS	29
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	30
SPECIAL WORK ASSIGNMENTS.....	36
HOLIDAYS.....	37
PAID TIME OFF	38
RETIREMENT	41
LEAVE OF ABSENCE.....	42
CIVIL AND WORK-RELATED LEAVE.....	44
PARENTAL LEAVE.....	46
FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE	48
MILITARY LEAVE.....	52
CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS.....	54

VOLUNTEER LEAVE TIME 58

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS 60

STATEMENT OF ERISA RIGHTS 62

CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS (COBRA)..... 63

SMOKING 64

DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE 65

SAFETY..... 67

WORKERS’ COMPENSATION 68

VIOLENCE PREVENTION 69

ACCIDENTS INVOLVING VPRA VEHICLES 70

HOUSEKEEPING 71

SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS AND UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES 72

LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES 73

PANDEMIC(S) 74

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY LEAVE..... 75

VACCINATION POLICY 79

HOURS OF WORK 80

JOB POSTING 81

REDUCTION IN FORCE 83

LACTATION ACCOMMODATION 84

ATTENDANCE..... 85

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION 86

DISTRIBUTION OR SALES 87

CONFLICT OF INTEREST 88

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT 89

FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE 90

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY USAGE AND SECURITY 92

SOCIAL MEDIA 94

MEDIA COVERAGE 96

PARKING 97

TELEWORK..... 98

RESIGNATION / TERMINATION..... 102
SEVERANCE 103
EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 104

Welcome

Welcome to Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA)! We are delighted that you have chosen to join our organization and hope you will enjoy a long and successful career with us.

You are joining an organization that is transforming passenger rail in the Commonwealth. We are a team focused on cultivating an environment where individuals can succeed professionally and personally. At VPRA, you can expect to make a difference through your work and have a direct impact on a truly meaningful mission.

With your active involvement, creativity, and support, VPRA will continue to achieve its goals. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being an important part of VPRA's success.

Please take time to review the policies. If you have questions, feel free to ask your manager or to contact the Human Resources (HR) department.

Mission and Vision

VPRA was created to increase passenger rail capacity, improve passenger rail services, ameliorate current and future traffic congestion on Virginia highways, and promote the industrial and economic development of the Commonwealth.

Our **mission** is to promote, sustain, and expand the availability of passenger and commuter rail service in the Commonwealth.

Our **vision** is to deliver passenger rail service as an integrated, affordable, convenient travel option that benefits the Commonwealth.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Purpose: To ensure all employment complies with equal employment opportunity regulations

Applies To: All Employees and Applicants

Policy: It is the policy of VPRA to provide equal employment opportunity (EEO) to all qualified individuals and to administer all aspects and conditions of employment without regard to the following:

- Race (including traits historically associated with race such as hair texture, hair type, and protective styles);
- Color;
- Religion;
- National origin;
- Citizenship;
- Age;
- Sex or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions);
- Sexual orientation;
- Gender identity or expression (including transgender status);
- Genetic information (including family medical history);
- Physical or mental disability;
- Marital status;
- Political affiliations;
- Military or veteran status;
- Expunged criminal records and non-conviction arrest records;
- Citizenship and immigration status; and
- Any other protected class, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

VPRA expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment or discrimination based on any of the characteristics mentioned above. VPRA takes allegations of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and retaliation very seriously and will promptly investigate when warranted.

The policy applies to all areas of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation, benefits, and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Management is primarily responsible for seeing that the organization's EEO policies are implemented. Still, all employees share in the responsibility for assuring that by their personal actions, the policies are effective and apply uniformly to everyone.

Any employee involved in discriminatory practices may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Appendix – State and Local Variations VIRGINIA

State law in Virginia prohibits unlawful discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Employees have a right to request a reasonable accommodation for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Requests for accommodation may be made through management or Human Resources. Upon request for accommodation, VPRA will engage in an interactive process with the employee to determine if a reasonable accommodation is available without causing undue hardship.

State law in Virginia also prohibits unlawful discrimination based on a disability, physical impairment, or mental impairment. Otherwise, qualified employees with a disability have a right to request a reasonable accommodation for known limitations related to physical and mental impairments if necessary to assist such an employee in performing a particular job. Requests for accommodation may be made through management or Human Resources. Upon request for accommodation, VPRA will engage in an interactive process with the employee to determine if a reasonable accommodation is available without causing undue hardship.

Background Checks

Purpose: To comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act

Applies To: All Applicants and Employees

Policy: VPRA conducts a background check on any applicant or employee with their signed consent. The background check may consist of prior employment verification, reference checks, education confirmation, criminal background, credit history, or other information, as permitted by law. Background checks are provided by a third-party service. All offers of employment and continued employment are contingent upon a satisfactory background check. Refusal to consent to a background check may result in discipline, up to or including termination.

Employment-At-Will

- Purpose: To identify terms of employment “at-will”
- Applies To: All Employees
- Policy: Employment at VPRA is at-will unless otherwise stated in a written individual employment agreement signed by the Executive Director or Chairman of the Board.

This means that either the employee or the organization may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.

Nothing in this or any other document creates or is intended to create an employment agreement, express or implied. Nothing contained in this policy, or any other document is intended to create a property interest of continued employment. In addition, no VPRA representative, other than the Executive Director, is authorized to modify this policy for any employee or enter into any agreement, oral or written, that changes the at-will relationship.

Any salary figures provided to an employee in annual or semi-monthly terms are stated for convenience or to facilitate comparisons and are not intended to and do not create an employment contract for any specific period of time.

Identification Cards

Purpose: To facilitate security screening of employees and others entering and working at VPRA facilities

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: To maintain safety at VPRA facilities, all employees are required to carry VPRA Identification card (ID card) provided by the Commonwealth's Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) at all times while at VPRA facilities. This restricted access is for the safety and well-being of our employees.

Tenants and contractors of VPRA and their employees, agents, contractors, and subcontractors are required to wear the ID card while at VPRA facilities.

Visitors to VPRA are required to wear a visitor's VPRA identification card at all times while at VPRA facilities.

ID cards must be returned prior to leaving VPRA. Employees are prohibited from loaning ID cards to other employees or any unauthorized individual. VPRA should be notified immediately if any card is lost or misplaced. There may be a fee to replace a lost or damaged card.

ID cards have expiration dates. Employees are required to renew their cards prior to the expiration date. VPRA ID Card Request Form may be obtained from Human Resources. The completed form, signed by the employee's manager or Human Resources, must be taken to the DHRM ID office for renewal.

Immigration Law Compliance

Purpose: To comply with federal law regarding Employment Eligibility Verification

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Each employee is required to complete Section 1 of Form I-9 on their first day of employment and produce within three business days thereafter acceptable proof of their identity and eligibility to work in the United States. VPRA uses E-Verify to confirm employment eligibility. Failure to produce the proper identifying documents within three days will result in termination.

Introductory Period

Purpose: To establish guidelines for an employee's first six months with VPRA

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: All newly hired, re-hired, or transferred employees are required to complete an introductory period of six (6) months. Introductory status does not affect eligibility for enrollment in benefit plans.

The introductory period allows the manager time to assess the employee's qualifications, performance, and general suitability to meet position requirements and standards. It also provides the employee with the opportunity to experience/explore VPRA, the department, and the position and to determine whether the position meets the employee's expectations. During the introductory period, employees are ineligible to apply for transfer or promotion to another position at VPRA.

Satisfactory completion of the introductory period does not negate the at-will nature of the employment relationship. Satisfactory completion of the introductory period provides the employee access to the grievance process.

Responsibilities of the manager are to:

- Make clear the job responsibilities, performance standards, and workplace practices;
- Assess employee performance and indicate areas that need improvement; and
- Determine if the employee should be continued in the position.

Classification of Employment

Purpose: To establish guidelines to classify all employees of VPRA

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA has established the following employee classifications for compensation and benefits purposes only. Each employee will be notified of their classification at the time of hire, rehire, promotion, or any time a change in status occurs. These classifications do not alter the employment-at-will status. Employees will be classified in one of the following employment classifications:

1. Regular, Full-time – Employees who are not in temporary status and are scheduled to work forty (40) hours weekly and maintain continuous employment status. Regular full-time employees may be exempt or non-exempt. Regular full-time employees are generally eligible for the full-time benefits package and are subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.
2. Regular, Part-time – Employees who are not in temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than forty (40) hours weekly and who maintain continuous employment status. Part-time employees may be eligible for some of the benefits offered by and are subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.
3. Temporary/Wage - Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or assist in completing a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work the full- or part-time schedule for a limited duration. Temporary/Wage employees will not receive any benefits unless specifically authorized in writing.
4. Exempt - Employees whose positions meet specific tests established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and applicable state law and who are exempt from overtime pay requirements. The basic premise of exempt status is that the exempt employee is to work the hours required to meet their work responsibilities.
5. Non-Exempt - Employees whose positions do not meet FLSA and state exemption tests and are paid multiple times their regular rate of pay for overtime hours worked. Unless notified otherwise in writing by management, all employees of VPRA are non-exempt.

Personnel Records & References

Purpose: To establish guidelines for maintaining and safeguarding employees' files

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Employee personnel records are the property of VPRA, maintained by the Human Resources and Payroll Departments, and are considered confidential.

Managers may only have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis.

A manager considering hiring a former employee or transferring a current employee may be granted limited access to the file. The Director of Human Resources will determine access.

VPRA's Human Resources may provide written confirmation of the employee's name, job title, and dates of employment. Requests for verification of employment or other inquiries from outside organizations must be in writing on company letterhead and must also include a signed waiver by the employee. VPRA should not provide additional information in response to reference inquiries.

In accordance with Va. Code § 2.2-3705.1(1), personnel information concerning identifiable individuals will not be disclosed to outside parties unless required by law or authorized by a signed waiver from the employee (or former employee).

Employees, under any circumstances, must not respond to requests for information regarding another employee unless it is part of their assigned job responsibilities. Otherwise, all reference requests should be forwarded to the Human Resources Department for a response. Employees wishing to see their personnel file will be permitted to do so in accordance with the law, including Va. Code § 2.2-3705.1(1) and Va. Code § 8.01-413.1(B).

Keeping personnel files up to date can be important to an employee's pay, deductions, benefits, and other matters. Employees must inform Human Resources as soon as possible if there are changes in any of the following items:

1. Legal name;
2. Home address, telephone number, and personal email address;
3. Emergency contact;
4. Change of dependents;
5. Marital status
6. Change of beneficiary;
7. Military or draft status; or
8. Exemptions on the W-4 tax form.

Disabilities in the Workplace

- Purpose:** To comply with all federal, state, and local laws concerning the employment of individuals with disabilities
- Applies To:** All Employees
- Policy:** VPRA will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. VPRA will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability who can (with or without reasonable accommodation) perform the essential functions of the job in question.

An individual, who can be reasonably accommodated for the job in question without undue hardship, will be given the same consideration for that position as any other employee or applicant.

All employees are required to comply with safety standards. Any applicants or employees cannot pose a direct or indirect threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. Individual situations will be reviewed for reasonable accommodations.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

1. Disability – a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual. An individual who has such impairment has a record of such an impairment and is also deemed a “disabled individual.” An individual may also be considered “disabled” if that person is regarded as having such impairment.
2. Major life activity – may include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, or working. A “major life activity” may also include bodily functions such as functions of the immune, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive systems.
3. Direct threat to safety – a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.
4. A qualified individual with a disability – an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the job the individual holds or has applied for.

5. Reasonable accommodation – making existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to; job restructuring, modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, and similar activities.
6. Undue hardship – an action requiring significant difficulty or expense by VPRA.
7. Essential job function – those activities of a job that are core to performing the job in question.

VPRA will treat all medical information obtained from employees about any potential disability or any related condition in a confidential manner and will reveal such information only to those within VPRA who need to know such information, and otherwise as required by law.

Returning To Work Following an Absence

When an employee is restricted in the performance of their regular duties due to personal injury, illness, or medical condition, or due to a work-related accident/injury, VPRA will assist the employee in returning to work by considering temporary work duties or assignments until the employee is medically released to resume regular duties. Placement in temporary assignments or with temporary duties is not guaranteed.

Employees returning to work following any absence resulting from a work-related accident/injury or a personal injury or illness excused by an authorized medical provider must provide their manager with documentation from an official medical provider that supports the absence and recommends a return to full duty, if applicable. If the authorized medical provider recommends light or modified duty, this documentation must be provided to the employee's manager. Employees may not return to work following an absence excused by the authorized medical provider without documentation from the authorized medical provider.

The employee's manager and Human Resources will review the authorized medical provider's light or modified duty recommendations/restrictions to determine what accommodations can be made. If necessary, a physical requirements checklist will be completed for any position for which the employee is being considered. In instances requiring clarification of restrictions, a copy of the physical requirements checklist and the employee's job description will be provided to the treating physician for review.

Employees not released for full duty may be placed in a position on a temporary basis or have their current position modified. An employee's manager shall review the temporary work assignment every 30 days to evaluate the employee's progress toward return to regular duties. The employee may be requested to provide updated medical information concerning physical capabilities and prognosis from the authorized medical provider during this review. A work restriction lasting 90 days or more will be evaluated to determine VPRA's ability to make continued temporary accommodations.

Temporary work assignments must meet department/staffing needs and accommodate the employee's medical restrictions while taking into consideration the welfare and safety of the employee and their co-workers. Temporary work assignments shall not exceed the level of responsibility of the regularly assigned position/function. Temporary work assignments must be in the respective department or another department within the respective division. When multiple employees request light or modified duty, and there are limited positions available for accommodation, preference will be given first to the employee receiving Worker's Compensation (WC) benefits. To the employee receiving Short Term Disability (STD) benefits followed by an employee without an approved WC/STD benefit, but with a doctor's recommendation for light or modified duty.

Temporary work assignments may be altered, upgraded, or changed in a manner consistent with medical restrictions and in accordance with the employee's condition.

To prevent employees from performing work while on extended WC, STD, and/or Family & Medical Leave Act leave, employees below the senior leadership team will have their network access inactivated during their leave of absence.

Standards of Conduct

Purpose: To establish the baseline expectations for personal and professional conduct in an effort to ensure VPRA provides and maintains a professional and safe work environment for all

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner with civility and courtesy at all times, for the benefit of customers, colleagues, co-workers, and VPRA. Professionalism is expected, as is respect for the safety and security of people and property. Failure to meet these expectations may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees are expected to contribute to the success of VPRA's mission in the following ways:

- Support and contribute to the mission, vision, goals, values, programs, and policies of VPRA;
- Work cooperatively and professionally with their fellow employees;
- Be fair and principled in official interactions and act in good faith with others;
- Perform their job with due regard for the health and safety of other employees;
- Comply with all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act (Va. Code § 2.2-3100, et seq.) and organizational policies and promote public trust and confidence in VPRA; and
- Perform assigned duties and responsibilities to meet or exceed expectations and with the highest degree of public trust.

The following are examples of unacceptable conduct. This list is not an exhaustive list and may be modified from time to time by VPRA leadership. An employee's questions should be directed to a manager.

- Failure to follow the policies outlined in the employee manual
- Negligent, careless, or inconsiderate treatment of clients or their information
- Theft, misappropriation, or unauthorized possession or use of VPRA property
- Unauthorized removal of VPRA property from the premises
- Sharing trade secrets or other confidential business information with anyone who does not have an official need to know
- Accessing, without authorization, confidential information pertaining to guests, donors, state colleagues, or employees
- Falsifying or changing any type of VPRA, client, or employee document or record without authorization
- Willfully, negligently, or carelessly damaging, defacing, or mishandling property of VPRA, a client, or an employee
- Participating in, receiving, taking, or giving bribes of any nature
- Violating security, safety, or fire prevention regulations, or tampering with safety equipment

- Conduct that is illegal under federal, state, or local law
- Conduct that is physically, mentally, and/or verbally abusive
- Creating a disturbance on VPRA premises
- Use of abusive language
- Any rude, discourteous, or un-businesslike behavior, on or off VPRA premises, which is not protected by Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act and that adversely affects VPRA services, operations, property, reputation, or goodwill in the community, or interferes with work
- Insubordination or refusing to follow instructions from a manager; refusal or unwillingness to accept a job assignment or to perform job requirements
- Leaving during scheduled work hours without permission; unauthorized absence from the assigned work area during regularly scheduled work hours
- Sleeping during regular working hours
- Recording time for another employee or having time recorded by another employee
- Use or possession of illegal drugs on VPRA premises at any time
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours, or working under the influence of intoxicants
- Unauthorized possession of a weapon on VPRA premises
- Illegal gambling on VPRA premises
- Soliciting, collecting money, vending, and posting or distributing bills or pamphlets during working hours in work areas (such activity by employees during non-working time, including meal and rest periods, is not restricted so long as such activity does not interfere with the regular operation of business, is orderly, lawful, in good taste, conducted in an orderly manner, and does not create a safety hazard or a mess, provided that non-employees are prohibited from all forms of solicitation on VPRA property at all times)

Discrimination and Harassment

Purpose: To comply with federal and state laws designed to eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace

Applies To: All Applicants, Employees, and Contractors

Policy: VPRA is committed to providing a work environment free of harassment in any form, including inappropriate and disrespectful behavior, intimidation, lack of civility and collegiality, and other unwelcome conduct directed at an individual and/or due to discriminatory and/or protected class reasons.

VPRA prohibits and will not tolerate unlawful discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race (including traits historically associated with race such as hair texture, hair type, and protective styles), color, religion, national origin, age, sex or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (including transgender status), genetic information (including family medical history), physical or mental disability, marital status, political affiliations, military or veteran status, expunged criminal records and non-conviction arrest records, citizenship and/or immigration status, or any other protected class, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Depending on the circumstances, conduct that, even if not objectionable to some employees, creates a working environment that may be considered by others to be hostile or offensive may constitute harassment when on the basis of race (including traits historically associated with race such as hair texture, hair type, and protective styles), color, religion, national origin, age, sex or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (including transgender status), genetic information (including family medical history), physical or mental disability, marital status, political affiliations, military or veteran status, expunged criminal records and non-conviction arrest records, citizenship and/or immigration status, or any other protected class, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

VPRA promotes a productive work environment and does not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any employee that harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

VPRA expects all employees to accomplish their work in a business-like manner. Therefore, harassment is strictly prohibited whether on VPRA premises or not and whether it occurs during working hours or involves employees during nonworking hours. Violations of this policy will be dealt with promptly and seriously.

Employees who violate this policy will be promptly disciplined, up to and including termination.

If any employee believes that the conduct of another employee is in violation of this policy, the employee must immediately report such conduct to VPRA management. This complaint must be reported to the Human Resources Department or a higher level of VPRA management the employee deems necessary to correct the problem. Any employee who believes the employee is a victim of harassment has a duty to report this right away.

Any complaints or concerns about harassment will be treated seriously and will be investigated promptly and addressed as is appropriate under the circumstances. VPRA will treat all such reports as confidentially as possible, including only those persons with a need to know such information, and otherwise as required by law.

Neither VPRA nor its employees will retaliate in any way against any employee for making a good faith report of alleged harassment or participating in VPRA's investigation of a report, regardless of the outcome of its investigation. VPRA also will not tolerate retaliation by the alleged harasser or any employee. Any employee who violates this policy may be disciplined, up to and including termination.

Sexual Harassment

This policy prohibits sexual harassment, including sexually oriented requests or attention by anyone, including managers, coworkers, clients, customers, or visitors, and the working environment in general. All employees are responsible for assuring that the workplace is free from sexual harassment and its effects.

"Sexual harassment" is generally defined under both state and federal law as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature whereby:

- Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Other sexually oriented conduct, whether intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

All employees must avoid any action that could be considered as sexual harassment, including:

1. Unwanted physical contact or conduct of any kind, including sexual flirtation, touching, advances, or proposition;
2. Verbal harassment of a sexual nature, such as lewd comments, sexual jokes or references, and offensive personal references;
3. Demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or sexually suggestive comments about an individual;

4. The display in the workplace of demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or sexually suggestive objects, pictures, photographs, or clothing, and
5. Demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or sexually suggestive written, recorded, or electronically transmitted messages.

Grievance Process

Purpose: To provide an employee grievance process as required by Va. Code § 33.2-290(C)

Applies To: All Employees past introductory period

Policy: VPRA has established a procedure for a fair review of grievances related to any workplace controversy, conflict, or harassment – including adverse employment actions taken against an employee that wishes to appeal such action. Employees may take their grievances directly to the person or department listed in Step 2 if it is related to their manager or if the employee feels the manager would not provide an impartial resolution.

Note: Problem resolution for issues with benefits plans are available through each plan (i.e., health and retirement). If you have questions, please refer to the plan or speak with Human Resources.

Grievance Procedure – Step 1

The grievance should be submitted in writing to the employee's manager as soon as possible, and in no case later than within three working days following the event or circumstance that is the basis for the grievance. Where the manager is the subject of the grievance, or the employee feels the manager would not provide impartial resolution, the employee may take the grievance directly to the person or department listed in Step 2. Generally, a meeting will be held within three business days of the employee's submission of a written grievance, depending upon urgency and scheduling availability. Attempts will be made to resolve the issue during the initial meeting. Still, regardless of whether there is an immediate resolution, the manager will give the employee a written summary of the meeting within three business days. A Step 1 decision will be rendered within 15 business days after the employee submits the relevant written grievance. Determining a resolution may take longer if a further administrative review of the grievance is required. If the employee is not satisfied with the Step 1 decision, they may proceed to Step 2.

Grievance Procedure – Step 2

The employee may submit a written request to review the grievance and Step 1 decision to the next level manager or a designated administrative reviewer. This request should be made within three working days following the receipt of the Step 1 decision. The manager or the designated reviewer will review the grievance and Step 1 decision and may call an additional meeting to explore the facts and other relevant matters. If warranted, additional fact-finding will be undertaken. A Step 2 decision will be rendered within 15 working days after the employee's submission of the Step 2 written request. A written summary of the resolution from Step 2 will be provided to the employee who filed the written grievance. If the employee is not satisfied with the Step 2 decision, they may proceed to Step 3.

Grievance Procedure – Step 3

The final step in the grievance process is a meeting with the Executive Director, which Human Resources shall facilitate. Human Resources will make a recommendation to the Executive Director, who will make a final decision within three working days after the meeting. This decision is final and is not appealable.

At each stage in the process, the employee will be given a full and fair opportunity to present the facts. The manager or Executive Director considering the grievance shall give the grievance full and careful consideration.

Employees are not permitted to be represented by a lawyer or other person at the aforementioned meetings.

Final decisions will not be precedent-setting or binding on future decisions unless officially adopted as VPRA policy. Initiation of the grievance procedure by an employee will not limit the right of VPRA to proceed with any corrective action pending against that employee.

Grievance Process – Special Procedure for Terminated Employees

Employees who are involuntarily terminated as a result of corrective action or who otherwise disagree with their termination may file a written grievance with the Executive Director within three working days after the termination date. The Executive Director will meet with the employee. The Executive Director will provide a written decision to the employee within three working days of receiving the grievance. This decision is final and is not appealable.

Corrective Action

Purpose: To outline procedures to correct performance or behavior and ensure fair and consistent treatment of employees

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA expects a high level of job performance and professionalism from each employee. Each employee is also expected to comply with the organization's standards of behavior and to correct any issues of performance or conduct that are in non-compliance with set standards.

When an employee does not meet the expectations of performance or behavior, management will use corrective action to resolve performance or behavior issues by identifying the problems, causes, and solutions. Corrective action is not a punishment; it is an opportunity for the employee to improve. In general, corrective action should be progressive, beginning with the lowest corrective action item before employing actions of more severity.

VPRA has developed specific corrective-action protocols that should be followed when an employee does not meet expectations for conduct and/or performance. Corrective action procedures will be administered consistently and in a manner intended to be corrective.

The type of corrective action taken is at Management's discretion and depends on many factors, such as the severity of the offense. This policy does not always require progressive corrective action. Management may choose the appropriate corrective action, even when there is no record of prior discipline. Available options include:

- **Counseling/Coaching:** The manager will informally counsel employees when a performance and/or conduct problem is identified. The manager will discuss the nature of the problem and the action necessary to correct it with the employee. Counseling/Coaching should be documented, and documentation should be maintained in the manager's file.
- **Verbal Warning:** The manager will meet with the employee and (a) review the problem, (b) permit the employee to present information regarding the problem, (c) provide counseling on expectations and required improvements, (d) notify the employee that the verbal warning constitutes corrective action, and (e) notify the employee that failure to correct the problem will result in further corrective action. Verbal warnings should be documented, and copies of verbal warning notices will be maintained in the manager's file.
- **Written Warning:** The manager will meet with the employee and (a) review the problem, (b) permit the employee to present information regarding the problem, (c) explain unacceptable behavior, conduct, or performance, (d) advise the employee that the problem must be corrected, (e) inform the employee that failure to correct the problem will result in further corrective

action, and (f) issue a written warning notice to the employee, which the employee must sign to acknowledge receipt. Copies of written warnings to the employee will be forwarded to Human Resources for filing with official employee records.

- Final Written Warning/Suspension: The manager and a representative from Human Resources will meet with the employee to (a) review the problem, (b) permit the employee to present information regarding the problem, (c) advise the employee that the problem must be corrected, (d) inform the employee that failure to correct the problem will result in further corrective action, and (e) issue a final written warning notice to the employee, which the employee must sign to acknowledge receipt.

Where the issue pertains to performance, the final written warning may include or be in the form of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) developed by the manager and employee, identifying steps, training, timelines, or necessary action to correct performance.

Final warnings may include or be in the form of suspension from work.

Termination

The decision to terminate an employee occurs when an employee does not meet performance or behavior expectations or in cases of serious misconduct. Termination without prior warnings or suspensions may be justified for very serious offenses, including but not limited to dishonesty, insubordination, or gross misconduct.

The manager must consult with Human Resources and their division head before making any decisions regarding termination. A Manager may not terminate an employee "on the spot."

VPRA reserves the absolute right to waive any of the corrective action procedures when an employee's conduct is, in the sole discretion of VPRA, contrary to the best interests of VPRA or fellow employees. Under such circumstances, the employee in question may be immediately discharged by VPRA.

Personal Appearance

Purpose: To establish guidelines for appropriate workplace attire and appearance

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Each employee is expected to maintain a safe, clean, professional appearance that is appropriate to their business environment.

VPRA's dress code is "Dress for Your Day," which allows employees to choose the attire that fits their schedule, environment, and location. Dress for Your Day encourages employees to dress professionally and appropriately for the day they have scheduled. It applies to all business activity, whether it is onsite, offsite, or using remote technology such as video conferencing. Employees should dress appropriately for interacting with other employees, and appointments with customers, suppliers, vendors, regulators, government officials, and other business professionals. More formality in appearance may be required for customer interactions or outside networking. Employees are expected to exercise good judgment. When in doubt, employees should always err on the side of attire that is appropriate and professional.

These general guidelines apply to employees' personal appearance:

- Employees should be well-groomed and neat and dress in a manner that reflects well on VPRA.
- Clothing should be consistent with the nature of an employee's work and job responsibilities.
- At no time will employees wear clothing imprinted with illustrations or messages that may be perceived as insulting, offensive, or demeaning.
- Employees may be required to wear specialized clothing that provides a standardized appearance or meets safety standards.

Acceptable attire is clothing that is:

- Clean and properly fitted
- Pressed or wrinkle-free
- Without holes or frayed areas

Examples of acceptable attire include:

- Blazer, sport jacket or suit
- Cardigan, sweater, and vest
- Dress pants, khakis, corduroys, cropped pants, or jeans
- Dress and skirt (appropriate length)
- Shirt with collar, polo/golf shirt, turtleneck, blouse, or sleeveless top that covers shoulders
- Casual/dress shoes, clogs, slip-on shoes, sandals, boots, or tennis/athletic shoes

Examples of unacceptable attire include:

- Ripped, wrinkled, or stained clothing
- Beachwear
- Items with offensive or profane language or images
- Underwear is worn as outerwear or outerwear that exposes underwear
- Provocative or revealing clothing, such as:
 - Midriff length tops and crop tops that expose the midriff
 - Off-the-shoulder tops, including halter, tank, or tube tops
 - Low-cut necklines
 - Clothing that is either too baggy or too tight
- Shorts or cut-offs
- Loose footwear such as beach shoes or crocs or flip flops
- Shoes in disarray (torn/ripped)

Additionally, body piercings and tattoos that may be perceived as insulting, offensive, or demeaning or interfere with the employee's ability to perform their job are unacceptable.

Any employee who does not meet the standards of this policy, determined by the manager or Human Resources, will be required to take corrective action, which may include leaving the premises. Work time missed because of failure to comply with this policy will not be compensated, and repeated violations of this policy will be cause for disciplinary action.

Pay Periods

Purpose: To establish guidelines for pay periods

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: The standard seven-day payroll workweek for VPRA will begin at 12:00 a.m. Sunday. The designated pay period for all employees is semi-monthly, with payday on the 15th and last day of each month. Except as otherwise provided, employees will be paid on the preceding scheduled workday if any payday falls on a weekend or holiday.

Pay periods are as follows:

Salaried employees

- From 25th to the 9th, will be paid on the 15th
- From the 10th to the 24th, will be paid on the last day of the month

Wage employees

- From 25th to the 9th, will be paid on the last day of the month
- From the 10th to the 24th will be paid on the 15th of the following month

All payments will be remitted via direct deposit. Paychecks will be deposited into the employee's designated financial institution each payday. Employees can download Pay stubs directly from the authorized payroll service website.

Time Keeping

Purpose: To comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Hourly employees are required to complete a timesheet every week to report their hours worked. All hourly employees are classified as non-exempt by the Fair Labor Standards Act and are, therefore, eligible for overtime (time-and-a-half) pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek. Overtime authorization from the manager must be secured before the hours are worked. Timesheets must be approved by the employee's manager and available for online review on the payroll processing date on the appropriate pay schedule to ensure timely payment.

Salaried, non-exempt employees must complete a weekly timesheet that reports their work hours, leave hours, and approved overtime and straight time compensation. All salaried non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime (time-and-a-half) pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek. Overtime authorization must be secured before the hours are worked. Timesheets for non-exempt salaried employees must be approved by the employee's manager and available for online review by Payroll by 10 a.m. according to the payroll processing date on the appropriate pay schedule to ensure timely payment.

Salaried, exempt employees are not required to complete a weekly timesheet. However, exempt employees must complete a leave request in the timekeeping system to report any non-work time used during the payroll period. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime. Leave requests for exempt employees require manager approval before being made available for online review by Payroll.

Overtime

- Purpose: To comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act overtime requirements
- Applies To: Non-Exempt Employees
- Policy: Overtime is defined as actual time worked on the job, exceeding 40 hours in a single workweek.

Eligibility Exempt Status

Positions in the exempt status category are not eligible for overtime payments, in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. Usually, persons in executive, administrative, and management classifications are included in this category.

Exempt employees should not keep track of hours worked.

Non-Exempt Status

Positions in this category are eligible for overtime payment, in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. Generally, persons who are paid hourly are non-exempt employees. Non-exempt employees must track hours worked.

Non-Exempt employees will be paid at a rate of one and one-half (1.5) times the base hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week.

Any time away from work, such as leave usage and all holiday hours, will not be counted as hours worked for the purpose of computing overtime.

All overtime must be approved in advance by the manager. Managers cannot authorize overtime work for employees in other departments or shifts unless they are temporarily in charge of those employees or specifically assigned such a responsibility.

Payroll Withholdings

Purpose: To comply with federal and state law with respect to payroll withholdings

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Virginia Passenger Rail Authority complies with state and federal laws regarding payroll deductions from the earnings of employees.

VPRA is required by law to make withholdings from employees' wages for Federal and State income taxes, Social Security, and Medicare taxes. Employees must complete Federal and State tax withholding forms.

In addition, optional withholdings for parking, health and dental insurance, life insurance, Flexible Spending Account, and the retirement plan are deducted if elected or required.

VPRA must comply with the rules and regulations of garnishment as outlined by the courts. If an order to deduct payroll funds is received from the Department of Social Services, IRS, or other authorized collecting agency, payroll must comply with the order. The employee will be notified when such an order has been received.

VPRA complies with the salary basis requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and does not make improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees. There are, however, certain circumstances where deductions from the wages of exempt employees are permissible. Such events include, without limitation:

- When an exempt employee is absent from work for one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability;
- When an exempt employee is absent for one or more full days due to sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide sick leave plan that provides compensation for salary lost due to illness;
- To offset amounts received as witness or jury fees or for military pay;
- For disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for serious workplace policy violations;
- For penalties imposed in good faith for serious safety infractions;
- When an employee is on unpaid leave under the Family Medical Leave Act; and
- During an employee's first and last week of employment if they work less than a full week.

If employees believe that an improper deduction has been made, they should immediately report this to their manager or Payroll. Reports will be promptly investigated, and if it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, the employee will be promptly reimbursed.

Performance Management

Purpose: To provide guidelines to employees regarding a performance management process that establishes, communicates, and documents performance expectations and outcomes

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

1. **Exceptional Performance Rating** - An exceptional performance rating denotes outstanding performance that results in extraordinary and exceptional accomplishments with significant contribution to the organization and/or department where performance far exceeds all expectations and is marked by excellence.
2. **Solid Performance Rating** - A "solid" performance rating denotes that performance is consistent with organizational standards and performance goals are effectively and efficiently achieved, sometimes above expectations.
3. **Does Not Meet Expectations Rating** - A rating of "does not meet expectations" denotes that performance is consistently below expectations. If an employee's overall performance rating is "Does Not Meet Expectations," the employee must be placed on a PIP (defined below) within two (2) weeks of the evaluation meeting.
4. **Interim Performance Evaluation** - An interim performance evaluation is a performance evaluation completed during the performance cycle to document and assess an employee's progress toward achieving the performance plan. Interim performance evaluations are retained in the manager's confidential file for use in constructing the annual performance evaluation.
5. **Performance Management** - Performance management is a proactive process that engages both employees and managers in ongoing communications designed to assist them to be successful in their jobs and make a positive contribution to their organizations.
6. **Performance Measures** - Performance measures are qualitative and/or quantitative standards or measures against which each individual objective is assessed. Performance measures describe objectives in terms of complexity, accountability, and results, and should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely. These measures are referred to on the Performance Planning and Evaluation form as measurements for individual objectives.

7. Performance Evaluation Cycle - The performance evaluation cycle is the annual cycle during which an employee's manager documents performance, usually beginning October 1st of each year.
8. Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) - The PIP gives an explicit list of those areas where the employee needs to improve, and what performance measures need to be met.
9. Performance Plan - The performance plan is the key portion of the evaluation instrument that identifies the individual objectives, competencies, and performance measures to indicate required achievement levels during and at the end of the performance cycle.
10. Performance Planning and Evaluation Form - The Performance Planning and Evaluation form is the document that is used to record employees' performance expectations and job performance throughout the performance cycle.

Performance Plans

Managers develop employees' performance plans using the appropriate Performance Planning and Evaluation forms. The performance plans are signed by the manager and then presented to employees for their signatures.

The manager should discuss performance plans with employees in a timely manner as follows:

- Generally, discussions should be held within thirty (30) days of the beginning of the performance cycle; and
- For an employee who is beginning a new or different position, discussions should be held within sixty (60) days of the employee's start date.

Changes to the Performance Plan During the Performance Cycle

Changes to the performance plan during the performance cycle may occur based on business needs. Changes to the performance plan are determined by the manager and could include updates to goals and/or the addition of special assignments. The performance plan is not intended to fully describe the tools or methods used to accomplish work; these may change without requiring a plan revision. If individual objectives include project-based assignments, managers may develop a statement indicating the general nature of the projects, and a measure noting that the project is completed in accordance with the objectives, standards, and timelines established and communicated at the time of assignment.

All changes to the performance plan should be noted on the official form and initialed and dated by both the manager and employee. If it is necessary to add additional pages, each page should be initialed and dated by the manager and employee, and the page(s) attached to the original form.

Changes that should be noted on the official form include assignments performed for more than thirty (30) workdays while on light duty status or in an acting status.

Documentation During the Performance Cycle

Performance feedback is a commitment to continuous improvement and should be delivered throughout the performance cycle, including both formal and informal feedback. Documented feedback and performance against goals should be completed at least three times annually.

Feedback

Feedback provided during the performance cycle may be informal or formal. Informal feedback is encouraged, but there may be times when formal feedback is more appropriate. Formal feedback should be documented through memos or interim evaluations. Employees should receive copies of formal feedback documentation and the documentation (including interim evaluations) should be retained in the manager's confidential files for use in completing the year-end evaluation.

Interim Evaluations

Managers of non-introductory employees are required, to complete two (2) interim evaluations (i.e., once every 120 days of the employee's first performance cycle). Managers should use the Performance Planning and Evaluation form for interim evaluations. More frequent feedback to the employee is encouraged.

Interim evaluations also may be conducted at any time during the performance cycle for both introductory and non-introductory employees to advise an employee of progress toward meeting performance measures or to document performance problems.

Interim evaluations should be maintained in managers' documentation files to be used when the annual evaluation is completed.

Introductory Employees

Introductory employees should receive formal performance reviews at the three (3) months point and approximately two (2) weeks prior to the completion of their introductory periods. Managers also should provide structured feedback to introductory employees periodically during their introductory periods. This should be done by completing the Performance Planning and Evaluation form at regular intervals during the introductory period.

Identifying Substandard Performance

Managers should immediately identify poor, substandard, or unacceptable performance. Managers normally should address first-time minor or marginal performance issues through performance counseling and coaching.

An employee may receive a "Notice of Improvement Needed – Substandard Performance" form at any time during the performance cycle if the employee

exhibits substandard performance on any individual objective, special assignment, or competency.

If an employee's performance level falls below a Solid Performance level, a PIP may be issued at any time.

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

The PIP plays an integral role in identifying and correcting performance discrepancies. It is a tool to monitor and measure the deficient work products, processes, and/or behaviors of a particular employee in an effort to improve performance or modify behavior.

A PIP should be issued to any employee whose performance level falls below solid. The PIP shall be developed by the manager and the employee. If an agreement cannot be reached, the manager may establish the PIP unilaterally. A PIP has an improvement period of no less than thirty (30) days or more than ninety (90) days. The PIP should be documented on the PIP form. The PIP will become a part of the performance plan and should be included with the year-end evaluation.

Employees should sign and be given a copy of their PIPs. The manager and employee will follow the PIP guidelines including meeting dates to review and document progress in the plan. The manager shall determine whether the employee has met the requirements of the PIP. Substandard performance on the PIP may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Personnel Changes

If the employee's manager changes position during an employee's performance cycle, the departing manager should complete an interim evaluation of the employee's performance.

If an employee transfers or is promoted or demoted into a new position with a different manager, then an interim evaluation should be completed by the manager prior to the employee's departure.

Conducting Performance Evaluations

Performance evaluations should reflect performance levels for the entire performance cycle.

NOTE: The following types of leave, if taken, must not be used to negatively impact the employee's overall performance rating: Military, Family and Medical Leave, Short-term Disability, and Long-term Disability.

If a manager changes an employee's performance plan during the performance cycle, the employee should be evaluated based on the performance plan in effect during each portion of the cycle. Evaluations of performance during each portion of the cycle should be consolidated to an "overall" rating and documented on the form that is in effect at the end of the cycle.

Manager's Role

An employee's manager must complete the evaluation section of the Performance Planning and Evaluation form.

If a new manager has been assigned during the performance cycle, then the new manager should review the performance plan, make necessary modifications, and make an individual assessment along with the former manager's assessment prior to determining the employee's overall evaluation at the end of the performance cycle.

The new manager is responsible for completing the official performance evaluation. In some cases, however, the reviewer or other designated person may need to assist the new manager or complete the evaluation.

More Than One Manager

An employee working for two (2) or more managers at the same time should be evaluated by only one of the managers, with input from the other manager(s). Only the evaluating manager should sign the evaluation form.

Gathering Information

Managers should identify all the potential sources of evaluation information including observable employee behaviors. In addition to the observations of the manager, performance evaluation information can come from other sources, including the employee, peers, customers, subordinates, other managers and directors, and work products. If managers use performance information from other sources to develop the employee's annual evaluation, employees should be informed of the potential sources at the beginning of the performance cycle, when they receive their performance plans.

Self-Evaluation

Each employee must be afforded an opportunity to provide the manager with a self-assessment of job performance for the rating period. The employee should be asked to provide a self-evaluation at least two (2) weeks prior to the evaluation meeting. A manager must review and consider the self-assessment when completing each employee's performance evaluation.

Appeals

When an employee disagrees with the evaluation and cannot resolve the disagreement with the manager, the employee may leverage VPRA's grievance process.

Reviewer's Action

The reviewer should discuss an employee's appeal with the manager and employee. After discussion of the appeal, the reviewer should provide the employee with a written response within five (5) workdays of receiving the appeal.

The response should indicate one of the following:

- The reviewer agrees with the evaluation;
- The manager will revise the evaluation;
- The manager will complete a new evaluation;
- The reviewer will revise the evaluations; or
- The reviewer will complete a new evaluation.

The reviewer's decision is final.

Retention of Performance Documents

Evaluation forms, including those developed for a PIP, are official personnel documents and must be retained in employees' official personnel files when completed.

Documentation of Exceptional Performance

If documentation of extraordinary or exceptional performance is used to support the overall rating of "Exceeds Expectations," the form becomes part of the official personnel file. Otherwise, the form is maintained in the manager's file until the completion of the annual evaluation.

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

A PIP must be included with the evaluation form and retained in employees' official personnel files when completed.

Self-Evaluation

Documentation submitted for self-evaluation should be maintained in the employees' official personnel files.

Interpretation

The Human Resources Department is responsible for the official interpretation of this policy. In the event a dispute as to the application of this policy exists or appears likely to materialize, the Human Resources Department will immediately notify the General Counsel, who will provide legal assistance as necessary. Questions regarding the application of this policy should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

Special Work Assignments

Purpose: To provide guidance regarding additional duties and work assignments

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: On occasion, employees may be required to perform duties that are in addition to their primary job description or usual tasks. This may happen because a co-worker is absent, a position is temporarily vacant, the business or department is particularly busy, or for other business and operational continuity reasons.

Employees are expected to perform these additional duties in a timely fashion and to the best of their ability. Should questions about the process or procedure arise, employees should speak with their manager. Unless informed otherwise, employees will be paid at their regular rate of pay.

VPRA leadership will work with Human Resources to ensure the employee is being properly compensated for additional duties that are placed on a consistent interim basis; generally, a duty that is more than 30 days (subject to funding and leadership review). Interim assignments and pay will not continue past 180 days unless authorized by Human Resources and the corresponding executive leader.

Holidays

Purpose: To establish official days to be observed by VPRA as holidays

Applies To: Regular, Full-time Employees

Policy: VPRA observes the following holidays with pay:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day /
Indigenous Peoples Day
- Voting Day
- Veterans Day
- Day before Thanksgiving
(4 hours)
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

The Executive Director of VPRA has the discretion to change the above list of holidays at any time or designate other workdays as additional holidays.

Non-Exempt Employees

For non-exempt employees, holiday pay equals the number of hours scheduled to work on the day the holiday is observed. Holiday pay will be computed at the base hourly rate times the number of straight-time hours.

Whenever a non-exempt employee is required to work on any of the above non-restricted holidays or that day observed as such, they will be paid the base straight-time hourly rate for all hours worked in addition to their holiday pay.

Non-Exempt employees required to work on a holiday will be paid two (2) times the base straight time hourly rate for all hours worked. If a holiday is observed on a day other than the actual date of the holiday, the employee will be paid one and one-half (1.5) times the base straight time hourly rate for all hours worked.

Exempt Employees

Exempt employees required to work on a holiday will receive a PTO day.

Employees who are on disability or leave without pay status for any part of the day before or after a holiday are not eligible to receive holiday pay.

Whenever any of the above holidays fall on either Saturday or Sunday, either the preceding Friday or the following Monday may be observed as the holiday. Employees will be notified as far in advance as possible concerning the day to be observed as the holiday.

Paid Time Off

Purpose: To guide VPRA paid time off policy accrual and use

Applies To: Regular, Full-time Employees

Policy: VPRA recognizes that employees have diverse needs for time off from work, and, as such, VPRA has established this paid time off (PTO) policy. The benefits of PTO are that it promotes a flexible approach to time off by combining vacation, sick, personal leave, and time off to care for dependents. Employees are accountable and responsible for managing their own PTO hours to allow for adequate reserves if they need to cover vacation, illness, appointments, emergencies, or other situations that require time off from work.

PTO Accrual

Eligible employees will accrue PTO hours each pay period based on their length of service with the Commonwealth.

Accrual Rate Chart

Years of Service	Hours Accrual Per Pay Period	Annual PTO Hours	Annual PTO Days
Under 5 Years	8	192	24
5 – 9 Years	10	240	30
10 – 14 Years	11	264	33
15 – 19 Years	12	288	36
20 – 24 Years	13	312	39
25 or More Years	14	336	42

Part-time employees' accrual will be prorated. PTO does not accrue while an employee is on leave without pay (LWOP).

New Employees and Rehires

New hires and rehires are given PTO on the hire date in the amount outlined in the Accrual Rate Chart. The "Years of Service" includes prior service time with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In the first calendar year of employment for new hires and rehires, PTO accrual is determined by the month employment begins. New and rehired employees will be given a prorated amount of PTO covering the amount of time left in the year. Rehired employees who return to work within six months will continue their previous years of service about annual PTO days. Those rehired employees who return after six months will start from zero years of service.

Newly hired and rehired employees who transition from a Commonwealth of Virginia agency or other Commonwealth of Virginia entity will be credited PTO in an amount equal to any accrued and unused Annual and Compensatory leave balances as of the last day of their prior employment. Balances of Sick leave and

Family/Personal leave will be prorated, and other leave types will not transfer to VPRA's leave management system.

Accrual of Additional PTO Hours

Employees who reach their 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, or 25th year of service will begin accruing the additional hours in the pay period following their anniversary.

PTO Availability

PTO is accrued incrementally throughout the year, as described above. Employees may use PTO hours from the bank even before they are accrued (each such hour used but not yet accrued being a "Pre-Used PTO Hour"). However, upon severing employment, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, employees must pay to VPRA the value of any Pre-Used PTO Hours measured as of the last day of employment with VPRA.

Use and Scheduling of PTO

VPRA will be responsible for recording the leave for all employees. However, each employee is accountable for monitoring their leave balances and accrual rates to ensure proper usage. If it is discovered that an employee has reported leave incorrectly or in excess of the amount available to them, then their record will be corrected, and the employee may be required to repay VPRA for leave taken in error.

Employees are required to use available PTO when taking time off from work. PTO may be taken in increments of as small as one hour.

PTO must be scheduled in advance in the time and attendance system whenever possible. PTO is subject to manager approval, department staffing needs, and established departmental procedures. Unscheduled absences will be monitored.

An employee must use PTO hours according to their regularly scheduled workday. For example, if an employee works a six-hour day, they will request six hours of PTO when taking that day off. PTO is paid at the employee's straight-time rate. PTO is not part of any overtime calculation.

Carryover of PTO

The maximum amount of PTO hours that an employee may carry over at the end of each calendar year is as follows:

Years of Service	Annual PTO Hours
Under 5 Years	192
5 – 9 Years	240
10 – 14 Years	264
15 – 19 Years	288
20 – 24 Years	312
25 or More Years	336

Unapproved PTO Requests

When an employee takes PTO that was requested but denied, the employee will be subject to the following actions:

- The absence will be designated as unauthorized;
- The employee may not be paid for the time missed; and
- VPRA may take disciplinary action under the Standards of Conduct.

PTO Accrued, Used, or Paid in Error

Each employee is accountable for knowing their correct leave balance and accrual rate. If it is discovered that an employee has accrued or used PTO in excess of the amount to which they were entitled, incorrect balances must be corrected, and the employee will be required to repay VPRA for leave taken in error.

PTO and Suspension Pending Investigation or Outcome of Court

An employee on LWOP during suspension pending an investigation or the outcome of a court proceeding may or may not use PTO to continue receiving pay, to be determined at the discretion of the head of VPRA's Human Resources.

Any PTO applied to the suspension period shall be reinstated if the investigation results in no disciplinary action. Any accruals not received will be credited to the employee's PTO balance.

Disciplinary suspensions after an investigation or outcome of court proceedings under the standards of Conduct Policy are without pay. Employees may not use PTO to avoid pay loss during a disciplinary suspension.

Compensation for PTO Not Taken

If an employee separates from service after six months or more of employment, an employee will be paid for the accrued, unused PTO.

Compliance with Laws

This policy shall be administered in compliance with state and federal law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Medical Leave Act.

Retirement

Purpose: To provide retirement income to employees and to allow employees to save for retirement on a tax-deferred basis

Applies To: All Regular Employees

Policy: VPRA employees are eligible for membership in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) or other retirement plans authorized by Article 4 (Section 51.1125 et seq.) Prior service with the Commonwealth of Virginia qualified under VRS will transfer for employees of VPRA.

VPRA offers a deferred compensation plan that allows employees to save for retirement on a tax-deferred basis. Employees may defer a percentage of their base pay, through payroll contributions, each pay period into a variety of mutual funds. Contributions are deducted from pay before federal and state income taxes are withheld and taxes on contributions are postponed until the money is withdrawn. All earnings on contributions also accumulate tax-deferred until withdrawn.

The maximum amount that can be deferred each year is set by the IRS. Current year maximums are available from Human Resources.

The IRS has placed restrictions on access to deferred compensation accounts while an employee is working. Distributions can be made only in the event of retirement, termination of employment, disability, death, or financial hardship (as defined by the IRS). The plan allows for loans from the employee's account. Please contact Human Resources for information.

The type of retirement plan offered and VPRA's contribution vary based on an employee's date of hire. Additional information and details are available from Human Resources.

Leave of Absence

Purpose: To provide employees an extended, unpaid leave of absence from work when all available paid time off has been taken for reasons not provided for in other VPRA policies

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: A leave of absence (LOA) is defined as time away from work without pay for a specific period. LOA is leave not covered by another VPRA policy. It may be granted at the discretion of management in consultation with Human Resources to employees who have completed their introductory period.

Employees may request up to three (3) months of unpaid leave after using all available paid time off.

Requesting a Leave

Employees must submit a written request to their manager that includes the:

- Reason for leave request;
- Date the leave will start;
- Date of scheduled return to work; and
- Dates of previous leaves of absence(s).

Leave Approval

The LOA must be approved by the Executive Director in coordination with Human Resources. The decision of whether to approve a requested LOA is made at the discretion of management. Approval may be based on, but not limited to:

- Workload;
- Business needs;
- Employee's job performance; and
- Reason for the request.

Employees will be notified in writing of approval or denial of the request. If approved, employees must use their leave of absence for the approved purpose. If an employee accepts other employment for pay while on a LOA, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

If a LOA is approved, the affected employee is required to keep management informed of the employee's intent to return to work, and the timing thereof.

Benefits During a Leave of Absence

- Insurance and Retirement – All VPRA-paid benefits will continue in accordance with Federal Law and comply with plan documents. Retirement and related benefits cease when an employee is in an unpaid status.
- Holidays – An employee on LOA shall not be entitled to receive holiday pay if a holiday falls during the leave period.

- Paid Time Off – PTO will not accrue during the LOA.

Employees must pay 100% of medical and other insurance during a LOA.

Additional Information

The following guidelines apply when a LOA ends:

- VPRA does not guarantee that it will hold a position for an employee while on LOA. Temporary replacements may be sought, but, if necessary, the position may be permanently filled.
- Job placement following a LOA is not guaranteed. A reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the workforce. VPRA cannot guarantee that the alternative position will provide the same compensation. If VPRA is unable to offer the employee a job, employment will be terminated.
- Employees who fail to return to work at the conclusion of their LOA will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

Civil and Work-Related Leave

Purpose: To provide employees time off with pay to perform certain civic duties and to employees participating in the formal resolution of workplace conflicts and certain other work-related activities

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Civil and Work-Related Leave is granted to employees to fulfill the civic duties and functions listed below. VPRA will permit an employee to be away from work for these purposes:

- As required by a summons to jury duty;
- To appear as a crime victim or as a witness in a criminal court proceeding
- or deposition as compelled by a subpoena or summons;
- To serve as an officer of an election;
- To serve as a member of a state council or board; or
- To attend their own naturalization ceremony.

Civil and Work-Related Leave is not granted for use by an employee:

- Who is a defendant in a criminal matter, where criminal matter means either an alleged misdemeanor or felony,
- Who has received a summons to appear in traffic court (except as a witness), or
- Who is a party to a civil case, either as plaintiff or defendant, or who has any personal or familial interest in the proceedings.

Civil and Work-Related leave is granted to employees for absences during scheduled work hours for the following reasons:

- To vote for elections not held on Election Day;
- To participate in the resolution of work-related conflicts or complaints of employment discrimination;
- To attend work-related administrative hearings as a party or witness; or
- To attend one initial session with the Employee Assistance Program per qualifying incident. (Employees who are not eligible for the EAP because they have waived state health coverage may consult the third party administrator to obtain a referral to other behavioral health resources.)

Non-exempt employees will be paid at their base hourly rate times the number of straight-time hours they are regularly scheduled to work. If the court appearance is not for VPRA business, then these guidelines apply, then time off will count towards hours worked for purpose of computing overtime.

Exempt employees will receive their normal salary for the time off. This leave will not be charged against Paid Time Off. No deduction from pay will be made for any money received from the courts for jury duty.

Employees are responsible for:

- Giving as much notice as possible to their supervisors in advance of the occasion for using paid or unpaid Civil and Work-Related Leave;
- Providing appropriate documentation as directed by their supervisors concerning events and travel time needed, and for completing appropriate leave requests;
- Returning to work as appropriate when the approved activity ends; and
- Notifying their supervisors if they are unable to return to work as expected

Parental Leave

Purpose: To allow employees and their families meaningful bonding time upon the birth or placement of a child

Applies To: Regular, Full-time Employees

Policy: Eligibility

Employees who become parents via birth, adoption, or foster or custodial care and (a) have been employed by the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority for a minimum of twelve months, and (b) who have worked for at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12-month period.

Eligibility determinations are made as of the date that the child is born or placed via adoption or foster or custodial care.

If both parents work for the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority and meet the eligibility criteria, each parent is entitled to Parental Leave.

Leave Amount

Eligible employees are to receive up to eight (8) weeks of paid Parental Leave to be used within six (6) months of the birth/placement of a child for any one or more of the following reasons:

- to give birth to, care for, and bond with a newborn child;
- to care for and bond with a child placed with the employee through adoption or foster care or a legal custodial arrangement; or
- to supplement disability benefits following the birth of an infant.

Leave Usage

Parental Leave must be used within six (6) months of the birth of an infant or placement of a child.

- Eligible employees may charge Parental Leave for one continuous period of time.
- Employees may request intermittent use of Parental Leave subject to the manager's approval. Managers are not required to approve the use of intermittent paid Parental Leave.
- The eight weeks of Parental Leave may be used only once per birth or placement of a child(ren) and only once within a 12-month period.
- Unused Parental Leave is forfeited six (6) months from the date of the birth/placement.
 - Unused Parental Leave is not compensable if an employee separates from service with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority.
 - Parental Leave terminates at the conclusion of the foster or custodial care placement or within 6 months of the placement, whichever comes first.

FMLA Job Protection: Employees using paid Parental Leave are afforded the remaining job protection under FMLA for an absence of up to a total of twelve (12) weeks (480 hours). They may use PTO or take leave without pay to cover the additional absence. Parental Leave is designated as Family and Medical Leave (FML) and runs concurrently with the FML period.

Parental Leave may be used to supplement reduced income replacement disability benefits (STD or VSDP) following the birth of a child.

Employee Responsibility

Employees should submit a written request for Parental Leave at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the anticipated leave begin date or as soon as practicable.

Note: An employee must comply with VPRA leave request procedures, absent unusual circumstances. Failure to do so may be grounds for delaying or denying an employee's approval for Parental Leave

Certification of Eligibility for Parental Leave

VPRA may require documentation of the birth or placement in order to approve Parental Leave. Official documents that will be considered (without limitation) are a report of birth, a birth certificate, an order of parentage, an adoption order, certified DNA test results, a custody order, and a foster care placement agreement. Documents provided should show date of birth and date of placement if placement was other than the date of birth.

Definitions

- Eligible Employee – An eligible employee who has provided the appropriate documentation may charge Parental Leave beginning on the date of birth of an infant or date of an adoptive, foster, or custodial care placement of a child. Parental Leave expires 6 months after the birth or placement.
- Adoption - The act of legally and permanently assuming the responsibility of raising a child as one's own.
- Child – a newborn biological child or a newly-placed adopted, foster, or custodial child under the age of eighteen.
- Custodial Care – A placement authorized by a judgment, decree, or other order of a court providing for the legal and physical custody of a child.
- Foster Care – The act of temporarily assuming the responsibility of daily care and supervision for a child removed from the child's birth family home due to evidence of abuse and/or neglect. Parental Leave may be used for temporary arrangements made through local departments of social services with the goal of reuniting the child with the child's birth family if possible.
- Parent – Legally recognized biological, adoptive, foster, or custodial parent.

Family and Medical Leave of Absence

Purpose: To provide a leave of absence to eligible employees in accordance with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: The FMLA entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave.

Reasons for Leave

Eligible employees may take up to 12 workweeks of leave in a 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

1. A serious health condition that causes the employee to be unable to perform the essential elements of the job;
2. To care for the employee's child after birth, adoption, or the state placement of a child with the employee for foster care; or
3. For any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or call to covered active-duty status.

Eligibility

Employees who have been employed with VPRA for a total of at least 12 months in the past seven years and have worked for at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12-month period are eligible.

Employees who do not meet the eligibility requirements may be eligible to request a leave of absence for family and medical reasons.

Leave Duration

An eligible employee can take up to 12 weeks for the FMLA circumstances (1) and (2) above under this policy during any 12-month period. This period is a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy. Each time an employee takes leave, the amount of leave taken in the last 12 months will be computed and subtracted from the 12 weeks of available leave, and the balance remaining is the amount the employee is entitled to take at that time.

An eligible employee can take up to 26 weeks for the FMLA circumstance (3) above (military caregiver leave) during a single 12-month period. For this military caregiver leave, this period is a rolling 12-month period measured forward. FMLA

leave already taken for other FMLA circumstances will be deducted from the total of 26 weeks available.

If spouses both work for VPRA and each wishes to take leave for the birth of a child(ren), adoption or placement of a child(ren) in foster care, or to care for a parent (but not a parent "in-law") with a serious health condition, the spouses may only take a combined total of 12 weeks of leave. If spouses both work for VPRA and each wishes to take leave to care for a covered injured or ill service member, the spouses may only take a combined total of 26 weeks of leave.

Intermittent Leave or Reduced Work Schedule

The employee may take FMLA leave in 12 consecutive weeks, may use the leave intermittently (take a day periodically when needed over the year), or, under certain circumstances, may use the leave to reduce the workweek or workday resulting in a reduced hour schedule. In all cases, the leave may not exceed a total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks to care for an injured or ill service member over a 12-month period).

VPRA may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate the intermittent or reduced schedule, in instances when leave for the employee or employee's family member is foreseeable, and for planned medical treatment, including recovery from a serious health condition, or to care for a child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care.

VPRA and the employee must mutually agree to the schedule before the employee may take the leave intermittently or work a reduced-hour schedule for the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child. Leave for birth, adoption, or foster care of a child must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the child.

Suppose the employee is taking leave for a serious health condition or because of the serious health condition of a family member. In that case, the employee should try to reach an agreement with VPRA before taking intermittent leave or working a reduced hour schedule. If this is not possible, then the employee must prove that the use of the leave is medically necessary.

Medical Certification or Recertification

The employee must provide VPRA with certification from a health care provider of their serious health condition or the family member for whom the leave is required. The employee must provide such certification 15 days in advance of taking leave, or the leave may be delayed or denied. Human Resources will provide a certification form.

Should VPRA disagree with the opinion given by the employee's healthcare provider, VPRA reserves the right to acquire opinions from a second or third healthcare provider at VPRA's expense.

The employee may be required to furnish VPRA with reports on status, intent to return, and re-certification of a serious health condition at 30-day intervals.

Use of Paid or Unpaid Leave

Employees are required to use available, accrued paid leave (for example, PTO, Parental Leave, etc.) for absences covered by FMLA unless an employee is on paid disability or worker's compensation. All paid and/or unpaid medical leave permitted under the FMLA will run concurrently with a non-occupational disability, or workers' compensation absence when the injury or disability meets the criteria of a serious health condition defined by FMLA.

Certification of Need for Leave

VPRA will require certification for the employee's serious health condition, family member's serious health condition, qualifying exigency for military family leave, and serious injury or illness of the covered servicemember. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave.

Recertification

VPRA may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member every 30 days and only when circumstances have changed significantly, if the employee receives information casting doubt on the reason given for the absence, or if the employee seeks an extension of their leave.

Procedure for Requesting FMLA Leave

All employees requesting FMLA leave must contact Human Resources at least 30 calendar days before the anticipated leave begin date or as soon as practicable in unforeseen circumstances. If an employee cannot provide notice because of an illness or injury, notice may be given by a family member or a spokesperson as soon as practicable.

Designation of FMLA Leave

Within five (5) business days after the employee has submitted the appropriate certification form, Human Resources will complete and provide the employee with a written response to the employee's request for FMLA leave using the DOL Designation Notice. VPRA may designate family and medical leave for an employee if notified that the employee has a serious health condition rather than wait for the employee's request.

Intent to Return to Work from FMLA Leave

On the basis that it does not discriminate against employees on FMLA leave, VPRA may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

Return-To-Work Examinations

Before being permitted to return to work from a leave for the employee's serious health condition, the employee may be required to provide certification from

their health care provider that the employee can return to work and perform all functions of the job.

VPRA also reserves the right to send the employee for a second opinion at VPRA's cost before a return to work.

Reinstatement After Leave

Eligible employees taking leave under this policy will be reinstated to their former position or an equivalent position with equivalent benefits and other terms and conditions of employment if available. However, no employee is entitled under this policy to any right, benefit, or position other than that to which the employee would have been entitled had they not taken leave. Thus, if a layoff or other extenuating circumstance or business condition arises that affects the employee's position, reinstatement may not be possible.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

1. Child – a biological child, adopted child, foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom a VPRA employee is standing in loco parentis (i.e., in place of a parent), in each case which is under eighteen (18) or older than eighteen (18) if incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
2. Parent – a biological parent, adoptive parent, or individual who stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child.
3. Serious health condition – an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care or a condition that requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider. This policy covers illnesses of a serious and long-term nature, resulting in recurring or lengthy absences.
4. Qualifying exigency – when the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of a VPRA employee is on covered active duty in the armed forces or has been notified of an impending call or order to cover active duty. (Son or daughter for this type of FMLA leave is defined the same as for child for other types of FMLA leave except that the person does not have to be a minor.) This type of leave would be counted toward the employee's 12-week maximum FMLA leave in a 12-month rolling period.

Military Leave

Purpose:	To comply with federal and state law and to provide support for employees serving in the military
Applies To:	All Employees
Policy:	VPRA supports the military obligations of all employees and grants leaves for uniformed service in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Active Military Duty

Military Leave is granted to employees called to active duty to the United States Military, or employees in Virginia's Militia called up by the Governor to respond to natural or man-made disasters. Upon satisfactory completion of compulsory military service, employees are eligible for reemployment. In accordance with federal law, a veteran will be reinstated in a position, which is in the same classification as the one left, and they will receive full credit for the time spent in military services provided that:

1. A copy of the military orders is submitted to the employee's manager and Human Resources as soon as practicable;
2. Service is not for more than five (5) years unless the additional service time qualifies as an exception under USERRA;
3. The employee is released from service under honorable conditions; and
4. The employee requests reinstatement in a timely manner as follows:
 - a. Less than 31 days of service – the employee must return by the beginning of the first regularly-scheduled work period after the end of the last calendar day of duty, plus the time required to return home safely;
 - b. 31 to 180 days of service – the employee must submit a request for reemployment no later than 14 days after completion of the employee's service; and
 - c. 181 days or more of service – the employee must submit a request for reemployment no later than 90 days after completion of the employee's service.

Benefits

1. Insurance and Retirement – All VPRA-paid benefits continue in accordance with federal law or to comply with the plan documents.
2. Holidays – An employee on Military Leave shall not be entitled to receive holiday pay if a holiday falls during the leave period.
3. Military Leave – 15 workdays of military leave will be credited on October 1 to be used for drills, training, and/or active duty.
4. Paid Time Off (PTO)/Legacy Leave – Available PTO/Legacy leave may be used for any portion of –Military Leave.

Employees returning from Military Leave will earn PTO from the date of return. However, the amount of PTO earned will be based upon the time they spent with VPRA from the date of hire including military service time.

Employees will retain and accrue seniority during such leave. Military Leave is not considered a break in service.

Military Training

Military Leave with full pay is granted up to 15 workdays (120 hours) (60 hours for part-time or temporary) in a federal fiscal year to an employee who is a member of any reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces for military training, drills and/or active duty. Additional time off for training is without pay, or at the employee's discretion, may be charged to paid time off (PTO). When utilizing military leave, VPRA will pay the difference between the employee's gross military earnings, including allowances for housing and other stipends, and the employee's VPRA base pay as long as military pay is less than VPRA base pay. Normal insurance benefits will continue during the military leave for training. The employee is expected to return to work the first working day following the termination of the leave period.

Career Development and Professional Memberships

Purpose: To provide employees with professional development opportunities that increase their skills and enhance their contributions to VPRA

Applies To: Regular, Full-time Employees

Policy: The work performance of an employee is vital to the success of VPRA. While the career of each employee is ultimately the employee's own, VPRA is committed to investing in its employees by providing professional development.

Professional development can be obtained through attendance at seminars, educational courses, and degree programs that (once acquired) will assist the employee in performing essential job functions and increase the employee's contribution to VPRA.

Other professional development expenses that are reimbursable under this policy are membership fees to professional organizations, registration fees for meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars, fees and subscriptions for scholarly journals, books, and computer-based resources.

Employees receiving a less than satisfactory performance evaluation or with an active disciplinary action will not be eligible for career development benefits for one (1) year after the offense. An exception may be granted for employees requesting to register for training as part of their Performance Improvement Plan. Managers will be responsible for the verification of employees' eligibility.

Corporate, Professional, and Civic Memberships

The amount of reimbursement for corporate, professional, and civic memberships is based on business needs, budget, and manager discretion.

Corporate

Industry-related organizations where the employee represents VPRA. An example includes the Chamber of Commerce and Association of American Railroads.

Professional

Job-related organizations where the membership is in the employee's name. Some examples include the Society of Human Resource Management, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Civic

Organizations whose primary purpose is working for the betterment of local communities and their citizens. Some examples include Lions, Jaycees, and Kiwanis. These are non-taxable costs.

Professional licenses and certifications

VPRA will fully reimburse employees for costs of obtaining professional licenses/certifications in fields directly related to their job responsibilities (e.g., registered professional engineers, architects, human resources, and administrative assistants).

Educational Courses and Degree Programs

Employees are eligible for 80% reimbursement for education costs from an accredited college or university that are approved by VPRA. It is the employees' responsibility to seek out the courses and other training media that will enhance their career development and are in line with VPRA's mission.

Employees should discuss their planned coursework with their manager prior to seeking approval. To apply for education assistance the employee should submit a "Tuition and Professional Development Reimbursement Request Form" to their immediate manager providing detailed information regarding the course for which they would like to receive reimbursement. The immediate manager will work with their management team, Human Resources, and the Executive Director to determine if the course is eligible for reimbursement based on job-relatedness, employee performance, and availability of funds. It is advised that the student wait to enroll until this decision has been finalized. The employee will be notified as to the decision in writing within ten business days. While all eligible expenses will be considered up to the maximums listed below, the total amount approved will be determined as a percentage of the total eligible costs according to departmental budgets.

Request for course approval should be submitted at least three (3) weeks before the course registration date, so all necessary approvals may be secured before the beginning of the course.

Employees' requests for educational benefits will be reimbursed for any grade of a "B-" or better. Any grade less than a "B-" is not eligible for reimbursement.

Maximum reimbursement per employee, including books and fees, will be up to \$5,250 annually. Employees will have to pay taxes on any reimbursements for exam and certification fees and any expenses involved in taking exams.

Employees eligible for reimbursement from any outside sources, such as the Veterans Administration or scholarships, must apply for these benefits and apply the benefits received to the cost of their education. VPRA will consider for reimbursement the difference between benefits received from outside sources and the cost of tuition, but VPRA's portion may not make the total exceed the reimbursable cost.

Payback Agreement

In recognition of the investment made by VPRA on the employee's behalf, each employee who requests education assistance for coursework towards a degree, certificate, or professional certification or license will be required to sign a payback agreement. Should the employee voluntarily terminate or be terminated for cause within one year of receiving tuition reimbursement then the

employee must repay VPRA according to the chart below. The time impact resets with each subsequent course taken and reimbursed. The repayment agreement should in no way be construed as an employment contract for the duration of the payback eligible period. VPRA reserves the right to deduct any owed monies from the employee's paycheck if necessary.

Terminate employment within	Employee owes VPRA
0-6 months of reimbursement	100% of the amount paid
6-12 months of reimbursement	50% of the amount paid

Requests for reimbursement must be submitted to Human Resources no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the course. Failure to provide a timely request may result in denial of reimbursement.

Time devoted to any course of study that takes place outside of normal working hours shall not be considered as time worked for VPRA.

Responsibilities

Each employee receiving reimbursements under this policy shall be responsible to:

1. Own their own learning and career development;
2. Discuss current and future learning needs and aspirations with manager.
3. Request opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, and abilities;
4. Follow the process for requesting educational assistance in a timely manner;
5. Perform job at a level that meets the expectation of manager and VPRA;
6. Successfully complete the coursework while putting forth the employee's best effort;
7. Be open to new learning opportunities; and
8. Apply new skills and share your knowledge with your peers.

Each manager is responsible to:

1. Create an environment that is conducive to learning and encourage employees to seek professional and educational development opportunities;
2. Help employees understand and follow the Educational Assistance policy;
3. Assist employees in assessing their proficiency in the required knowledge, skills, and abilities for their positions;
4. Provide honest and professional feedback regarding the employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities;
5. Present employees with opportunities to expand their skills fairly and within the guidelines of our Equal Opportunity Policy; and
6. Provide flexible work schedules in support of learning opportunities while ensuring business needs are fully met.

Human Resources is responsible to:

1. Promote a learning environment to assist VPRA in meeting its overall mission, goals, and objectives;
2. Help managers assess employee strengths and opportunities for development;

3. Provide employees and managers with policy guidance and interpretation;
4. Maintain relationships with all VPRA departments and managers to support organizational objectives;
5. Identify and coordinate external training resources; and
6. Develop, maintain, and administer the Educational Assistance policy, procedures, and related forms.

Volunteer Leave Time

Purpose:	To support activities that help strengthen and serve communities in which we live and work
Applies To:	Regular, Full-time Employees
Policy:	VPRA recognizes the importance of employees actively serving in local communities and encourages employees to take part in volunteering activities with recognized charities and community organizations. To enable volunteer efforts, employees are provided with sixteen (16) hours per calendar year to serve as volunteers in community programs that are of personal interest.

Guidelines for Volunteering

To be considered a volunteer activity, a person must perform or give their free will services. A person who renders aid, performs service, or assumes an obligation voluntarily must do so without monetary compensation from the service organization.

Employees must:

- Have Solid Performance or above;
- Request and receive manager approval for volunteer time in advance; and
- Neither be compensated monetarily by the service organization nor compelled for other reasons to complete the service.

Volunteer time should not conflict with the peak work schedule and other work-related responsibilities, create the need for overtime or cause conflicts with other employees' schedules. Volunteering during working hours is at management's discretion and subject to the conditions of the business. Employees can apply for time off to volunteer using VPRA's time and attendance system.

Allowable and Excluded Activities

Volunteer activities include but are not limited to private involvement in coaching youth sports teams, serving on fire and rescue squads, working with community or church groups, and volunteering at local schools and adult and child daycare centers.

Company-sponsored voluntary time may not be used for organizations that discriminate based on creed, race (or traits historically associated with the race, including hair texture, hair type, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists), sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, veteran status, genetics, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, or disability.

Eligible Organizations

Volunteer service may be provided at a public or private nonprofit organization representing a community or a significant segment of a community and is

engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs.

Use of Time

Volunteer hours may be taken in one-hour increments. The time is refreshed on January 10 each year, and any unused time will not be carried over to the following year. There will be no payment for unused volunteer leave upon employees' separation from service.

Approval Process

Employees should make a reasonable effort to schedule the leave to minimize disruption to the operations of VPRA. Leave may be requested through the time and attendance system. Management is responsible for the approval of the leave.

Employee Benefits

Purpose: To provide a high-level overview of important employee benefits and eligibility

Applies To: Regular, Full-time Employees

Policy: VPRA recognizes the value of benefits to employees and their families. The company supports employees by offering a comprehensive and competitive benefits program. For more information regarding benefit programs, please refer to the Summary Plan Descriptions (SPDs), which are found on the Department of Human Resource Management's (DHRM) internet or contact VPRA's HR Department. To the extent the information provided here conflicts with the SPD or full plan document, the full plan document will control.

Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance

Full-time employees scheduled to work 32 hours or more per week are eligible for health insurance on the first of the month following their date of hire. Health insurance options also include options for a Flexible Spending Account (FSA).

Group and Optional Life Insurance

VPRA provides life insurance for full-time employees scheduled to work a minimum of 32 hours per week. Employees are eligible for this benefit on the first of the month following their date of hire. The life benefit is equal to two times an employee's annualized base rate. The cost of this coverage is paid for in full by VPRA.

Employees may also elect optional life insurance to cover themselves, spouses, or dependent children. The cost of this optional life insurance coverage is paid for by the employee.

Sickness and Disability Program

Short-term and long-term disability is offered to full-time employees scheduled to work a minimum of 32 hours per week. Employees are eligible for work-related disability coverage and coverage under the Virginia Sickness & Disability Program (VSDP) and Long-Term Care Plan from the first day of employment. Eligibility periods for non-work-related disability coverage and certain income replacement levels vary. There is a one-year waiting period from your hire date for non-work-related disability coverage.

Additional information on short- and long-term disability can be found on the VSDP website.

Disability benefits may run concurrently with FMLA leave and/or any other leave where permitted by state and federal law.

Retirement Plan

VPRA recognizes the importance of saving for retirement and offers eligible employees 401 (a) and 457 plans.

Eligibility, vesting, and all other matters relating to these plans are explained in the SPD that can be obtained from HR.

Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation is a "no-fault" system that provides compensation for medical expenses and wage losses to employees who are injured or who become ill because of employment.

VPRA pays the entire cost of workers' compensation insurance. The insurance provides coverage for related medical and rehabilitation expenses and a portion of lost wages to employees who sustain an injury on the job.

VPRA abides by all applicable state workers' compensation laws and regulations.

Workers' compensation benefits (paid or unpaid) will run concurrently with FMLA leave, if applicable, where permitted by state and federal law. In addition, employees will not be paid PTO leave for approved absences covered by the company's workers' compensation program, except to supplement the workers' compensation benefits such as when the plan only covers a portion of the employees' salary as allowed by state law.

Employee Assistance Program

The employee assistance program (EAP) is a resource designed to provide highly confidential and experienced help for employees in dealing with issues that affect their lives and the quality of their job performance. VPRA wants employees to be able to maintain a healthy balance of work and family that allows them to enjoy life. The EAP is a confidential counseling and referral service that can help employees successfully deal with life's challenges.

For questions or additional information about this program, employees may contact the HR department.

Statement of ERISA Rights

Purpose: To comply with federal law regarding ERISA rights

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: As a participant in VPRA's Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) qualifying benefit plans, you are entitled to examine the plan documents and the annual report and plan description filed with the U.S. Department of Labor. This inspection may be made during regular business hours; make arrangements with Human Resources.

Continuation of Benefits (COBRA)

Purpose: To notify employees of COBRA rights

Applies To: Regular, Full-Time Employees

Policy: The right to COBRA continuation coverage was created by federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA). COBRA continuation coverage can become available to the employee or other members of the employee's family who are covered under the Medical Plan, the Dental Plan, and/or the Medical FSA when they would otherwise lose such group health plan coverage.

VPRA employees become eligible for COBRA when one of the following qualifying events happens:

For Employees

- Voluntary or involuntary termination of employment for reasons other than gross misconduct
- Reduction in numbers of hours worked

For Spouses

- Loss of coverage by the employee because of one of the qualifying events listed above
- Covered employee becomes eligible for Medicare
- Divorce or legal separation of the covered employee
- Death of the covered employee

For Dependent Children

- Loss of coverage because of any of the qualifying events listed for spouses
- Loss of status as a dependent child under the plan rules

Smoking

Purpose: To establish basic guidelines relating to smoking throughout VPRA facilities

Applies To: All Employees and Contractors

Policy: VPRA maintains a smoke- and tobacco-free environment. No smoking or other use of tobacco products (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, pipes, cigars, snuff, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, or chewing tobacco) is permitted in any part of buildings, structures, and vehicles owned, leased, or rented by VPRA. This also includes covered walkways, temporary enclosed structures, trailers, and tents as well as structures placed on VPRA-owned property by contractors or vendors.

Smoking is permitted outdoors on VPRA grounds, sidewalks, and other similar open pedestrian ways, provided smokers are at least 25 feet from an air intake, entrance, or exit of any facility.

Where ash urns are furnished, they shall be placed at outside locations (25 feet or more from entry/exit ways) to aid smokers in disposing of smoking materials

It is the responsibility of all employees to observe the smoking policy. It is the responsibility of each manager to enforce the provisions of this policy in his/her area of accountability. Those who smoke outside of buildings are expected to be considerate and courteous of other individuals. Smoking locations should not impede traffic flow in or out of buildings and should be in a location where smoke cannot drift into buildings. Additionally, smokers are asked to leave the smoking locations free of cigarette butts and other trash materials. All employees and visitors share the responsibility of keeping the work locations clean, attractive, and litter-free.

Being permitted to use tobacco products during breaks is a privilege, as long as such use does not interfere with the employee's work, fitness for duty, or professional appearance.

Drug, Alcohol, and Substance Abuse

Purpose: To provide a drug-free workplace to protect the health and safety of employees and to ensure our customers receive efficient service by establishing and maintaining a work environment free from the adverse effects of alcohol and other drugs

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Employees are expected to be in a suitable mental and physical condition while at work, allowing employees to perform their jobs effectively and safely. The manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled (including marijuana) or illegal substance or alcohol is prohibited during working hours, on VPRA property, or while performing services for VPRA. Employees who are impaired in the workplace by the use of alcohol or drugs (including marijuana) are in violation of this policy. Employees are also prohibited from consuming alcohol or drugs (including marijuana) during breaks and lunch periods on or off VPRA premises, except for the use of prescription drugs. The sole exception to this policy will be VPRA-sponsored activities, which have the approval of the Executive Director.

To ensure compliance with this policy, substance abuse screening may be conducted in the following situations:

- Pre-employment screening as required by VPRA for all prospective employees who receive a conditional offer of employment;
- "For cause" screening upon reasonable suspicion that the employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs that could affect or have adversely affected the employee's job performance; and
- Random screening as authorized or required by federal or state law.

Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment. Employees who test positive will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Notwithstanding any provision herein, this policy will be enforced at all times in accordance with applicable state and local law.

Under the following circumstances an employee may be subject to immediate termination:

- When an employee refuses to comply with testing requirements or procedures; refusal is considered a failure to obey a direct order (insubordination);
- When an adulterant is found in a sample, it is considered "refusal to be tested";
- When an employee is found in possession of illegal drugs or alcohol or when suspected illegal drugs or alcohol are found in an area controlled or used

exclusively by the employee, such as the employee's office, VPRA vehicle, or personal vehicle, which is on VPRA property or used for business travel;

- Failure to enter into and complete required rehabilitation treatment;
- When an employee, as the result of the use of alcohol or drugs, presents a clear and obvious hazard to themselves or others; and
- Failure to notify VPRA of the conviction of a drug/alcohol-related crime within three (3) calendar days after the conviction.

VPRA recognizes alcoholism and other substance dependencies as a disease or illness, which should be treated. Employees are encouraged to seek help for alcohol and/or drug problems.

VPRA may assist employees found to have used alcohol and drugs by referring them to an appropriate substance abuse assistance program. Employees may be required to complete an appropriate substance abuse assistance program and/or undergo additional testing as a condition of continued employment. If, after completing the rehabilitation process, an employee fails to remain alcohol and drug-free in the workplace, the employee will be subject to further discipline, likely termination.

Observed use of drugs/alcohol or reasonable suspicion is sufficient justification to be reported by employees to Management or Human Resources.

The results of all testing will be kept independently of each individual's personnel record. Disclosure regarding the results will be made only to those management personnel who require such information, when consulting legal counsel in actions, or when such information is relevant to its defense in civil or administrative matters. Employees understand and agree that such disclosure may be made by VPRA.

Safety

Purpose: To establish safety expectations and guidelines

Applies To: All Employees and Contractors

Policy: Protecting the safety of our employees and visitors is the most important aspect of running our business.

All employees have the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to a safe work environment by using commonsense rules and safe practices and by notifying management when any health or safety issues are present. All employees are encouraged to partner with management to ensure maximum safety for all.

In the event of an emergency, notify the appropriate emergency personnel by dialing 911 to activate the medical emergency services.

Any workplace injury, accident, or illness must be reported to the employee's manager as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident.

If an employee is injured or witnesses an injury at work, the employee must report it immediately to the nearest available Manager and/or Human Resources. Employees should render any assistance requested by that manager. When any accident, injury, or illness occurs while an employee is at work, regardless of the nature or severity, the employee must complete an injury reporting form and return it to Human Resources as soon as possible. Reporting should not be allowed to delay necessary medical attention. Once the accident is reported, follow-up will be handled by Human Resources or the designated Safety Officer, including a determination as to whether the injured employee may return to work.

Questions asked by law enforcement or fire officials making an investigative report should be answered giving only factual information and avoiding speculation.

In addition to compliance with safety measures imposed by federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and state law, VPRA has an independent interest in making its facilities a safe and healthy place to work. VPRA recognizes that employees may be in a position to notice dangerous conditions and practices and therefore encourages employees to report such conditions, as well as non- functioning or hazardous equipment, to a manager immediately. Appropriate remedial measures will be taken when possible and appropriate. Employees will not be retaliated or discriminated against for reporting of accidents, injuries, or illnesses, filing of safety-related complaints, or requesting to see injury and illness logs.

Workers' Compensation

Purpose: To comply with workers' compensation laws

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: All employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance, which compensates an employee for lost time, medical expenses, and loss of life or dismemberment from an injury arising out of or in the course of work. Employees must immediately report any accident or injury to their manager and Human Resources so that the necessary paperwork may be completed.

If an injury occurs, the manager is responsible for completing the Accident Report outlined in the Safety policy.

It is the employee's responsibility to cooperate fully with the investigation of any reported accident. Any employee who does not cooperate or who leaves the scene of an accident may be subject to disciplinary action.

The employee must return to work the first working day the employee is released by the attending physician. A written release form by the attending physician will be required. An employee who does not report to work on the first working day the employee is released by the attending physician will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

Violence Prevention

Purpose: To maintain a safe work environment, free from violence

Applies To: All Employees and Contractors

Policy: VPRA is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. VPRA has adopted guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of or actual violence that may occur onsite or offsite.

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a non-threatening, non-abusive manner at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, horseplay, or other conduct that may be dangerous to themselves and/or others. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, customer, visitor, vendor, or business associate will not be tolerated. VPRA resources may not be used to threaten, stalk, or harass anyone at or outside the workplace.

Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of actual violence and suspicious individuals or activities, or violations of any policies that are designed to provide a comfortable workplace environment should be reported as soon as possible to a manager or Human Resources.

“Violence” includes physically harming another, shoving, pushing, harassing, intimidating, coercing, brandishing weapons, and threatening, talking about, or engaging in those activities. It is the intent of this policy to ensure that no one associated with VPRA ever feels threatened by any employee’s actions or conduct.

“Threats or acts of violence” include conduct against persons or property that is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to alter the employment conditions at the worksite, or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or more VPRA employees or users of VPRA facilities.

VPRA specifically prohibits the possession of weapons by any employee while on VPRA property. Employees are also prohibited from possessing a weapon while performing VPRA business off the premises.

Weapons include guns, knives, explosives, and other items with the potential to inflict harm. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken against any employee who violates this policy.

Employees share the responsibility of identifying and alleviating threatening or violent behaviors. Any employee who is subjected to or threatened with violence, or who is aware of another individual who has been subjected to or threatened with violence, should immediately report this information to a manager or Human Resources.

Threats will be investigated, and appropriate remedial or disciplinary action will be taken.

If an employee should be terminated for violence in the workplace, they will be prohibited from entering all VPRA’s facilities for any reason.

Accidents Involving VPRA Vehicles

Purpose: To ensure proper handling of accidents involving VPRA vehicles

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Licensed Automobile Drivers' Responsibilities

Whenever a VPRA (owned, leased, or rented) automobile is involved in an accident, the driver must:

- Call the local police department to investigate the accident;
- Follow the instructions carried in the glove compartment of each licensed vehicle; and
- Notify the manager immediately.

Reporting immediately means that accidents with injuries shall be reported within four (4) hours. Accidents without injuries shall be reported within twenty-four (24) hours.

Any driver who does not report an accident will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Any driver who does not complete these procedures, cooperate fully with the authorities investigating the accident, or who leaves the scene of an accident will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Housekeeping

Purpose: To ensure work areas are neat and orderly for employees' health and safety

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Neatness and good housekeeping are signs of efficiency. Employees are expected to keep their work area neat and orderly at all times as a required safety precaution.

Easily accessible trash receptacles and recycling containers are located throughout VPRA offices. All litter and recyclable materials are to be placed in the appropriate receptacles and containers. Always be aware of good health and safety standards, including fire and loss prevention.

Anything that needs repairing or replacing should be reported immediately.

Severe Weather Conditions and Unusual Circumstances

- Purpose:** To establish guidelines for severe weather conditions or unusual circumstances which create a hazard for employees
- Applies To:** All Employees
- Policy:** Employees should make every reasonable effort to report to work as scheduled. However, they should not take unnecessary risks when weather or natural disaster conditions make it hazardous to report to work.

When employees reasonably determine they are unable to report to work or need to report late due to inclement weather or unusual circumstances:

- The employee should notify their manager of the situation before the beginning of the work shift or as soon as possible; and
- At management's discretion, and if business needs allow, employees may be permitted to make alternative work arrangements, such as working from home or reporting to another work location.

An employee who cannot report to work may use any accrued time off or take the day off without pay.

Emergency Closings / Early Dismissals

The decision to close VPRA offices or mandate remote work is made by the Executive Director or their designee. When a decision to close for a whole or partial day is made, an email will be sent to all employees, and information will be posted on VPRA's intranet site. Employees may also contact their manager for information.

When VPRA office(s) are closed, employees may be paid their standard hours for these periods.

Certain personnel may be required to work during authorized closings to meet the organization's business needs. Check with your manager to determine if you are "designated" to work during authorized closings.

Life-Threatening Illnesses

Purpose: To establish guidelines for employees with life-threatening illnesses and their manager(s); to ensure reasonable precautions are taken for the safety of the employee and others

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA recognizes employees with a life-threatening illness, including but not limited to, cancer, heart disease, and AIDS, may wish to continue to engage in as many of their normal pursuits as their condition allows, including work. These employees must be able to meet acceptable performance standards. Performing normal job functions must not exacerbate their condition. Medical evidence must indicate that their condition is not a threat to other workers.

Managers need to be sensitive to the employee's condition and ensure that the employee is treated consistently with other employees. VPRA seeks to provide a safe work environment for all employees. Therefore, precautions should be taken to ensure that any employee's condition does not present a health and/or safety threat to other employees.

When dealing with situations involving employees with life-threatening illnesses, managers should:

- Remember that an employee's health condition is personal and confidential, and take reasonable precautions to protect information regarding an employee's health condition;
- Contact Human Resources if they believe that they or other employees need information about terminal illness, a specific life-threatening illness, possible contagion, or if they need further guidance in managing a situation that involves an employee with a life-threatening illness;
- Contact Human Resources to determine if a statement should be obtained from the employee's attending physician that continued presence at work will pose no threat to the employee, co-workers, or customers;
- Make reasonable accommodations for employees with a life-threatening illness provided that any accommodations made do not require significant difficulty or expenses;
- Make a reasonable attempt to transfer employees with a life-threatening illness who request a transfer and are experiencing undue emotional stress;
- Be sensitive and responsive to co-workers' concerns;
- Not give special consideration beyond normal transfer requests for employees who feel threatened by a co-worker's life-threatening illness; and
- Be sensitive to the fact that continued employment for an employee with a life-threatening illness may sometimes be therapeutically important in the remission or recovery process or may help to prolong that employee's life.

Pandemic(s)

Purpose: To provide additional guidelines to the “Public Health Emergency Policy” when a Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat condition has been declared by the State Health Commissioner and or the Governor of Virginia

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Notification

All employees are required to notify Human Resources and notify their manager in the following circumstances:

- Return from travel (personal or work-related) to/from:
 - specific areas as defined by the CDC, posted here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travelprecautions.html>, and
 - a cruise of any kind;
- Potential Direct Exposure as defined by the CDC risk assessment as “Close Contact” here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/riskassessment.html>

In these circumstances, a mandatory 14-day post-exposure “Waiting Period” will be invoked, unless otherwise expanded or reduced by updated CDC guidelines. During this Waiting Period, telework may be considered on a case-by-case basis. If telework is not available, then Public Health Emergency Leave may be used.

Related Policies

- Public Health Emergency Leave – used during waiting period or period of mandated quarantine
- Paid Time Off – used during illness or after Public Health Emergency Leave is exhausted
- Short Term Disability – available during period of illness, to be determined by insurance carrier, Cigna
- Family and Medical Leave – may be available during Waiting Period, medical quarantine, and illness
- COVID Vaccination - guidelines for the COVID vaccination requirements

Public Health Emergency Leave

- Purpose:** To permit eligible employees to attend to the medical needs of themselves and immediate family members by providing up to 40 hours of paid leave per leave year when Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat conditions have been declared by the State Health Commissioner and Governor
- Applies To:** All Employees
- Policy:** Use of this policy is intended for illnesses directly related to the declared communicable disease threat.

Procedures During Exceptional Circumstances

Upon the State Health Commissioner's determination of the existence of Exceptional Circumstances relating to one or more persons within the Commonwealth who are known to have been exposed to or infected with a Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat, but prior to any formal declaration or emergency office closing decision, VPRA will apply the following procedures:

- VPRA will remain open for business and all VPRA employees will be expected to report to work as usual;
- All employees will be designated as essential or non-essential and reminded of their performance expectations during Exceptional Circumstances and during a declaration of Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat;
- VPRA will communicate in a timely manner the status of public health concerns, VPRA Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) requirements, and the agency's efforts to reduce the spread of, or exposure to, infection;
- All Designated Employees will be compensated according to established compensation policies and overtime regulations;
- The Executive Director or designee(s) will determine if telecommuting work agreements will be executed for employees to work at alternative locations to reduce the risk of exposure; VPRA will consider business needs to ensure that services to the public are not disrupted;
- VPRA may expand the use of alternate work schedules to reduce employee contact; and
- VPRA may temporarily reassign employees to minimize critical staffing deficiencies.

Employees who become ill prior to a formal declaration of Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat are subject to existing VPRA leave policies. Managers should encourage these employees to use existing leave to attend to their medical needs.

Workplace Safety and Hygiene

To reduce the spread of communicable diseases in the workplace the following measures should be followed:

- Precautionary measures should be applied to the workplace and home, including the provision of community health or online resources that offer information and assistance on communicable disease prevention, respiratory manners, signs and symptoms of the disease, and when to seek medical attention;
- Employees are encouraged to take proactive steps to protect themselves and their families; and
- Management should make sure landlords, contractors, and cleaning staff ensure that VPRA offices and facilities are cleaned using techniques and cleaning agents that reduce the spread of infection.

Paid Public Health Emergency Leave

In order to qualify for 40 hours of paid Public Health Emergency Leave, an employee must submit the required agency leave request form to manager. The request should be submitted in a timely manner but must be submitted no later than the employee's return to work. All employees, including non-exempt employees, are eligible for up to 40 hours of paid Public Health Emergency Leave.

To qualify for paid Public Health Emergency Leave:

- The employee's primary care provider, a Public Health Official, or an Acceptable Medical Authority may be required to confirm the diagnosis of a communicable disease of public threat that requires isolation and/or medical attention for a specified period of time;
- The employee's primary care provider, a Public Health Official, or an Acceptable Medical Authority may be required to confirm the employee's exposure to a communicable disease of public threat and recommend removal from the workplace for a specified period of time; or
- The employee's primary care provider, a Public Health Official, or an Acceptable Medical Authority may be required to confirm that an eligible member of an employee's immediate family is diagnosed with a Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat;

Employees are responsible for providing written confirmation of the diagnosis and/or isolation requirements according to clinical recommendations published by the Virginia Department of Health; Recovering employees whose illness and/or isolation extends beyond 80 hours must use existing leave and/or disability policies to cover the remainder of their absences.

Illness in the Workplace

Upon declaration of a Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat, VPRA will direct ill employees to leave the workplace and attend to their medical needs. Time away from the job site to comply with this directive shall be applied toward the 40 hours of pre-authorized Public Health Emergency Leave.

An employee's refusal to leave the workplace under these circumstances may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Emergency Office Closings

If the Public Health Threat requires the closing of VPRA office(s), employees will be compensated.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

1. Acceptable Medical Authority - Doctors of Medicine and Surgery, Hospital Interns and Residents, Physician Assistants, and Nurse Practitioners licensed to practice in Virginia by the State Boards of Medicine or Nursing.
2. Affected Area - Any part or whole of the Commonwealth, which has been identified as where persons reside or may be located, who are known to have been exposed to or infected with or who is reasonably suspected to have been exposed to or infected with a Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat.
3. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) - An emergency response plan that addresses the continuity of an agency's operations and the security of their customers and employees in the event of a natural or man-made disaster or emergency, including terrorist attacks. Executive Order 7 (2002) directed all executive branch agencies to prepare and maintain Continuity of Operations Plans.
4. Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat - An illness of public health significance, as determined by the State Health Commissioner in accordance with regulations of the Board of Health, caused by a specific or suspected infectious agent that may be reasonably expected or is known to be readily transmitted directly or indirectly from one individual to another and has been found to create a risk of death or significant injury or impairment as described in Section 32.1-48.06 of the Code of Virginia.
5. Designated Employees - Designated employees are exempt and non-exempt employees who are required to work during an authorized closing because their positions have been designated by the agency as essential to agency operations during emergencies. Designated employees may be required to work during times they are not regularly scheduled to work. VPRA may designate different employees as essential for different situations.
6. Exceptional Circumstances - When one or more persons within the Commonwealth are known or are reasonably expected to have been exposed to or infected with a communicable Disease of Public Health Threat as described in Section 32.148.05 of the Code of Virginia.
7. Immediate Family Member - Immediate family includes parents, stepparents, or persons who stood in place of the parent and performed parental duties and responsibilities; a spouse as defined by laws of the Commonwealth;

children, including stepchildren, foster children, and legal wards; siblings, including step-siblings, residing within an Affected Area.

8. Public Health Official - Public Health physicians under the supervision and management of the State Health Commissioner who is licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth and have expertise in public health duties, epidemiology, sanitary science, and/or environmental health, including Public Health physicians at all clinical sites administered by local health departments.

Vaccination Policy

Purpose: To provide guidance on VPRA vaccination and mask directives during the coronavirus pandemic

Applies To: All Employees and Contractors

Policy: These directives, including steps and expectations at VPRA, are to ensure compliance initiated by state leadership, specifically Executive Directive Number 2 (2022). This replaces previous guidance under the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Executive Directive 18.

Effective January 15, 2022, VPRA employees and contractors are no longer required to disclose their vaccination status against COVID-19. To the extent VPRA has collected documentation identifying an individual's COVID-19 vaccination status under prior directives, VPRA will not share such documentation with any third party.

Mask Recommendations

Unvaccinated visitors to VPRA offices are encouraged to wear a mask while inside VPRA buildings. Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines still recommend social distancing and wearing masks that completely cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of the face without gaps.

VPRA promotes a respectful work environment. Employees that are unvaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask for their own protection and well-being. Also, employees should wear masks if a co-worker requests the precaution. Managers and supervisors should review the updated policy with new hires to ensure understanding.

Hours of Work

Purpose: To establish guidelines for work schedules

Applies To: Regular, Full-time Employees

Policy: VPRA is committed to helping employees sustain a productive work environment by offering flexible work schedules to enable employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Regular hours of work will consist of at least a 40-hour per week schedule, Monday through Friday, with normal operating hours between 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

All VPRA employees will be considered for flexible and compressed work schedules on a case-by-case basis by each manager. Eligibility considerations will include the type of role and the evaluation of productivity and quality of work. Flexible work and compressed work schedules are not appropriate for all employees or positions and are not a universal employee benefit.

Job Posting

Purpose: To ensure all job postings are handled in a consistent manner that provides internal and external job seekers the awareness of open positions for which they are eligible

Applies To: Internal and External Job Seekers

Policy: VPRA is committed to providing employees the opportunity for development and career advancement through job application, and external job seekers an opportunity to submit their applications for open positions that are posted externally.

Job opportunities approved for posting will remain available for a minimum of five (5) business days unless the response volume warrants limiting the posting period. Hiring leaders and recruiters are accountable to ensure that postings remain open for a reasonable length of time to allow for broad visibility by job seekers and sufficient to attract an ample pool of diverse applicants.

Eligibility Requirements for Internal Transfers/Promotions

Employees seeking a new position with less than one (1) year in their current position may be considered under special circumstances with the approval of their manager, Chief Executive, and Human Resources.

External Job Seekers

1. All job openings which are approved for external posting may be accessed through the Virginia Jobs page.
2. External job seekers interested in an advertised position must submit their application electronically through the careers site. Unsolicited resumes will not be accepted.
3. Successfully submitting an application does not imply the job seeker is qualified as a candidate for the position. Once determined the applicant has met the required minimum qualifications, the applicant may then become eligible to progress further in the process.
4. A successfully submitted application does not guarantee an interview or selection for the position and should not be construed as a contract of employment.
5. If selected, employment with VPRA may be contingent upon successful completion of a pre-employment drug screening and background check.

Administrative Provisions

Some open positions may be exempt from job posting if approved by Human Resources. Approved exceptions to job postings will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Examples, where an exception may be permitted, are as follows:

1. Open positions at the Executive or Director level;
2. Open positions resulting from an organizational restructure or reclassification;

3. Positions that occur due to normal career progression (successful performance in a role that dictates the role and responsibility level be elevated without backfilling the current position); or
4. Employees, when qualified, returning from approved Family and Medical Leave of 12 weeks or less or from military leave (who may receive first consideration to ensure adherence to federal/state regulations).

The hiring leader must submit a business case scenario detailing the need for an exception to Human Resources for review and approval.

Reduction in Force

Purpose: To allow for orderly and fair means of reducing the workforce

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: If economic or operational factors make a reduction in the workforce necessary, decisions will be based on the organizational need for positions. The Executive Leadership Team will identify positions to be eliminated, and where essential, skill, knowledge, ability, and performance will also be considered.

Lactation Accommodation

Purpose: To provide resources for lactating employees and comply with federal law

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA provides a supportive environment to enable breastfeeding employees to express breast milk during work hours for up to one year following the birth of a child. Accommodations under this policy include a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public which may be used by an employee to express breast milk. Discrimination and harassment of breastfeeding mothers in any form are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary actions and/or termination.

Attendance

Purpose: To ensure consistency regarding attendance

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Employees are expected to be at work and ready to go when their scheduled shift begins or resumes. If an employee is unable to be at work on time, or at all, the employee must notify the manager no later than 30 minutes before the start of the scheduled workday. If an employee's manager is not available, the employee should contact another member of management. If an employee is physically unable to contact VPRA, the employee should ask another person to make contact on the employee's behalf. Leaving a message with a co-worker or answering service is not considered proper notification. Excessive tardiness or absences are unacceptable job performance.

When an employee calls in absent, the employee should provide the employee's expected time or date of return. VPRA reserves the right to require proof of the need for absence if allowed by law. If an employee is absent for three consecutive days and has not provided proper notification, VPRA will assume that the employee has voluntarily quit the position and will proceed with the termination process.

If an employee becomes ill during a scheduled workday and feels the employee may need to leave before the end of the employee shift, the employee should notify the manager immediately. If an employee is unable to perform the employee's job at an acceptable level, the employee may be sent home until the employee is well enough to work.

Absences should be arranged as far in advance as possible. When an employee needs to be absent during the workday, the employee should attempt to schedule outside appointments or obligations so that the absence has the smallest impact possible on business operations.

Confidential Information

Purpose: To ensure VPRA information is handled confidentially

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: During the course of an employee's employment, the employee may receive, develop, otherwise acquire, have access to, or become acquainted with trade secrets or other confidential information related to the business of VPRA. All employees are required to safeguard confidential information and must not disclose any confidential information to any non-VPRA person, company, or other entity except as required by law or as authorized by a VPRA representative with authority to release information. Employees must not use any confidential information for their own purposes or for other purposes not related to conducting VPRA business. Employees are required to comply with all procedures and methods that VPRA may establish to maintain the confidentiality of confidential information, such as any procedures for storage of documents or protection of electronic data. Misuse or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information not otherwise available to persons or firms outside VPRA is cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Confidential information may come in various forms such as, without limitation, the following information:

- Business plans or proposals: Non-public plans, proposals, or strategies (whether pursued or not) to increase, reduce, or otherwise change VPRA's business operations or facilities
- Confidential financial information: Non-public forecasts, budgets, or production and cost data
- Trade secrets and inventions: Non-public information about technologies, strategies, methods, processes, inventions, developments, improvements, know-how, formulas, and discoveries (whether implemented or not)
- Personally Identifiable Information: Information that uniquely identifies individuals – generally name and additional information such as a Social Security number or medical information
- Business partner data: Non-public, sensitive information about joint venture businesses, vendors, customers, and other VPRA business partners, such as pricing or cost information or transaction terms
- Regulated information: Information that VPRA is required to keep confidential to satisfy regulatory requirements
- Legally privileged information: Confidential communications between VPRA attorneys and VPRA representatives that are made for purposes of providing legal advice

Questions about the confidentiality of particular information should be routed to a manager or executive leader. Questions in connection with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act shall be directed to the VPRA FOIA Officer.

Distribution or Sales

Purpose: To protect employees from outside distractions while they are working and provide for better productivity

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA and its employees may find unwanted solicitations disruptive. Accordingly, employees are not permitted to solicit other employees for any reason during working time or to distribute literature to fellow employees during working time in working areas. Working time includes all time during the day when employees are required and expected to be in their work areas or engaged in work-related duties. Solicitors or agents who are not employees of VPRA are not permitted to solicit employees or guests or to distribute literature on VPRA premises at any time unless they have obtained special permission to do so from Human Resources.

Conflict of Interest

Purpose: To provide guidance on handling conflicts of interest that may arise during an employee's performance of VPRA duties

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA employees must execute their official duties in accordance with the best interest of VPRA. A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interests (which include the interests of an employee's immediate family members) are in conflict with the best interest of VPRA. This situation can sometimes arise through no fault of the employee. However, VPRA employees must avoid even the appearance of impropriety in all matters when performing their duties. Conflicts of interest can arise in many different ways.

Without limitation, a conflict of interest can arise when an employee (i) has a personal interest in a VPRA contract or transaction, (ii) solicits or accepts a gift from a person or entity impacted by his/her performance of VPRA duties, (iii) uses confidential information gained during his/her VPRA employment for the benefit of himself/herself or someone else, or (iv) engages in outside employment with an entity doing business with, or whose interests are or could become adverse to, VPRA. However, within this policy, it is not possible to anticipate or enumerate all the ways a conflict of interest could arise.

If a conflict of interest has arisen or will arise (or an employee believes a conflict of interest has arisen or will arise) he/she must report the relevant facts to Human Resources and VPRA General Counsel as soon as practicable. Human Resources and VPRA General Counsel will advise the impacted employee(s) with respect to the appropriate actions to take, if any, and may solicit an advisory opinion from the Virginia Attorney General or the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council. Each circumstance will require detailed disclosure of facts by the employee so that Human Resources and VPRA General Counsel can help the employee manage the situation appropriately – for the benefit and protection of both the employee and VPRA.

Outside Employment

Purpose: To provide guidance on outside employment of VPRA employees

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Employees may engage in outside employment during non-working hours, provided doing so does not interfere with their job performance or constitute a conflict of interest. Prior to accepting outside employment, employees should notify their manager in writing. The notice must include the name of the organization, the title and nature of the position, the number of working hours per week, and the time of scheduled work hours. If the position constitutes a conflict of interest or interferes with the employee's job at any time, they may be required to limit or end their outside employment.

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

Purpose: To aid in the prevention and detection of fraud, waste, or abuse against the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority and the Commonwealth

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: This policy applies to any fraud, waste, abuse, or suspected fraud, waste, or abuse involving an employee, a consultant, vendor, contractor, outside company, or person doing business with VPRA or in any other relationship with VPRA.

Policy: VPRA does not tolerate any type of fraud, waste, or abuse. VPRA's policy is to promote consistent, legal, and ethical organizational behavior.

Fraud is the false representation of material fact made knowingly and with the intent to mislead.

Waste is the intentional or unintentional, thoughtless or careless expenditure, consumption, mismanagement, use, or squandering of Commonwealth resources to the detriment or potential detriment of the Commonwealth. Waste also includes incurring unnecessary costs due to inefficient or ineffective practices, systems, or controls.

Abuse is the excessive or improper use of VPRA resources, including policies, employees, or other assets in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use. Examples of abuse include intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, mistreatment, or misuse of Commonwealth resources.

State Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline

All citizens of the Commonwealth have the opportunity to report possible instances of fraud, waste, or abuse anonymously and without fear of retribution by using the State Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline. The hotline is reserved for reporting:

1. Illegal or fraudulent conduct;
2. Waste of funds;
3. Abuse of state property or resources;
4. Gross mismanagement; and/or
5. Gross neglect of duty.

The hotline's non-traceable, toll-free number (800-723-1615) protects the confidentiality of the caller, making the hotline completely anonymous.

Hotline investigations will be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the Office of the State Inspector General.

Responsibility to Report Suspected Fraud, and Abuse

VPRA employees are encouraged to report any instances of fraud, waste, or abuse to Management or the State Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline.

Managers are required to report suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or other dishonest conduct, including reports from employees or other individuals to Human Resources.

Retaliation and Confidentiality

VPRA will not tolerate any form of retaliation against individuals providing information concerning wrongdoing, fraud, waste, or abuse. However, disciplinary action may be taken if a report is made in bad faith.

The identity of an employee or other individual who reports a suspected act of fraud, theft, or abuse will be protected.

Information Technology Usage and Security

Purpose: To ensure System Administrators and users of VPRA technology understand VPRA usage and security practices and recognize and understand what to do if usage and security problems occur

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: All employees, including contractors, vendors, and anyone using or accessing VPRA information or information systems, must comply with this policy.

1. Release of VPRA information will be in accordance with this policy.
2. All information systems available through VPRA are the property of VPRA and must be used in compliance with this policy.
3. Users must make reasonable efforts to protect all agency-provided hardware and communications equipment and software programs from theft and physical damage.
4. Any personal information placed on VPRA information system resources becomes the property of VPRA.
5. Any attempt to circumvent this policy (e.g., disconnecting or tunneling a protocol through a firewall) is strictly prohibited.
6. Unauthorized use, destruction, modification, and/or distribution of VPRA information or information systems are prohibited.
7. VPRA data should only be stored on the network. Sensitive data should not be stored on mobile data storage media, including laptops or memory devices, unless there is a VPRA business necessity and that all data storage media containing sensitive data are physically and logically secured, such as using authentication and encryption. Sensitive data is defined as "any data of which the compromise with respect to confidentiality, integrity, and/or availability could adversely affect VPRA interests, the conduct of Authority programs, or the privacy to which individuals are entitled."
8. All users will report (via the most convenient method - email, phone call, in-person, etc.) any incidents or suspicious activity found on VPRA information systems to the IT Help Desk immediately upon detection.
9. Use of any VPRA information systems or dissemination of any information in a manner bringing disrepute, damage, or ill will against VPRA is not authorized.
10. All equipment capable of authentication will require a password to log on to the individual system and/or VPRA network. Mobile devices issued by VPRA also require a password.
11. Systems should be locked or logged off whenever an employee leaves the employee's workstation during business hours. There is an auto-lock policy enabled but users are responsible for locking their desktops when leaving them unattended. At the end of the day, users must log off but leave the computer turned on. Users must not write/post passwords on or around their personal computers.

12. Users will not attach any computer equipment to VPRA computers or networks without the prior written approval of the Information Security Manager, IT Manager, or IT Director. IT will not provide technical support for non-business-related computer equipment or software.
13. Users may not modify, alter, or upgrade any hardware or software programs provided by VPRA without the written consent of the Systems Administrator or the Information Security Officer.
14. VPRA practices the philosophy of "least privileges" for granting access whereby users have access to the minimum privileges (systems and data) required to perform their job functions.
15. VPRA information systems and information will be subject to monitoring at all times, including personal email if accessed via VPRA assets. Use of VPRA information systems constitutes acceptance of this monitoring policy. The IT department utilizes various intrusion detection software tools for network and application monitoring. VPRA Information Systems may be monitored for technical purposes by the Systems Administrator as necessary. Monitoring for investigation of specific (individual) potential abuse must be authorized by the Executive Director or a member of the Executive Leadership team.
16. All new hires will sign an acknowledgment to be retained in their personnel file to acknowledge understanding and acceptance of this policy prior to use of VPRA technology assets and information systems. Thereafter, an electronic acknowledgment of this policy will be required annually by June 30.
17. Department heads and IT will annually (by June 30) review access authorization listings to determine whether they remain appropriate, and adjust authorizations as deemed necessary.
18. It is the responsibility of each employee to use reasonable care in handling and protecting computer equipment and accessories provided by VPRA. Employees should report to the Systems Administrator any equipment that is lost, stolen, or damaged. Employees may be held personally responsible for the replacement of equipment and accessories if it is determined that lost, stolen, or damaged equipment as a result of personal gross negligence. Damaged and non-functioning equipment must be returned to VPRA prior to the replacement being issued.

Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Specific, documented approval is required in the event a manager or user wants to take action that would be deemed contrary to this policy. Violators of this policy are subject to disciplinary action including termination and/or civil and criminal legal action.

Social Media

Purpose: To ensure social media is used in a responsible manner

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA recognizes the importance of social media for its employees. However, use of social media by employees may become a problem if it interferes with the employee's work, is used to harass co-workers or customers, creates a hostile work environment, or harms the goodwill and reputation of VPRA or the community at large. VPRA encourages employees to use social media within the parameters of the following guidelines and in a way that does not produce the adverse consequences mentioned above.

Where no policy or guideline exists, employees are expected to use their professional judgment and take the most prudent action possible and check with their manager if they are uncertain about the appropriateness of a social media posting.

Note: As used in this policy, "social media" refers to blogs, forums, and social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and MySpace, among others.

- If your posts on social media mention VPRA, its services, employees, vendors, and/or competitors, make clear you are an employee of VPRA and that the views posted are yours alone and do not represent the views of VPRA.
- Do not mention VPRA employees, clients, vendors, or partners without their express consent.
- Unless given written consent, you may not use VPRA's logo or trademark on your posts.
- Remember, you are responsible for what you write or present on social media. You can be sued by other employees, competitors, vendors, and any individual that views your social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or creating a hostile work environment.
- Employees may not use VPRA equipment or facilities for non-work-related activities without permission. Social media activities should not interfere with your duties at work. VPRA monitors its facilities to ensure compliance with this restriction.
- All postings on social media must comply with VPRA's confidentiality and disclosure of proprietary information policies. If you are unsure about the confidential nature of information you are considering posting, consult with your manager.
- Comply with copyright laws and cite or reference sources accurately.

Do not link to VPRA's website or post VPRA material on a social media site without written permission from Communications.

All VPRA policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to illegal harassment, code of

conduct, conflict of interest, and protecting confidential and/or proprietary information.

Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Note: Nothing in this policy is meant to, nor should it be interpreted to, in any way limit your rights under any applicable federal, state, or local laws, including your rights under the National Labor Relations Act to engage in protected concerted activities with other employees to improve terms and conditions of employment, such as wages and benefits.

Media Coverage

Purpose: To provide guidance relative to questions from newspaper, radio, television, or other media representatives concerning various items of VPRA business

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Unless given prior approval by the Executive Director, the Chief Administrative Officer, or the Director of External Affairs and Communications, employees are prohibited from discussing any VPRA business with media representatives.

All inquiries are to be referred to the Director of External Affairs and Communications.

Parking

Purpose: To provide guidance on parking at VPRA facilities

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Parking is available to employees on a space-available basis. A monthly fee, depending upon location and work schedule, will be deducted from your paycheck for this service.

All parking is at an employee's own risk. Employees and visitors should lock their vehicles and take appropriate safeguards to protect their valuables, including removing them from the vehicle if appropriate under the circumstances. Employees are not to park in areas reserved for visitors.

Telework

Purpose: To establish guidelines for teleworking

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: VPRA recognizes that teamwork, collaboration, and productivity are critical to the fulfillment of our mission, and that our workplace and associated policies must reflect those priorities. At VPRA, telework is a benefit that may be available for certain eligible positions.

Eligible positions are determined by the type of work and job requirements of the position, as defined below. Determinations for telework eligibility will be focused on the job requirements and the ability of the individual employee to perform work duties assigned to the individual and the team.

Managers, in consultation with Human Resources, have the discretion to:

- Designate positions for telework;
- Designate and approve employees for telework; and
- Deny approval for telework.

Any telework schedule where the employee works remotely greater than one day per week must be approved by the Executive Director.

Procedures

Teleworking can be informal, such as working from home or other remote locations for a short-term project or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office. Either an employee or a manager may suggest teleworking as a work arrangement.

Any teleworking arrangement may be discontinued at any time at the request of either the teleworker or the manager. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such a change to accommodate issues that may arise from the termination of a teleworking arrangement. Less than 30 days' notice requires the notification of Human Resources with justification.

Position Eligibility

In making decisions regarding which positions are appropriate to designate or approve for telework, managers will analyze the duties of positions and how the work is performed, using the below-listed attributes:

- Requires independent work;
- Requires little face-to-face interaction;
- Results in specific, measurable work products
- Can be monitored by output, not time spent doing the job; and
- Requires a workspace design that is consistent with telework

Prior to making and communicating a final decision, managers will consult with Human Resources to ensure that positions designated for telework are aligned with the intent of the organization.

Employee Eligibility

The manager has the discretion to approve, disapprove, or rescind telework. In making decisions about which employees are approved for telework, managers will consult with Human Resources in which the manager attests that the employee possesses all of the below-listed attributes:

- Ability to work productively on their own
- Are self-motivated, flexible, and well organized
- Are knowledgeable about the job and can perform with minimum supervision
- Are dependable and trustworthy;
- Are organized; and
- Have good communication skills.

Tax and Other Legal Implications

The employee is responsible for any tax or legal implications under federal, state, and local government laws, including restrictions associated with working out of a home-based office. The responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

Telework Categories

An employee's typical work schedule will fall into one of three categories:

- Full-Time Office (4-5 days each week in physical VPRA office)
- Hybrid Office (3 days each week in physical VPRA office)
- Hybrid Telework (2 days each week in physical VPRA office)
- Full-Time Telework (0-1 day each week in physical VPRA office)

Telework Agreements

If the employee, manager, and Human Resources are all in agreement, a draft teleworking agreement will be prepared and signed by all parties. Evaluation of teleworker performance will include regular interaction by phone, video-teleconference, and e-mail between the employee and the manager to discuss work progress and performance. Evaluation of teleworker performance will be consistent with that received by employees working at the office in both content and frequency and will focus on work output and completion of objectives. The manager and teleworker will communicate at a level consistent with employees working at the office.

Failure to follow policies, rules, and procedures may result in the termination of the telework assignment and/or disciplinary action. At a minimum, telework agreements are to be revisited and reviewed every 12 months, to ensure the agreement effectively meets the needs of the business.

General Provisions

- Telework assignments do not change the conditions of employment or required compliance with policies, including the total number of hours that employees are expected to work. Managers are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the work produced by the teleworker.
- Telework is not intended to serve as a substitute for child or adult care. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate child or adult care needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands. If children or adults in need of primary care are in the alternate work location during an employee's work hours, another competent individual must be present to provide the care.
- Employees are required, as requested by the manager, to report to the central work location as needed for work-related meetings or other events.
- Employees must forward their office phone to the alternate work location, which will permit other Authority employees, customers, etc., to readily access them during scheduled work hours.

Equipment

VPRA will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the manager, the appropriate equipment needs for each teleworking arrangement. The Human Resources and Information Technology Departments will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization.

Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. VPRA accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.

Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The teleworker must sign an inventory of all VPRA property received and agree to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all VPRA property will be returned to VPRA, unless other arrangements have been made.

VPRA will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.). With prior approval from Finance, VPRA may also reimburse the employee for reasonable business-related expenses.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within their telework location for telework purposes. VPRA will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's telework location, such as remodeling, furniture, or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the telework location.

Security

Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, teleworkers will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and customer information that is accessible from their telework location. This includes the use of locked file cabinets and

desks, document shredders, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

Health and Safety

Teleworkers are expected to maintain their remote workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. An injury sustained by the teleworker in a telework location that is in direct performance of regular work duties is normally covered by the workers' compensation policy. Teleworkers are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries in accordance with existing policy. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to the telework site.

Time Worked

Teleworkers who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using VPRA's time-keeping system. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per workday and per workweek require the advance approval of the teleworker's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the teleworking agreement.

Temporary Arrangements

Temporary teleworking arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects, or other extenuating circumstances. These arrangements are approved on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of continuance.

All informal teleworking arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the organization.

Resignation / Termination

Purpose: To establish guidelines for handling resignations and terminations

Applies To: All Employees

Policy: Employees resigning from VPRA are expected to provide a written resignation to their manager (with a copy to Human Resources) at least 10 working days in advance of their last day of work. An employee's actual termination day must be the last day worked and cannot be extended by the use of paid time off or other leave. Employees who provide the requested amount of notice will be considered to have resigned in good standing and generally will be eligible for rehire.

The Manager and Human Resources will review all circumstances of the termination with the employee. Prior to the employee's last day of work, Human Resources will make arrangements to meet with the employee to conduct an exit interview to discuss benefits-related information, final paycheck, employee experience, and to collect all VPRA property. Where applicable, information regarding benefits continuation through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) will be sent to the employee's home address.

Employees are responsible for any VPRA-issued property (computer, credit card, keys, tools, parking pass, etc.). The employee must return all VPRA-issued property immediately at the time of termination. Employees may be required to pay for any lost or damaged items. The value of the item(s) may be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. When leaving employees should take all personal items with them.

Employees who terminate VPRA employment will be paid for accrued but unused PTO days in accordance with VPRA's PTO leave policy. Accrued but unused balances of volunteer and other leave will not be paid out. The employee's final paycheck will be remitted the next payday following the last day of employment.

Job Abandonment

Employees who fail to report to work for three consecutive days without properly communicating to their manager the reasons for their absence will be viewed as voluntarily resigning their employment as of the third day.

Severance

Purpose: To provide severance benefits to eligible employees who have been involuntarily separated from VPRA

Applies To: Regular, Full-time and Regular, Part-time Employees

Policy: Employees that are involuntarily separated due to layoff from budget reductions, agency reorganization, workforce downsizing, or other causes not related to the job performance or conduct of the employee (but not including voluntary resignations) are eligible for severance benefits according to Virginia DHRM policy, including the provisions of the Workforce Transition Act (WTA).

Severance benefits include:

- The employer share of the cost of the employee's health insurance plan selected during open enrollment for up to one year;
- The employer share of the cost of group life insurance for the employee for up to one year; and
- Salary payments (which are based on, and will not exceed, the employee's weekly salary with disbursements continuing for a specified period of time, determined by the employee's length of continuous salaried state service).

Salary Payments

The number of severance payments received by an eligible employee is based on the employee's years of continuous state service. Severance benefit is two (2) weeks' salary for every full year of service with a minimum of four (4) weeks and a maximum of thirty-six (36) weeks.

Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge I have been provided access to VPRA's Employee Manual and I understand that they apply to me as a VPRA employee. I agree to follow the guidelines posted. I also acknowledge the following:

1. Receipt of the information on where to access all employee policies on VPRA's intranet and it is my responsibility to read and comply with all policies;
2. My employment with VPRA is at-will and nothing in any policy negates the at-will nature of my employment;
3. The policies and benefits, both in the human resource policies and those communicated to me in any other fashion, can be modified by VPRA from time to time (unless mandated by law);
4. I am not entitled to any particular sequence of disciplinary measures prior to termination;
5. Violation of any policy may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination;
6. I may be counseled, disciplined, or terminated for poor behavior or performance even if the behavior or performance issue is not specifically addressed by a policy;
7. If a provision in policy conflicts with federal, state, or local law, that provision alone will be considered ineffective, while the rest of the policy remains effective; and
8. If I have questions regarding any policy or other expectations related to my behavior or performance, it is my responsibility to speak with my manager or Human Resources.

Signature	Date