



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY EMPLOYEE MANUAL UPDATES – MAY 2022

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) has updated its employment policies to align with its business practices. These policies will be presented as a matter of information and have been prepared to inform employees about VPRA's philosophy, employment practices, policies, the benefits provided to our valued employees, and the conduct expected from them. While these policies are not intended to be a list of rules and regulations or an employment contract, they include some essential guidelines for employees. Except for the at-will employment provisions, these can be amended based on business needs.

The attached Employee Manual reflects a VPRA-branded format and a number of updates. The summary below highlights substantive policy updates since the Board reviewed the initial Employee Manual in February 2021. If the Board approves them in May 2022, these updated policies will be effective on July 1, 2022.

Action	Title	Notes
New	Welcome Page	-
New	Mission and Vision	-
New	Background Checks	Changes application of policy from non-exempt employees to all applicants and employees.
New	Employment-At-Will	Clarifies language relating to At-Will employment.
New	Immigration Law Compliance	Confirms VPRA uses E-Verify to comply with immigration requirements.
New	Continuation of Benefits (COBRA)	Notifies employees of COBRA rights.
New	Introductory Period	Establishes individual policy with content previously embedded in Classification of Employment Policy. Renamed Probationary Period to Introductory Period to create a warmer atmosphere and reflect VPRA's culture.
New	Vaccination	Provides guidance on COVID practices, including updated mask requirements.
New	Parking	Provides guidance on parking at VPRA facilities.
New	Employee Acknowledgement	Reinforces at-will employment, corrective action, and other terms of employment.
New	Special Work Assignments	Provides guidance regarding additional duties and work assignments
Updated	Classification of Employment	Updated the types of employee classifications for the purposes of benefits and compensation programs. New classifications resemble standard practice.
Updated	Confidential Information	Provides more detail on the types of information that may be considered confidential.
Updated	Equal Employment Opportunity	Updated with new Virginia laws on disability and pregnancy as well as the protected categories.
Updated	Personnel Record and References	Retitled from Personnel Records Policy. Clarifies where information on references can be located. Updated to reference statutes permitting employees to review their employment records (Va. Code Sec. 2.2-3705.1(1) and Va. Code Sec. 8.01-413.1(B)).
Updated	Conflict of Interest	Simplified the policy with a broad definition of conflict of interest.
Updated	Resignation / Termination	Updated to require the employee to provide ten working days of notice versus two weeks of notification.



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		Prior policy could include holidays and vacation time, while the new policy does not.
Updated	Telework	Provides detailed guidelines for telework, including categories, agreements, and general provisions.
Updated	Payroll Withholdings	Combined two policies into one (Payroll Deductions, Payroll Withholdings, and Garnishments). Provides a complete perspective on all payroll withholdings.
Updated	Time Keeping	Replaces Recording Hours Worked Policy. Clarifies expectations on completing time away from work.
Updated	Career Development and Professional Memberships	Retitled from Career Development Policy. Clarifies the types of memberships covered. Decreases VPRA's contribution to educational reimbursements to 80% of eligible costs. Changes the eligibility for a refund by raising the grade requirement from a "C" to a "B-" and limiting the benefit to only full-time employees.
Updated	Leave of Absence	Replaces Leave of Absence – Emergency Policy. Allows the employee to request a leave of absence for more reasons than an emergency. Enables the employee to request up to 3 months, which expands the original 30 days allowed in the previous policy.
Updated	Military Leave	Combined two policies into one (LOA-Military, Military Reserve Training); no material changes to content.
Updated	Paid Time Off	Added details on PTO transfers from other agencies; removed negotiation of PTO at time of hire.
Updated	Employee Benefits	Replaces Wellness Policy. Updated to provide a high-level overview of employee benefits and eligibility,
Updated	Parental Leave	Increased the period when Parental leave could be used from eight weeks to six months. Prior policy only allowed 8-weeks of use within eight weeks of the event.
Updated	Standards of Conduct	Updated with employees' expectations to support VPRA's vision, mission and values, and other performance standards. Also updated a list of examples of unacceptable conduct.
Updated	Attendance	Rewritten for clarification, including when an employee has to report changes in attendance
Updated	Discrimination and Harassment	Updated definition of sexual harassment and workplace harassment. Also updated the protected categories with the federal and state definitions and inclusions.
Updated	Performance Management	Replaces Performance Evaluations Policy. Rewritten to detail VPRA's employee evaluation process.
Updated	Corrective Action	Replaces Disciplinary Procedures Policy. Rewritten to include more opportunities for improvement in the disciplinary process for the employee. Newly added steps include coaching and counseling and final warning/suspension steps. Also introduces the use of the performance improvement plan as a tool.
Updated	Grievance Process	Added more detail on VPRA's grievance process for clarification.
Updated	Outside Employment	Updated to provide guidelines and expectations regarding outside employment.
Updated	Social Media	Replaces Communications Policy. Elaborates on appropriate social media practices for employees.



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Updated	Public Health Emergency Leave	Updated to reflect the governor's most recent guidelines.
Deleted	Pay Plan	Eliminated from the employee manual as it will become part of the compensation policies.
Deleted	Theft	Content covered in Standards of Conduct; no need for a separate policy on theft.

The following policies were reviewed and had no substantive changes:

- Disabilities in the Workplace
- Job Posting
- Reduction in Force
- Hours of Work
- Overtime
- Pay Periods (policy previously titled Pay Day)
- Civil and Work-Related Leave
- Volunteer Leave Time (policy previously titled Community Service)
- Holidays (added Juneteenth as a federal holiday)
- Retirement
- Severance
- Statement of ERISA Rights
- Workers' Compensation
- Distribution or Sales
- Drug, Alcohol, and Substance Abuse
- Identification Cards
- Retirement
- Personal Appearance
- Housekeeping
- Civil and Work-Related Leave
- Family and Medical Leave of Absence
- Accidents Involving VPRA Vehicles (added rented vehicles)
- Life-Threatening Illnesses
- Violence Prevention (policy previously titled Violence in the Workplace; added contractors)
- Fraud, Waste, and Abuse
- Media Coverage
- Lactation Accommodation (policy previously titled Nursing Mothers)
- Severe Weather Conditions or Unusual Circumstances
- Smoking (added contractors)
- Information Technology Usage and Security
- Pandemic
- Safety (policy previously titled Incidents and Injuries at Work; added contractors)