



LOUISIANA
**DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH**

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Revised March 2026

Welcome to the Louisiana Department of Health

Please allow me this opportunity to welcome you to the Louisiana Department of Health. We hope your new job will live up to your expectations, and your employment with us will be rewarding. If you have been working with us, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for your valued service.

We are pleased to provide you with your Employee Handbook which outlines the personnel policies and procedures in effect at the Louisiana Department of Health. I'm sure the handbook will be a helpful reference during your tenure with our Department. Also, we encourage you to freely ask questions of your supervisor and co-workers. By doing so, you will learn the job more quickly and will build interaction with those who are involved with your performance.

Early in your employment with us, you will realize that we have set very high standards for you. You were selected for your position because of your qualifications, training, experience and qualities which will help us achieve the goals of the Department. The many people we serve in Louisiana are dependent upon you and your fellow employees to provide the necessary services delivered by our Department. Take pride in your work. We are committed in providing you challenges, recognition, appropriate compensation and benefits to help you reach your personal goals and objectives, as well as those of the Louisiana Department of Health.

I am available to assist with any concerns you may have that your management team may not have the authority or be able to assist with. I am confident that the future will be both productive and prosperous for all of us.

Secretary
Louisiana Department of Health

Table of Contents

Section 1 - Introduction	6
1.1 Changes in Policy.....	6
1.2 Equal Employment Opportunity.....	6
Section 2 - LDH Organizational Structure	7
2.1 Mission Statement.....	7
2.2 Departmental Philosophy.....	7
2.3 Organizational Goals.....	7
2.4 Organizational Chart.....	7
A. Office of the Secretary	7
B. Office of the Surgeon General.....	8
C. Bureau of Health Services Financing (Louisiana Medicaid)	8
D. Office of Aging and Adult Services	8
E. Office of Behavioral Health	8
F. Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities.....	9
G. Office of Public Health	9
H. Office of Women’s Health and Community Health	9
I. Louisiana Emergency Response Network	9
J. Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council.....	9
Section 3 - General Employment Information	10
3.1 Job Classification	10
A. Probational Appointment	10
B. Job Appointment	10
C. Classified WAE (“When Actually Employed”) Appointment	10
D. Student Appointment	11
3.2 Continuous Performance Management (CPM).....	11
3.3 Grievances, Complaints, and Appeals	11
A. Grievances and Complaints.....	12
B. Civil Service Appeals.....	12
3.4 Disciplinary Actions	12
3.5. Travel	13
3.6 Emergency Preparedness	13
Section 4 – Payroll and Leave Administration	13
4.1 Payroll.....	13
A. Your Pay.....	14
B. Market Adjustments.....	14
C. Promotions	14
D. Employee Self-Service (LEO)	15
E. Personal Data Changes.....	15
4.2 Hours of Work	15

A. Lunch and Break Periods.....	15
4.3 Leave.....	16
A. Annual and Sick Leave.....	16
B. Civil Leave.....	17
C. Compensatory Leave (K-time).....	17
D. Conferences and Workshops.....	17
E. Educational Leave.....	17
F. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).....	17
G. Funeral Leave.....	18
H. Military Leave.....	18
I. Special Leave.....	18
J. Parental Leave.....	18
4.4 Attendance.....	199
A. Unscheduled Absences.....	19
B. Overtime.....	19
C. Resignation Courtesies.....	19
Section 5 - Benefits.....	20
5.1 Paid Holidays.....	20
5.2 Group Insurance.....	20
A. Health Insurance.....	20
B. Life Insurance.....	21
5.3 Miscellaneous Insurance.....	21
5.4 Flexible Benefits Plan.....	21
5.5 Worker’s Compensation.....	21
Section 6 – Standards of Conduct.....	22
6.1 Business Dress Standards.....	22
A. Inappropriate Attire.....	22
B. Additional Requirements.....	22
C. Appointing Authority or Designee.....	23
D. Casual Dress Days.....	23
6.2 Confidentiality.....	23
6.3 Conflict of Interest (Gifts).....	24
6.4 Outside Employment.....	24
6.5 Prohibited Political Activity.....	24
6.6 Employee Conduct Policy.....	25
6.7 Employee Interaction with Inmates.....	25
Section 7 – Retirement.....	27
7.1 Retirement Contributions.....	27
7.2 Refunds.....	27
7.3 Disability Retirement.....	27
7.4 Survivors’ Benefits.....	27

7.5 Deferred Compensation27

Section 8 – Training.....28

Section 9 – Safety.....28

 9.1 Operation of State Vehicles.....28

Section 10 – Important Web Links28

Section 11 – Conclusion.....29

Section 1 - Introduction

This employee handbook has been prepared to introduce you to the Louisiana Department of Health. It will acquaint you with information concerning policies, procedures, benefits, and other general guidelines which you will encounter during your employment. It is not all-inclusive, but offers only general guidelines.

The information contained in this handbook applies to all classified employees of the Department and is presented as a matter of information only. Its contents should not be interpreted as a contract, expressed or implied, between the Louisiana Department of Health and any of its employees. Furthermore, its contents should not be interpreted as superseding federal or state laws and Civil Service Rules. This handbook supersedes any previous handbook and may be changed, revoked or modified in writing by the Secretary of the Department at any time. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for future reference. Each program office and facility providing direct services to clients of LDH may establish a handbook specific to that program office or facility. Any questions concerning its contents should be directed to your supervisor or to LDH's Division of Human Resources.

1.1 Changes in Policy

Since our business is constantly changing, we expressly reserve the right to change any of the policies and procedures at any time, including those covered in this handbook. Normally, we will notify you of any changes through the Department's communication system. Effective dates for policies are identified on the applicable policy document which will supersede any conflicting policy guidance of this handbook. No manager or supervisor other than the Secretary of the Department has authority to alter the policies and procedures of LDH. If you are uncertain about any policy or procedure, please check with your supervisor and/or Human Resources.

1.2 Equal Employment Opportunity

LDH and all offices under its jurisdiction reaffirm the policy for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) by hereby stating that no person shall be discriminated against in any employment practice because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age (age 40 or older), genetic information, veteran's status, natural, protective or cultural hairstyle, absence from work due to genetic testing, or a medically necessary cancer screening. LDH is committed to this policy because it is morally right and is legally required by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (PL 101-336), Act 529 of the 2022 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature and Act 210 of the 2023 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

Section 2 - LDH Organizational Structure

The current LDH Organizational Chart may be accessed by clicking on the following link:

[LDH Organizational Chart](#)

2.1 Mission Statement

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is to protect and promote health and to ensure access to medical, preventive, and rehabilitative services for all citizens of the State of Louisiana.

2.2 Departmental Philosophy

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is dedicated to fulfilling its mission through direct provision of quality services, the development and stimulation of services of others, and the utilization of available resources in the most effective manner.

2.3 Organizational Goals

In order to fulfill its mission, the Louisiana Department of Health intends to:

1. Provide quality services;
2. Protect and promote health;
3. Develop and stimulate services by others;
4. Utilize available resources in the most effective manner;

2.4 Organizational Chart

A. Office of the Secretary

The Office of the Secretary (OS) provides leadership and technical support services while maximizing resources to fulfill the Department's mission. This Office is comprised of the following sections:

- Executive
 - Secretary
 - Deputy Secretary
 - Executive Counsel
 - Chief of Staff
- Compliance:
 - Internal Audit
 - Program Integrity
- Legal, Audit, Regulatory and Compliance:
 - Bureau of Legal Affairs
 - Health Standards
- External Affairs:

- Legislative and Governmental Relations
- Bureau of Media and Communications
- Policy and Quality Improvement
- Office of Management and Finance
 - The Office of Management and Finance (OMF) provides leadership and operational support services through its various divisions, while maintaining maximum utilization of financial and human resources, and overseeing administrative and budgetary activities of the Department. This Office is comprised of the following sections:
 - Undersecretary/Deputy Undersecretary
 - Division of Fiscal Management
 - Division of Human Resources
 - Division of Planning and Budget
 - Division of Safety, Security and Administrative Services
 - Disaster Recovery

B. Office of the Surgeon General

The Office of Surgeon General is charged with crafting health policy, including healthcare workforce development; advocating for wellness and disease prevention; and coordinating with other state agencies and institutions to improve health outcomes in Louisiana.

C. Bureau of Health Services Financing (Louisiana Medicaid) and SNAP

The Bureau of Health Services Financing (Medicaid) provides medical benefits to low-income individuals and families. Although the federal government establishes the general rules for Medicaid, specific requirements are established by each state. In Louisiana, over a million residents receive health care coverage through Medicaid, most of whom are children under 19.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides monthly benefits that help eligible low-income households buy the food they need for good health.

D. Office of Aging and Adult Services

The Office of Aging and Adult Services aims to develop, provide and enhance services that offer meaningful choices for people in need of long-term care. The office is committed to developing a long-term care system that provides choice, ensures quality, meets the needs of consumers and caregivers, and does so in a fiscally responsible manner.

E. Office of Behavioral Health

The Office of Behavioral Health aims to work collaboratively with partners to develop and implement a comprehensive integrated system of behavioral health and healthcare, social supports, and prevention services that promote recovery and resilience for all citizens of Louisiana.

OBH assures public behavioral health services are accessible, family-driven, have a positive impact, are culturally and clinically competent, and are delivered in partnership with all stakeholders.

F. Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities

The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities aims to provide programmatic leadership necessary in the design and development of services to afford people with developmental disabilities and their families a seamless services system that is responsive to both individual needs and desires.

G. Office of Public Health

The Office of Public Health (OPH) aims to protect and promote the health and wellness of all individuals and communities in Louisiana. We accomplish this through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, preventing disease and injury, enforcing regulations that protect the environment, sharing vital information and assuring preventive services to uninsured and underserved individuals and families.

H. Office of Women’s Health and Community Health

The Office of Women’s Health and Community Health (OWHCH) is dedicated to focusing on improving women’s health outcomes and serving as a clearing-house, coordinating agency and resource center for women’s health data and strategies. Issues of focus include needs throughout a woman’s life; chronic or acute conditions; access to healthcare; how poverty impacts women’s health; and leading causes of morbidity and mortality and health disparities.

I. Louisiana Emergency Response Network

The Louisiana Emergency Response Network (LERN) is an agency of state government created by the Louisiana Legislature in 2004 charged with the responsibility of developing and maintaining a statewide system of care coordination for patients suddenly stricken by serious traumatic injury or time-sensitive illness (such as heart attack and stroke). It is a system also designated to serve as a vital healthcare resource in the face of larger scale emergencies and natural disasters.

J. Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (LaDDC) aims to lead and promote advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Section 3 - General Employment Information

3.1 Job Classification

All positions are classified in one of the job titles established by the Department of Civil Service. The duties and responsibilities of your position will be described generally in a job specification and specifically by an individual position description. During your initial orientation, your supervisor will give you a copy of your individual position description. If there is any question about your position description, please ask your supervisor for clarification. Over a period of time, your duties may change, and it may be necessary to update or revise your position description to indicate your current duties. The following are brief descriptions of the different temporary positions. Also refer to [LDH Policy 55 - Temporary Appointments](#) and the [Department of Civil Service Job Information website for additional information](#).

A. Probational Appointment

A probational appointment is an appointment on a trial basis. Essentially, it's a way for LDH to observe and assess the skills, competence, and attitude of an employee before making a final decision about their continued employment.

Every person hired on probational appointment must serve a probationary period of at least 12 months (LDH requirement), but not more than 24 months, before becoming eligible for permanent status. During this probationary period your supervisor will determine whether or not you are satisfactorily performing your duties. If your performance does not meet the required standard, you may be removed at any time during the probationary period. While on probation you will earn annual leave, sick leave and retirement credit. When you have satisfactorily completed your probationary period, you will attain permanent status. Attainment of permanent status is extremely important because many rights under the Civil Service system are available only to permanent employees.

B. Job Appointment

A job appointment is a non-permanent appointment of an employee to fill a position in the classified service for a limited period of time. Job appointees earn annual leave and sick leave. They are eligible for group health and life insurance and receive pay for observed holidays. Job appointees may pay into Louisiana State Employees Retirement System (LASERS) depending upon the length of the appointment. Persons on job appointments do not attain permanent status and may be separated at any time.

C. Classified WAE (“When Actually Employed”) Appointment

A classified WAE appointment is a temporary appointment of an employee to fill a position in the classified service for a limited period of time and/or hours in order to address filling the position in a regular manner, or to address an emergency or work overload situation. Persons serving in

classified WAE appointments do not gain permanent status, do not earn annual leave or sick leave, nor do they receive pay for observed holidays. WAE classified appointees usually pay FICA, but may pay into LASERS if they have ten years of prior LASERS service credit and have not withdrawn their contributions. A classified WAE appointment may be terminated at any time.

D. Student Appointment

A student appointment provides high school, undergraduate, and graduate students with opportunities for paid work at LDH and to explore a State career. Appointment and Pay of Student Employees is governed by

[LDH Policy 36 - Appointment and Pay of Student Employees.](#)

Civil Service Rule 1.5.1 defines a bona-fide student as:

- a person enrolled in an accredited high school, college or university in the State, or a person enrolled in a State-operated technical college, in a sufficient number of courses and classes to be classified as a full-time regular student under the institution's criteria; or
- a person enrolled in their last two semesters in an accredited high school, college or university in the State or in a State-operated technical college, in the courses and classes necessary and available to satisfy graduation requirements, even if not classified as a full-time student under the institution's criteria; or
- a person enrolled in an off-campus college work-study program in a proprietary institution of higher education as defined in Section 102(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; or
- a person employed by the college or university that they attend; or
- a person performing work under the Federal Work Study Program.
- A bona fide student shall retain their status during breaks, which occur in the course of or between sessions, including summer breaks.

3.2 Continuous Performance Management (CPM)

Each classified employee's job performance shall be evaluated annually. Employees that would like to request a review of their annual rating should contact Human Resources for assistance.

3.3 Grievances, Complaints, and Appeals

As in any organization, misunderstanding may arise between you and your supervisor or management. Through the Department's established grievance procedures, you will be given an opportunity to discuss your complaints with the appropriate personnel.

A. Grievances and Complaints

The policy of the Department is to resolve employee problems at the lowest possible supervisory level and at the earliest possible opportunity after such problems are recognized. Refer to [LDH Policy #35 – Grievance and Complaints Policy](#).

A grievance is defined as any disagreement between a supervisor and an employee, a complaint, or any alleged act of unfair treatment of an employee which has occurred while conducting the agency's business.

A clearly defined policy has been established by the Department to resolve employees' grievances. The process involves several steps which an employee must follow, with established timetables for each step. Should you find it necessary to file a grievance, you should first discuss the situation with your supervisor. You may request a copy of the policy and filing form from your supervisor or Human Resources. The final decision is not appealable to the Civil Service Commission. Alternatively, if the issue does not fall within the scope of the grievance process outlined in the policy, you may submit a formal complaint to Human Resources.

Allegations of discrimination or harassment based on non-merit factors such as race, sex, national origin, age, and disability should be pursued through the proper authorities as outlined in [LDH Policy 34 - Equal Employment Opportunity](#).

Alleged violations of Civil Service Rules may be appealed in accordance with Chapter 13 of the Civil Service Rules.

B. Civil Service Appeals

Appeals can be made to the Civil Service Commission for any of several reasons including discrimination based on race, sex, political beliefs or religious beliefs; disciplinary action; and violation of any Civil Service rules. Should you decide to file an appeal, the notice of appeal to the Civil Service Commission must conform to the guidelines listed in Chapter 13 of the Civil Service Rules, a copy of which is available from the Appeals Section of the Department of Civil Service, 1201 N 3rd St., Suite 3-280, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, telephone (225) 342-8070, and FAX (225) 342-8058 or at <https://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov/csrules/chapter13.aspx>.

3.4 Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary actions include suspension without pay, involuntary demotion, reduction in pay, and dismissal. Permanent classified employees have the right to appeal any disciplinary action taken against them to the Civil Service Commission. An appeal must comply with the requirements outlined in Chapter 13 of the Civil Service Rules. A copy of these rules is available from the Appeals Section of the Department of Civil Service website or through your Human Resources office. The SCS Appeals Division is located at 1201 N. 3rd Street, Suite 3-280, Baton Rouge, LA 70804. You may contact them by phone at (225) 342-8070 or by fax at (225) 342-8058.

Your responsibility as an employee includes knowing, understanding, and abiding by the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures that govern your work. Since it would be impossible to list every potential infraction, please consult with your supervisor or Human Resources concerning those actions that could bring about disciplinary results. Refer to [LDH Policy 30 - Employee Discipline](#) and [LDH Policy 86 - Employee Conduct](#).

3.5 Travel

Your position may require travel. In some cases, it is a condition of employment. All travel must be authorized and approved in advance by your supervisor and an LDH employee with delegated travel authority. Expenses incurred should be well documented and limited only to those incurred during the performance of your job duties. Claims for reimbursement must be submitted on a Travel and Expense Account Form and include all details provided for on the form, your signature and approval of your supervisor. Reimbursement is based on a set limit for each type of travel expense. If you are required to travel, consult your supervisor regarding [LDH Policy 10 - Travel Regulations](#).

3.6 Emergency Preparedness

LDH plays a vital role in responding to situations such as hurricanes, environmental disasters and other emergencies. During national or state-declared emergencies all LDH employees are subject to being called upon to provide emergency assistance to the citizens of Louisiana which includes being assigned to work at a shelter. You will be notified of your role in an emergency by your supervisor and you will be provided with the necessary training to fulfill your responsibilities. Refer to [LDH Policy 65 - Emergency Preparedness \(All Hazards Response\)](#).

Section 4 – Payroll and Leave Administration

4.1 Payroll

For each classified position, the Department of Civil Service assigns a pay range. The range consists of a minimum, midpoint, and a maximum rate. The salary for each job is determined by a variety of factors, such as the type of work performed, level of expertise required, and educational requirements. The rate of pay for someone entering the classified service is generally set at the minimum of the range. There are some instances when pay may be set at a higher rate, depending upon the availability of applicants in the job market and the level of expertise required for certain jobs. Refer to [LDH Policy 50 - Pay Policy](#) and the [Department of Civil Service Job Information website](#).

A. Your Pay

LDH operates on a biweekly pay cycle. There are 26 pay periods annually. If you are a full-time employee, your biweekly pay is your hourly pay rate times 80. By law, the Department is required to withhold federal and state income taxes, FICA and/or Medicare tax, and either state retirement or social security deductions from your check. You may authorize other deductions such as health insurance, life insurance, dental insurance, credit union, tax shelters, and other miscellaneous deductions.

B. Market Adjustments

An employee who is in active status as of January 15th and July 15th of the performance evaluation year, except for those serving in WAE classified appointments, becomes eligible for and may be granted a market adjustment effective July 15th, provided that the legislature appropriates funds and the agency does not request an exemption from Civil Service.

- Employees with the following official overall performance evaluations are eligible for a market adjustment:
 - “Exceptional”
 - “Exceeds Expectations”
 - “Successful”
 - “Needs Improvement”
 - “Not Evaluated”

- Employees with the following official overall performance evaluations are not eligible for a market adjustment:
 - “Unsuccessful”

C. Promotions

Promotions are limited to classified employees with permanent status. Additionally, employees must meet the minimum qualifications of the position (i.e.: education and/or experience) before they can be placed on an eligibility list for consideration.

It is your responsibility to apply for positions in which you are interested and for which you meet the minimum qualifications. Upon promotion, your pay will be adjusted. It is your responsibility to schedule Civil Service examinations for any position(s) that you wish to apply for by going to the [Civil Service job seeker website](#) and selecting the proper examination. Consult with your supervisor or Human Resources regarding promotional opportunities within the Department. You may also refer to [LDH Policy 32 - Filling Job Vacancies](#).

D. Employee Self-Service (LEO)

Louisiana Employees On-line (LEO) is a part of the LaGov ERP Human Resources System that provides the following benefits to employees:

- Enables employees to enter time and attendance.
- Enables employees to view Employee Notification Forms notifying them of their personnel actions.
- Enables employees to view their personal data.
- Enables employees to view their benefits.
- Enables employees to change their addresses and phone numbers.
- Enables employees to change their emergency contact information.
- Enables employees to change their tax withholdings.
- Enables employees to send on-line leave requests to their supervisors and enables supervisors to approve/disapprove leave requests electronically.

E. Personal Data Changes

Maintaining accurate employment records is important to both you and the Department. You are responsible for promptly reporting any changes to your name, address, tax withholding status, or marital status.

Name changes require an updated Social Security card and a Personal Data Form (HR-9). Marital status changes require a Personal Data Form (HR-9). These changes cannot be made in LEO, and required documents must be submitted to Human Resources.

Tax withholding updates, excluding exempt status, can be updated in LEO. Exempt withholding status requires a completed W-4 and/or L-4 submitted to Human Resources.

4.2 Hours of Work

The regular work week consists of 40 hours. Your exact work schedule will be discussed with you by your supervisor. Refer to [LDH Policy 125 - Work Schedules, Attendance and Punctuality](#).

A. Lunch and Break Periods

Lunch periods are generally for a 30-minute period and are not considered to be working time. Your supervisor will inform you of your scheduled time for lunch.

At your supervisor's discretion, you may be given up to two fifteen-minute break periods away from your work station during a work day. If given, these breaks are considered to be working time and your supervisor will advise you of the times of your scheduled breaks, if any. Breaks are not required. Refer to [LDH Policy 125 - Work Schedules, Attendance and Punctuality](#).

4.3 Leave

[LDH Policy 28 - Leave Policy for Classified LDH Employees](#)

[LDH Policy 136 - Unclassified Appointees and Employees Attendance and Leave](#)

A. Annual and Sick Leave

All permanent, probational, and job appointed employees earn annual and sick leave. The amount of annual and sick leave earned is based on an employee's number of years of full-time state service. An equal amount of each type is creditable at the end of each pay period as follows:

Years of Service	Earnings Rate per hour	Approximate Days per year
0-3 yrs.	.0461	12
3-5 yrs.	.0576	15
5-10 yrs.	.0692	18
10-15 yrs.	.0807	21
15-above	.0923	24

You do not earn annual or sick leave for any overtime hours or hours of leave without pay. Any hours of unused sick and annual leave held by an employee at the end of a calendar year are carried forward to the next year. There is no limitation on the amount of annual and sick leave that can be accumulated.

Annual leave (Absence Code LA) is provided primarily for vacations and handling personal affairs. It must be applied for in advance and can only be used when approved by your supervisor.

Sick leave (Absence Code LB) is provided for those times you are prevented from performing your duties because of your own illness, medical, optical or dental appointment, or other personal medical reason. You may also request to use sick leave in lieu of annual leave (Absence Code LBIF) for the illness or medical, optical or dental appointment of your spouse, child, stepchild, foster child, parent or stepparent. Use of sick leave in lieu of annual leave for this reason requires approval from your Appointing Authority or their designee. Advance approval of sick leave is not required, except for scheduled medical appointments; however, you are required to file a leave request stating the cause of the absence and the amount of time absent. Sick leave to be used for medical, optical or dental appointments is approved only for the time required for the appointment when it is not possible to schedule the appointment during non-duty hours.

Upon separation from state service, you will be paid the value of any accrued annual leave up to a maximum of 300 hours. Annual leave in excess of 300 hours and all sick leave will be recorded in

your employment record and will be reaccredited if you are reemployed in state service within five years of separation if your last separation was not a dismissal for cause or resignation in lieu of disciplinary action.

B. Civil Leave

You will be given time off, without loss of pay, or charge of annual, sick or compensatory leave, for performing jury duty and for appearing as a witness before a court, grand jury or a public body or commission, provided you are not the plaintiff or defendant or the appearance is not as a result of previous non-State employment. You must furnish a copy of the court summons to your supervisor when requesting such leave. You will also be granted civil leave for performing emergency civilian duty. You are entitled to keep the stipend you are paid for jury duty.

C. Compensatory Leave (K-time)

You may use accrued compensatory leave in the same manner as annual leave. LaGov will automatically use K-time before annual leave or leave without pay for purposes other than those to which sick leave applies. You may, at your option, request approval from your Appointing Authority to use compensatory leave in lieu of sick leave. You may be required at any time, except for sick leave purposes, to take any or all accumulated compensatory leave.

D. Conferences and Workshops

You may be granted time for attendance at conferences, conventions, and workshops for training purposes. You may be permitted to attend while on duty status, provided the content of the program is pertinent to your job and your attendance is approved by your supervisor.

E. Educational Leave

You may be granted educational leave with pay for attendance of a class in which you are duly enrolled at an educational institution for a maximum of 30 days in one calendar year. Educational leave is allowed if the following criteria are met: the course is pertinent to your work, the leave is applied for in advance, your absence does not adversely affect the operations of the agency, and your leave request is approved by your supervisor. Please contact Human Resources for more information.

F. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

All eligible employees of the Department who are qualified may request [Family and Medical Leave Act](#) leave for qualifying family and medical purposes. Your accumulated annual, compensatory and/or sick leave is to be used for this purpose. An eligible employee is an employee who has been employed by the State of Louisiana for at least twelve (12) months and has worked at least 1,250 hours in state service during the 12 months immediately preceding the start of leave. An eligible employee shall be entitled to 12 weeks of FMLA during a 12 month period for one or more of the following circumstances: for the birth of child, and to care for a newborn child; for adoption or foster care of a child; to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition;

and for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his/her position. A father, as well as a mother, can take leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child. A request for FMLA requires certification of a serious health condition from a health care provider. You may contact your supervisor or Human Resources for more information.

G. Funeral Leave

To assist employees through periods of bereavement following the death of a relative, employees with permanent, probational, or job appointment status may be granted up to two days of funeral leave to attend funeral services of immediate family members. Immediate family members include parent, step-parent, child, step-child, brother, step-brother, sister, step-sister, spouse, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grand-parent, or grand-child.

Annual leave may be approved in accordance with normal policy to attend the services of other relatives and friends or to extend funeral leave beyond the allowed time. Contact your supervisor to request additional leave.

H. Military Leave

If you are a permanent, probationary, or job appointment employee and a member of a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces of the United States, you shall be granted military leave with pay not to exceed 15 working days in one calendar year, except that it shall be limited to 15 working days for each tour of duty. Advance notice must be given to the appointing authority by providing a copy of the military orders to report to duty, except when such notice is either precluded by military necessity or otherwise impossible or unreasonable.

I. Special Leave

You will be granted special leave to participate in a Civil Service examination on a regular work day not to exceed six examinations per year or to participate in a Licensing Board Examination necessary to retain a position or for employment. Special leave may also be granted in cases of natural emergencies or local conditions such as civil disorders, floods, and hurricanes and closures authorized by the Governor or Department.

J. Parental Leave

Civil Service Rule 11.36 provides up to 240 hours of paid parental leave without deduction to an eligible employee's annual, sick, or compensatory leave balances. This leave shall be for a qualifying purpose related to an employee's child born or placed with the employee for adoption or foster care on or after January 1, 2024 and as described in [LDH Policy 28 - Leave Policy for Classified LDH Employees](#).

4.4 Attendance

You are expected to report to work in accordance with the work schedule form assigned by your supervisor, and you are responsible for letting your supervisor know as soon as possible if you expect to be late or absent. Your supervisor will instruct you regarding your agency's procedure for reporting absences. Failure to notify your supervisor appropriately may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Refer to [LDH Policy 125 - Work Schedules, Attendance and Punctuality](#).

A. Unscheduled Absences

An unscheduled absence occurs when an employee is absent from work without having obtained approved leave by the close of business on the last working day prior to the absence. Approval of leave, after the fact, to cover an unscheduled absence shall not prevent the absence from being considered unscheduled. A continuous absence for the same reason is one unscheduled absence, regardless of its duration. According to Civil Service Rule 12.6 (a) 2 an employee who has seven or more unscheduled absences during any consecutive twenty-six-week period may be removed from their position. You should take care to request leave in advance, if possible, to avoid unscheduled absences.

B. Overtime

Effective delivery of services may require your supervisor to direct you to report to work on your days off, holidays or before or after regular working hours. In accordance with appropriate Civil Service Rules, Department policies, and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), you may be granted either compensatory time or cash payment for overtime work. Any questions concerning overtime compensation should be directed to your supervisor, or you may contact Human Resources for information. Refer to [LDH Policy 45 - Overtime](#).

C. Resignation Courtesies

We realize that not all employees will remain in our employment until retirement. If you find it to your advantage to leave your employment, please give your supervisor at least two weeks advance notice of your resignation. This will afford your supervisor time to make arrangements to cover your workload with the least disruption of service to our clients and patients.

Be sure that you update your current address with Human Resources. This will ensure that your W-2 form or other separation documents can be sent to you promptly. If you move after leaving LDH be sure to inform HR of your new address to assure that your W-2 and other separation documents will be sent to the correct address.

Section 5 – Benefits

5.1 Paid Holidays

State holidays observed by the Department are as follows:

New Year's Day	Veterans Day
Marin Luther King Jr. Day	Thanksgiving Day
Mardi Gras Day	Christmas Day
Good Friday	New Year's Day
Independence Day	Inauguration Day in the City of Baton Rouge
Labor Day	General Election Day in the even-numbered years

In addition to the above, the Governor may declare other holidays during the year. You may be required by the Department to work on any of these days. If you do work, you will be compensated for the overtime in cash or compensatory time. For handling of holidays that fall on an employee's off day please review please refer to [LDH Policy- 125](#).

5.2 Group Insurance

The State offers group health and life insurance to full-time employees working 30 hours or more (on average) per week. Eligibility for insurance coverage begins upon hire. Coverage is effective the first of the month coinciding with or following completion of one (1) month of service. For example, if hired on June 1, coverage would be effective July 1. If hired on June 2, coverage would be effective August 1.

A. Health Insurance

You and certain family members are eligible for health insurance coverage under the Office of Group Benefits. Should you choose to participate in the Office of Group Benefits, a portion of your premium will be paid by the agency, with the remaining portion of the premium being deducted from your paycheck. The effective date of coverage for new hires whose employment begins on the first day of the month is the first day of the following month. If employment begins on the second day of the month or later, coverage is effective the first day of the next month after 30 days of employment. It is to your advantage to make a decision within the first 30 days of employment.

B. Life Insurance

Life insurance is also available to you and your eligible family members through the Office of Group Benefits. You will have the opportunity to purchase life insurance upon your employment and during the yearly Group Benefits enrollment period.

5.3 Miscellaneous Insurance

Other insurance plans may be available to you through payroll deduction including life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, dental insurance, and cancer plans. With these policies, the employee is responsible for the full premium.

5.4 Flexible Benefits Plan

You are eligible for participation in the Flexible Benefits Plan. This plan was implemented by the State of Louisiana to help you reduce your taxes and increase your spendable income. The plan enhances your employee group insurance program by allowing you to pay any eligible insurance premium costs or dependent care expenses tax free. You never pay federal or state income taxes on the money you save on these eligible expenses. If you are interested in enrollment, please contact Human Resources.

The Flexible Benefits plan allows you to pay for certain benefits before your money is taxed. Active employees of agencies participating in an OGB Flexible Plan may enroll in one or several Plan options of the Flexible Spending Arrangement programs (FSAs) or Health Savings Account program (HSA). Employees must re-enroll each year during Annual Enrollment in the Flexible Spending Arrangement programs (FSAs), if they choose to continue participation.

5.5 Premium Conversion

Premium Conversion is automatic for all employees, who are employed by those agencies who participate in an OGB Flexible Benefits Plan. By enrolling in an OGB health plan, life insurance, and/or a voluntary/statewide product that is eligible for pre-tax deductions, employees are automatically enrolled in the Premium Conversion option.

5.6 Worker's Compensation

You are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance which pays benefits when you become disabled or miss work because of work-related injuries. Should you sustain a work-related injury, regardless how minor the injury may be, notify your supervisor or Human Resources immediately. (See Transitional Return to Work Policy).

Section 6 – Standards of Conduct

6.1 Business Dress Standards

It is vital that LDH employees project a level of professionalism in both the provision of services and personal appearance. As an LDH employee, you are expected to present a clean and neat appearance and to dress according to the requirements of your position while you are on duty status. The following guidelines describe “business casual attire” which is appropriate attire for most LDH office environments:

- Women: Dresses; skirts with blouses and/or sweaters; slacks with blouses and/or sweaters; trousers and polo-type collared shirts
- Men: Tailored or Dockers-type trousers or slacks; open-collared, button-down and polo-styled collared shirts; sweaters
- Direct Patient Care Staff: Scrubs are appropriate for direct patient care staff as long as scrubs are clean and well-maintained. Clean, well-maintained athletic shoes are appropriate footwear with scrubs.

A. Inappropriate Attire

All clothing/attire worn by an LDH employee while on duty status shall be appropriate to his/her position in the workplace.

The following clothing/attire is deemed inappropriate and is thus prohibited and not to be worn in the LDH workplace:

- Athletic wear (sweat suits, jogging suits, wind suits, workout clothing, etc.)
- Non-LDH T-shirts
- Tank tops or muscle shirts
- Shorts
- Leggings (unless worn under a dress or skirt)
- Crop pants shorter than mid-calf
- Clothing/attire that reveals cleavage, the chest, stomach, or midriff
- Clothing/attire that is sheer or transparent.
- Clothing/attire that allows undergarments to be visible
- Strapless, spaghetti-strap or backless clothing/attire
- Apparel or attire displaying obscene, profane, discriminatory, harassing, or political language, images, or messages
- Any type of clothing that is frayed, faded, or has holes
- Lounging attire or pajamas
- Beach shoes/flip flops/slippers/shower shoes

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

B. Additional Requirements

Skirts and dresses shall be professional and shall be no shorter than two inches above the knee.

Jewelry or body piercings may not display images, symbols, or messages that include profanity, sexual content, hate speech, threats, or discriminatory or harassing language or imagery.

Tattoos containing profanity, sexually explicit content, discriminatory or harassing language or imagery, hate speech, threats, or political messages must be covered while at work.

C. Casual Dress Days

LDH may allow casual dress days on certain days, such as Fridays. Appropriate clothing and attire is still expected on casual dress days; blue jeans will be allowed on such days for men and women, provided that the blue jeans are not frayed and do not have holes. Your appointing authority may direct you to adhere to special dress requirements during Legislative Session or other occasions, even on casual dress days, especially if you are meeting with the public, stakeholders, legislators, or other outside entities.

D. Appointing Authority or Designee

Your Appointing Authority or designee may direct you to adhere to special dress requirements related to your position, such as safety considerations, uniforms or the necessity to dress in “professional attire” in certain situations. (Examples of “professional attire” are suits, dresses, dress shirts, dress pants, ties, etc.). You are expected to comply with your Appointing Authority or designee’s directives in all matters involving work attire.

If your Appointing Authority or designee determines that you have reported to work in inappropriate attire, your supervisor may send you home to change into other attire. You may be placed on leave without pay during this period and you must return to your workstation in a timely fashion and appropriately attired according to your Appointing Authority or designee’s directive to you. Questions regarding appropriate dress should be directed to your supervisor.

6.2 Confidentiality

The records of our clients and patients are confidential and highly personal, and the confidentiality of these records must be maintained. Be sure that only authorized persons who have a bona fide need for the information have access to these records. You will be given training regarding the Health

Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and you will be expected to comply with HIPAA confidentiality requirements at all times during your employment with LDH.

As in any workplace, you may have access to information that is sensitive. Improperly passing on this information can be very disruptive to the office as well as to the agency. You should be careful not to divulge sensitive information except as directed by agency procedures or your supervisor. (See [LDH Policy 17 - HIPAA General Privacy Policy](#)).

6.3 Conflict of Interest (Gifts)

As a public employee you are subject to the Code of Governmental Ethics. The Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits a public employee from soliciting or accepting, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any person if the public servant knows, or reasonably should know, that the person making the gift or gratuity:

- Has or is seeking a contractual or business relationship with the public employee's agency;
- conducts activities regulated by the public employee's agency; or
- Has a substantial economic interest that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the public employee's official duties.

There are some exceptions to this general rule based on the definition of a "thing of economic value". Please check with your supervisor if you are not sure whether the gift or gratuity is a "thing of economic value."

6.4 Outside Employment

An employee who is presently engaged in, or who plans to engage in, outside employment with any person or entity that derives revenue or financial aid from LDH, including but not limited to Medicaid, state general funds, federal or state grants; and/or, is licensed or regulated by LDH, must complete the Disclosure of Outside Employment form, and submit it to your appointing authority. The appointing authority shall submit the form to the Bureau of Legal Services who will determine if an advisory opinion from the Ethics Commission for Public Employees should be obtained. If additional information is needed or an advisory opinion be obtained, you will be notified accordingly. Should you need additional information, please contact your supervisor or Human Resources. Refer to [LDH Policy 44 - Disclosure of Outside Employment](#).

6.5 Prohibited Political Activity

Article 10, Section 9 of the State Constitution and Civil Service Rules 14.1(e), (f), and (g) govern the political activities of classified state employees. The United States Supreme Court has recognized that a state has the right to limit the political activity of its workers to ensure the enforcement and

application of laws for the common good and not for the good of one candidate or political party. The Supreme Court has also recognized the right of a state to restrict such activity in order to avoid the appearance of such support. This means that classified state employees must avoid the ACTUAL support or opposition of a candidate, party, or faction. Furthermore, classified state employees also must avoid the APPEARANCE of giving such support or opposition.

For current information regarding prohibited political activities, please refer to the Civil Service page on [Prohibited Political Activity](#). You should also contact your supervisor prior to participation in any political activities to ensure that you are compliant with these restrictions. Participation in prohibited political activities may subject you to disciplinary action by the State Civil Service Commission.

6.6 Employee Conduct Policy

In an effort to project a positive image of the Department, certain standards must be met. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action in accordance with [LDH Policy 86 - Employee Conduct Policy](#).

6.7 Employee Interaction with Inmates

Building cleaning services in your area may be performed by the Department of Corrections inmates. The following list contains behaviors that are strictly prohibited when interacting with inmates (violations could result in disciplinary action):

Employee Interaction with Inmates

- Employees **shall not** engage in conversation with an offender other than simple courtesies. An employee should not respond to questions, interact in conversation, ask work related questions or give instructions to an offender. If conversation is required other than the simplest and brief, the correctional officer or LDH Safety/Security & Administrative Services Director **must** be contacted.
- Employees **shall not** correspond with an offender by phone, mail, note or any other method.
- Employees **shall not** mail letters or any other articles for an offender.
- Employees **shall not** be affectionate with an offender to include casual touching, either alone or in the presence of others or develop any type of relationship with an offender, their family or friends.

- Employees shall not call or accept calls from an offender, their family or friends. If you should receive a call either from an offender, their family or friends reject it and report it immediately to a correctional officer, LDH Safety/Security & Administrative Services Director, or the institution.
- Employees shall not allow an offender to use any telephone and should report any use of a telephone to a correctional officer or the LDH Safety/Security & Administrative Services Director immediately.
- Do not leave valuables, office supplies or contraband (i.e. jewelry, scissors, letter openers, money, cigarettes, lighters, medication, postage stamps, or cell phones) where it would be accessible to an offender. These items should be secured at all time. If you have any questions as to what is considered contraband, please consult with a correctional officer or the LDH Safety/Security & Administrative Services Director.
- Employees shall not give anything to an offender (i.e. money, cigarettes, candy, pictures, and telephone numbers). Nor should an employee accept anything from an offender (i.e. painting, drawings, poems, correspondence).
- Employees shall not bribe, influence or coerce an offender or their family or friends to violate institutional policy, procedures, rules or state or federal laws (or attempt to).
- Any employee who is related to or acquainted with an offender assigned to the building in which they work, must report this relationship to their supervisor and/or the correctional officer immediately.
- Employees shall not leave on their desk or discard into garbage cans any materials containing personal information (i.e. home address, bills, social security number, bank information, credit cards, credit card receipts or statements).
- Employees should secure their computers when not in use and memorize computer passwords. Do not leave them written where an offender can easily read it.
- Employees shall not assign an offender work outside their regular work area.
- All communications and/or jobs regarding an offender must be directed to a correctional officer or the LDH Safety/Security & Administrative Services Director.

Section 7 – Retirement

Membership in the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS) is mandatory for all state employees, except those persons specifically exempted by law. Employees who must join LASERS are probational and permanent employees with the exception of those who are contributing members of another state retirement system; are currently receiving a retirement annuity or persons that are older than age 55 at the time of employment.

7.1 Retirement Contributions

Your retirement contribution is deducted from your paycheck. The state's contribution to your retirement (paid by our agency) is determined annually and is based on an actuarial formula provided by state law.

7.2 Refunds

The money you contribute to the retirement system is not lost. Should you leave state employment before gaining retirement eligibility, you may request a refund of all your contributions made to the system. Please be aware that the state's contributions are not refunded to you, but are forfeited upon your receipt of the refund.

7.3 Disability Retirement

Should you become totally disabled and unable to perform your job duties, you may be eligible to apply for disability benefits after you have earned at least 10 years of creditable service and you are an active member at the time the disability application is submitted. Disability retirement must be approved by a Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS) authorized physician. For more information, contact [Human Resources](#) or LASERS.

7.4 Survivors' Benefits

If your death should occur prior to your retirement while in active state service or have at least 20 years of service, and are not retired, your spouse, minor children, and totally physically handicapped or mentally disabled children may be eligible to receive survivor benefits. For more information, contact Human Resources or LASERS.

7.5 Deferred Compensation

The Deferred Compensation Plan is a governmental 457 deferred compensation plan, which is a retirement savings plan that allows eligible employees to supplement any existing retirement and pension benefits by saving and investing pre-tax and/or after-tax Roth dollars through a voluntary salary contribution. Pre-tax contributions and any earnings on contributions are tax deferred until money is withdrawn. Roth contributions are made with after-tax dollars, and earnings are tax-free with tax-free distributions when qualifying events have occurred. For more information regarding

the Deferred Compensation Plan, you can access the website at [Louisiana Public Employees Deferred Compensation Plan](#).

Section 8 – Training

As an LDH employee you will be engaged in continuous learning to fulfill the dynamic public service mission of the Louisiana Department of Health. LDH and other state governmental entities have mandatory training requirements that are applicable to all LDH employees. In addition, you will be provided with training opportunities to further advance your knowledge and skills. Your supervisor will explain which training is required for you to complete and which courses are available for you to take on your own.

Section 9 – Safety

LDH is committed to providing a safe environment for the Department’s employees and clients. Each LDH employee must willingly assist management in accomplishing this goal which cannot be achieved without safe work practices. Each employee is responsible for immediately reporting accidents, unsafe conditions and work practices to supervisory staff and taking effective temporary actions to minimize risk to themselves and others. Your agency’s safety coordinator will advise you of required quarterly safety training that you must complete.

9.1 Operation of State Vehicles

If you are required to drive a state vehicle or your own vehicle while on state business, you must have proper authorization from your supervisor. You also must have a (1) valid Louisiana driver's license, (2) have successfully completed the required driving course within the last 36 months, and (3) have your driving record on file in the Department.

Section 10 – Important Web Links

As an employee of the Louisiana Department of Health, we hope you will enjoy the many benefits available to employees in state government. Listed below are links to some common state employee related websites.

LDH Website:

<http://www.ldh.louisiana.gov>

LDH Policy Manual:

<http://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/2749>

Louisiana Employees Online (LEO):

<https://leo.doa.louisiana.gov/irj/portal>

State of Louisiana Website:

<http://louisiana.gov/>

Department of State Civil Service Website:

<http://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov/>

State Travel Information:

<https://www.doa.la.gov/doa/ost/>

Office of Group Benefits Website:

<http://info.groupbenefits.org/>

State of Louisiana Public Employees Deferred Compensation Plan Website:

<https://louisianadcpretire.gwrs.com/login.do>

Section 11 – Conclusion

We hope the information contained in this handbook will assist you in becoming familiar with the policies, procedures and rules of the Department of Health. Throughout this handbook, you are referred to your supervisor for assistance in understanding LDH policies and procedures. Please take advantage of that expertise. In addition to your supervisor, the Human Resources staff stands ready to assist you.