

Texas Human Resources Management Statutes Inventory

2022-2023 Biennium

A Resource for Management of State Agencies
and Institutions of Higher Education



SAO No. 22-303

Foreword

The Texas Human Resources Management Statutes Inventory (Inventory) is provided by the State Auditor's Office as a guide to assist state agencies and institutions of higher education. The Inventory, first published in 1972 and updated every two years, is a compilation of major state and federal laws that apply to human resources management. This 23rd edition supersedes all previous editions and reflects changes made in the 87th Legislative Session.

Applicability of the Inventory: The Inventory is a general reference guide for state entities and organizations and should not be construed as legal advice. It is intended to serve as a general summary and is not intended to be an exhaustive source of information on human resources management statutes, policies, and procedures. The provisions within this Inventory apply to most executive agencies but may not always apply to higher education institutions, the judiciary, or legislative agencies. State entities should consult with their legal counsel to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Intention of Inventory

This guide does not create a contract between a state entity or organization and any employee. Unless explicitly exempted by written contract, statute, or policy, state employees are employed "at-will."

The State Auditor's Office has strived to provide an accurate summary of laws relating to human resources management. However, due to the complex nature of the subject matter, the Inventory is not intended to be comprehensive or authoritative. The specific language contained in the statutes, regulations, case law, Texas Office of the Attorney General Opinions, and other source documents takes precedence over the content of the Inventory.

Interpretation of the human resources management provisions: The Inventory draws state human resources statutes, policies, and procedures primarily from four sources: general laws enacted by the Legislature, the General Appropriations Act, federal laws, and Texas Office of the Attorney General Opinions. Texas Government Code, Section 661.151, grants the State Auditor the authority to provide a uniform interpretation of Texas Government Code, Chapter 661, Subchapter F, General Provisions for Vacation Leave for State Employees; Subchapter G, General Provisions for Sick Leave for State Employees; and Subchapter Z, Miscellaneous Leave Provisions for State Employees. Please be advised that State Auditor interpretations are advisory in nature and should not be construed as legal advice. State entities are responsible for consulting with their legal counsel to determine the best course of action and to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state laws.

Additional information: Questions from state entities concerning this Inventory should be directed to the Classification Analyst from the State Auditor's Office's State Classification Team who is assigned to the entity. Information about analyst assignments is at <https://sao.texas.gov/Contact/AgencyContactManagers>.

Contents

Foreword	<i>i</i>
Chapter 1 Standards of Conduct	<i>1</i>
Ethics Policy	1
Nepotism	1
Physical Fitness Programs and Standards	3
Political Influence.....	4
Publicity	4
Employment Restrictions for Former Officers or Employees.....	5
Unacceptable Solicitations and Benefits.....	5
Use of Alcoholic Beverages	6
Use of State Property.....	6
Chapter 2 Employment Discrimination and Anti-Retaliation Laws	<i>7</i>
General Information	7
Texas Workforce Commission	7
Workforce Diversity Programs.....	7
Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA).....	8
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)	8
Bona-Fide Occupational Qualification (BFOQ)	8
The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII	9
Religious Affiliation Discrimination	9
Sexual Harassment	9
Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA)	10
Federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978.....	10
Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)	11
Genetic Testing Discrimination	11
Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009.....	11
Protections in Reporting Violations of Law	12
Reporting Discrimination.....	12
Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect	12
Texas Whistleblower Act.....	12
Public Employee Labor Unions	13
Strikes	13
Right to Express Breast Milk	13
Required Posters at the Workplace.....	13
Chapter 3 Employee Recruitment and Selection	<i>15</i>
At-Will Employment.....	15

Reference Checks	15
Criminal History Checks	16
Dissemination of Criminal History Information.....	16
Criminal History Checks on Information Technology Employees.....	17
Criminal History Checks on Security-Sensitive Positions in Higher Education	19
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions under Title VII	19
Employees Working Out of State.....	19
Employment Preference for Former Foster Children	20
Employment Preference for Veterans.....	20
Military Occupational Specialty Codes on Employment Openings.....	20
Report on Transition from Military Service to Employment.....	21
Identification Cards for Peace Officers	21
Merit Selection Principles - Federal Laws or Regulations	22
Multiple Employment with the State	22
Appointments at State Institutions of Higher Education	23
Posting Job Vacancies	24
Online State Agency Employment Applications	24
Probationary or Introductory Period.....	25
Selective Service Registration.....	25
Verification of Employment Eligibility	25
Volunteer Programs.....	25
Civilian Workforce Composition.....	26
Workforce Analysis.....	26
Recruitment Plans.....	27

***Chapter 4 Federal Requirements: Fair Labor Standards Act and the
Family and Medical Leave Act..... 28***

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)	28
FLSA Nonexempt Employees.....	28
FLSA-Exempt Employees	30
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).....	31
Family and Medical Leave Eligibility	31
Family and Medical Leave Entitlement	32
Military Caregiver Leave	32
Spouses Employed by Same Employer	33
Family and Medical Leave Notice and Certification.....	33
Family and Medical Leave and the Use of Paid Leave	35
Determining the 12-Month Leave Entitlement Period	35
Job Restoration and Maintenance of Health Benefits.....	36

Chapter 5 State and Holiday Compensatory Time..... 37

State Compensatory Time	37
State Compensatory Time for Nonexempt Employees Subject to FLSA.....	37
State Compensatory Time for Employees Exempt from FLSA Overtime Provisions	37

State Compensatory Time for Emergency Services Personnel	38
Payment for State Compensatory Time in Certain Situations	38
Use of Compensatory Time before Lapsing	39
Notification of Compensatory Time Policy	39
Compensatory Time for Persons Governing State Agencies and Institutions of Higher Education	39
Compensatory Time and Assigned Place of Employment	40
Holiday Compensatory Time	40
Transfer of Holiday Compensatory Time between State Agencies	41
Authorizations for Payment of Holiday and State Compensatory Time	41
<i>Chapter 6 Position Classification Plan</i>	<i>42</i>
Position Classification Plan Overview	42
Agencies Subject to the Position Classification Plan	42
Agencies' Use of the Position Classification Plan	43
Bona Fide New Positions	43
State Job Descriptions	44
Classification Salary Schedules	44
Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Classification Salary Schedules A and B	44
Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Classification Salary Schedule C	47
Classification Compliance Audits	47
Salary Studies	47
<i>Chapter 7 Positions Exempt from the Position Classification Plan ..</i>	<i>49</i>
Positions Exempt from the Position Classification Plan	49
Salary Groups and Not-to-Exceed Rates for Exempt Positions	50
Salary Groups	50
Not-to-Exceed Rates	50
Exempt Employee Salaries	50
Salary Supplements for Exempt Positions	54
Provisions for Educational Institutions	54
Salary Study on Exempt Positions	54
<i>Chapter 8 Salary Administration</i>	<i>56</i>
General Information	56
Part-time and Hourly Employees	56
Salary at the Time of Hire	56
Salary Limitations	56
Salary Supplementation	57
Conversion of Exempt Employees to Classified Positions	58
Reassignment of Executive Directors	58
Demotions	59
Equity Adjustments	59
Lateral Transfers	60
Reallocations	60
Reclassifications	61

Salary Reduction for Disciplinary Reasons	61
Promotions	62
Temporary Assignments	62
<i>Chapter 9 Employee Compensation</i>	63
Employee Compensation Overview	63
Salary Limitations	63
Recovering Excess Compensation Paid	63
Benefit Replacement Pay	63
Hazardous Duty Pay	65
Hazardous Duty Pay Lifetime Service Credit	65
Amount of Hazardous Duty Pay	66
Jury Service and Witness Fees	66
Longevity Pay	66
Accrual of Lifetime Service Credit	67
Longevity Pay for State Judges and Justices	68
Longevity Pay for Return-to-Work Retirees.....	69
Longevity Pay When an Employee’s Status Changes	69
Merit Salary Increases and One-time Merit Payments	69
Employees Not Eligible for Merit Increases	70
Merit Increases at Institutions of Higher Education	71
Recruitment Bonuses	72
Retention Bonuses	72
Savings Incentive Program for State Agencies	73
Salary Stipends for Employees in Classification Salary Schedule C	74
Education Level.....	74
Commission on Law Enforcement Certification Level.....	74
Bilingual Capabilities	74
Salary Stipends and Pay for Special Assignments.....	74
Shift Differentials, Standby, or On-Call Pay.....	75
<i>Chapter 10 Payroll and Personnel Reporting</i>	76
Payroll Overview	76
Payday.....	76
Method and Frequency of Pay.....	77
Determining Amounts for Monthly or Hourly Pay	77
Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA)	78
Payroll Deductions	78
Charitable Contribution Deductions.....	79
Credit Union Deductions	79
Deductions for Membership Fees for Eligible State Employee Organizations.....	79
Deductions for Supplemental Optional Benefits Program	79
Payroll Reductions or Deductions Authorized for Institutions of Higher Education.....	80
Withholding of Administrative Fee for Supplemental Deductions	80
Deductions for Prepaid Higher Education Tuition Program	81
Limitations on State Employment Levels	81

Full-Time Equivalent Employees Reporting	83
<i>Chapter 11 General Leave Provisions</i>	85
Employee Leave Policies	85
Leave Records	85
Leave Reporting	86
Reporting of Emergency Leave and Leave During an Investigation.....	86
Vacation Leave	86
Vacation Leave Accruals and Utilization	87
Vacation Leave for Legislative Employees	88
Vacation Leave and Employee Transfers and Separations	89
Vacation Leave Accruals and Retirees	90
Sick Leave	90
Sick Leave Accruals and Utilization	90
Sick Leave Records for Faculty at Institutions of Higher Education	91
Sick Leave and Employee Transfers and Separations	91
Extended Sick Leave	92
Sick Leave Pool	92
Administering the Sick Leave Pool	92
Family Leave Pool	93
Administering the Family Leave Pool	94
Donation of Sick Leave to Another Employee	95
Parental Leave.....	95
Education Service Centers and Leave	96
Leave without Pay	96
Payment of Accrued Leave of Deceased Employees	97
Leave Policies and Provisions for Institutions of Higher Education	97
<i>Chapter 12 Miscellaneous Leave Provisions</i>	99
Administrative Leave for Outstanding Performance	99
Amateur Radio Operator Leave	99
Assistance Dog Training	100
Blood Donation	100
Bone Marrow and Organ Donation	100
Volunteers of Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster	100
Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteers	101
Emergency Leave.....	101
Death of an Employee's Family Member	101
Good Cause	101
Reporting of Emergency Leave.....	102
Foster Parent Leave	102
Injury Leave for Certain Peace Officers	102
Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers	103
Leave During an Agency Investigation.....	104
Medical and Mental Health Care Leave for Certain Veterans.....	104

Sick Leave for Educational Activities.....	104
Time Off to Vote	104
Volunteer Firefighters, Emergency Medical Services Volunteers, and Search and Rescue Volunteers Training Leave.....	105
Reserve Law Enforcement Officer Training Leave.....	105
Additional Miscellaneous Leave Types Provided Under Texas Labor Code and Texas Government Code	105
Compliance with a Subpoena.....	105
Jury Service	106
Wellness Leave.....	106
<i>Chapter 13 State Employee Holidays</i>	<i>107</i>
Overview of Holidays for State Employees	107
Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 Holiday Schedules.....	109
Optional Holidays	111
Holidays and Employee Separations	111
Holidays and Employee Transfers.....	111
Holidays for Employees Working Non-Traditional Schedules.....	111
Holidays for Institutions of Higher Education	112
Holiday Time Payment for Deceased Employees	112
<i>Chapter 14 Military Leave and Employment Rights</i>	<i>113</i>
Military Leave Overview.....	113
Veteran’s Liaisons.....	113
Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)	113
Military Leave Entitlements and Eligibility	114
Military Family Leave Entitlements	116
Paid Leave and State Service.....	116
Notice of Military Leave	117
Military Pay Differentials.....	117
Determining Eligibility.....	118
Returning Service Members	118
Applications for Reemployment	118
Entitlement to Retirement or Other Benefits	119
Veteran’s Employment Preference	119
Veteran Employment Goal for State Agencies	120
Designation of Open Positions for, and Immediate Hiring of, Individuals Entitled to a Veteran’s Employment Preference.....	120
Interviews.....	120
State Employment Forms	121
Employment Investigation	121
Competitive Examinations	121
Reductions in Force	121
Appealing Employment Decisions Under Veteran’s Preference	121
Veteran’s Preference Reporting Requirements.....	122

Chapter 15 Insurance Programs 123

Insurance Overview 123
Employee Insurance Benefits 123
 Waiting Period for Health Insurance Coverage 124
 Dependent Coverage 124
 State Contributions for Health Insurance 124
Dental Insurance 125
Vision Insurance 125
Tobacco User Premium 125
Employee Life and Disability Insurance 125
 Accelerated Payment of Life Insurance Benefits 125

Chapter 16 Retirement 127

Retirement Overview 127
Employees Retirement System (ERS) 127
 Retirement Contributions 128
 Withdrawal of Contributions 129
 Classes of Membership 129
Retirement Eligibility 130
Establishing Service Credit 130
 Determining the Standard Service Retirement Annuity 131
Proportionate Retirement Program 131
Resumption of State Service by a Retiree 132
Deferred Compensation 132
 401(k) Plan Automatic Enrollment 133

Chapter 17 Additional Benefits 134

Awards and Gifts 134
Employee Health and Wellness Programs 134
 Health Fitness and Education Programs 134
 Wellness Programs 135
 Wellness Council 136
 Employee Assistance Programs 136
Child Care Expenses 136
Memberships In and Dues for Professional Organizations 136
Moving and Storage Expenses 137
State-Owned Housing 137

Chapter 18 Training 138

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Compliance Training 138
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Standards Training 138
Coordinated Technology Training 138
Cybersecurity Training 139
 Cybersecurity Awareness Training and Data Use Agreements 139
 Cybersecurity Training for State Agency Employees 139

Cybersecurity Training for Agency Contractors	139
Training and Education Programs	140
Training Policy Requirements	141
Contract Management and Purchasing Training	143
Reporting of Contract Management and Procurement Staff	143
Training in Contract Negotiation for Purchase of Information Resources Technologies	143
<i>Chapter 19 Unemployment Insurance Compensation</i>	<i>144</i>
Overview	144
Filing an Initial Claim for Unemployment Benefits and Notice of Initial Claim	144
Appeals Process	145
Reimbursements to the Unemployment Compensation Fund	145
Coverage for State Employees Working Outside the State	146
<i>Chapter 20 Workers' Compensation</i>	<i>147</i>
Overview of Workers' Compensation	147
Coverage for State Employees	147
Workers' Compensation Health Care Networks	148
Out of State Assignments or Positions	148
Coverage for Services Provided by Volunteers	149
Workers' Compensation Benefits	149
Employer Responsibilities	149
Workers' Compensation and State Leave Provisions	151
Workers' Compensation and Emergency Leave	152
Employer's Rights	152
Employee's Responsibilities	153
Additional Injury Reporting Requirements	153
Facilitating an Injured Employee's Return to Work	154
<i>Chapter 21 Miscellaneous Provisions</i>	<i>155</i>
Employee Exit Surveys.....	155
Exit Survey Employee Access.....	155
Exit Survey Reporting and Disclosure Requirements	156
Human Resources Staffing	156
Place of Work and Working Hours	156
Eight-Hour Work Day for Certain Public Works Employees.....	157
Voluntary Work Reduction Program	157
Workforce Planning	158
Designated Information Security Officer.....	158
Designated Data Management Officer.....	158
Restrictions on State Agency Use of Certain Individual-Identifying Information.....	159

***Appendices*..... 161**

Appendix 1
Objective, Scope, and Methodology161

Appendix 2
State Agency Responsibilities163

Appendix 3
Entitlements for State Agency Employees.....165

Appendix 4
Entitlements for Employees of Institutions of Higher Education166

Appendix 5
Pay Entitlements Upon Separation from State Employment167

Appendix 6
Transfer and Rehire Leave Reinstatement Entitlements168

Chapter 1 **Standards of Conduct**

Ethics Policy

Each state agency and institution of higher education is required to adopt a written ethics policy outlining standards of conduct for employees. The ethics policy should be distributed to each new employee no later than the third business day after the date of employment with the agency.¹ The Office of the Attorney General is responsible for developing and distributing a model policy that state agencies may use.² A state employee who violates an agency's ethics policy is subject to termination.³

Nepotism

Nepotism statutes focus primarily on prohibiting public officials from employing their relatives. Specifically, the nepotism statutes state that public officials are not allowed to appoint, confirm, or vote for the appointment or confirmation of a person to a position that is compensated from public funds or fees of office if either of the following conditions is met:

- If the relationship is within the third degree by consanguinity or within the second degree by affinity (see Table 1-1 on the next page); or
- The public official holds the appointment or confirmation authority as a member of a state or local board, the Legislature, or a court and the individual is related to another member of that board, Legislature, or court within a degree described within Table 1-1.⁴

Individuals are related by consanguinity if one is a descendant of the other, or if they share a common ancestor. An adopted child is considered to be the child of an adoptive parent for this purpose.⁵ Individuals are related to each other by affinity if they are married to each other, or the spouse of one of the individuals is related by consanguinity to the other individual.⁶

¹ Texas Government Code, Section 572.051(c).

² Texas Government Code, Section 572.051(d).

³ Texas Government Code, Section 572.051(b).

⁴ Texas Government Code, Sections 573.002 and 573.041.

⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 573.022.

⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 573.024(a).

A “public official” is:

- A political officer.
- An officer or board member.
- A judge.⁷

A state agency may adopt a nepotism policy that is more restrictive than state law.⁸

Table 1-1

Consanguinity and Affinity Relationship Chart From Public Official or Employee ⁹					
Consanguinity (Includes individuals related by blood to the official or employee)			Affinity (Includes an official’s or employee’s spouse and individuals related to the spouse)		
First Degree	Second Degree	Third Degree	First Degree	Second Degree	Third Degree
Parent	Grandparent	Great Grandparent	Spouse	Grandparent	Great Grandparent
Child	Grandchild	Great Grandchild	Parent	Grandchild	Great Grandchild
	Brother or Sister	Uncle or Aunt	Child	Brother or Sister	Uncle or Aunt
		Nephew or Niece			Nephew or Niece

Exceptions to a nepotism policy include:

- An appointment as a notary public.
- An appointment as a page, secretary, personal attendant, or any other person employed by the Legislature to attend to a member of the Legislature who, because of physical infirmities, is required to have a personal attendant.
- A confirmation of appointment to a term in the Legislature when no one related to the appointee within the prescribed degrees was a member or candidate.¹⁰

⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 573.001(3).

⁸ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion MW-540 (1982).

⁹ Texas Government Code, Sections 573.023 and 573.025.

¹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 573.061.

Another exception is made for appointments, confirmations, or votes for an appointment or confirmation when the individual is employed in the position immediately before the election or appointment of the public official to whom the individual is related and the prior employment of the individual is continuous for at least:

- Thirty days, if the public official is appointed.
- Six months, if the public official is elected through an election other than the general election for state and county officers.
- One year, if the public official is elected through the general election for state and county officers.¹¹

When an employee is allowed to continue in a position because of an exception to the nepotism rules, the appointing official (who is a relative) cannot participate in decision making regarding the employee unless such deliberations affect a class or category of employees.¹²

The Texas Office of the Attorney General opinions on nepotism are available at <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/attorney-general-opinions>.

Physical Fitness Programs and Standards

State agencies with commissioned law enforcement officers are required to adopt physical fitness programs in which commissioned law enforcement officers must participate and physical fitness standards that the officers must meet. The standards must directly relate to the officer's job duties and include individual fitness goals specific to the officer's age and gender. The agencies must use the services of a consultant to aid in the development of such standards. Each agency is required to adopt policies and procedures to provide reward incentives in the form of administrative leave to officers who participate in the physical fitness program and meet the standards. The total administrative leave offered as reward incentives is limited to four days per year.¹³ For a list of state agencies covered under this provision, see Texas Government Code, Section 614.171.

A violation of the adopted standards is just cause for dismissal or transfer to a position not compensated within Classification Salary Schedule C prescribed by the General Appropriations Act. The agencies, however, may exempt a law enforcement officer from participating in a physical fitness program or meeting a standard based on the facts and circumstances of the individual case, including whether an officer was injured in the line of duty. Each agency may adopt physical readiness standards independent of the other agencies.¹⁴

¹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 573.062(a).

¹² Texas Government Code, Section 573.062(b).

¹³ Texas Government Code, Section 614.172(a) and (a-1).

¹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 614.172(a-2), (b), and (c).

Political Influence

A state agency or institution of higher education may not use any money under its control to finance or support the candidacy of a person for an office in the legislative, executive, or judicial branch of state government or of the government of the United States.¹⁵

State officers and employees may not use official authority or influence to affect the result of an election or nomination of a candidate or to achieve any political purpose.¹⁶ Employees may not coerce, command, restrict, or prevent contributions to candidates or political organizations.¹⁷

The use of state-owned or state-leased vehicles to support the candidacy of a person running for office is prohibited.¹⁸

State agencies and institutions of higher education may not use appropriated funds to attempt to influence the passage or defeat of any legislation. However, this does not prohibit a state officer or employee from using state resources to provide public information or to provide information in response to a request.¹⁹

State agencies and institutions of higher education may not use appropriated funds to employ as a regular or contract employee a person who is required by Texas Government Code, Chapter 305, to register as a lobbyist. In addition, a state agency may not use any money under its control to employ or contract with an individual who is required by Texas Government Code, Chapter 305, to register as a lobbyist.²⁰ State agencies and institutions of higher education also may not use appropriated funds to pay membership dues to an organization that pays part or all of the salary of a person who is required by Texas Government Code, Chapter 305, to register as a lobbyist.²¹

Each agency and institution of higher education is required to provide all employees a copy of prohibited political activities and to maintain signed acknowledgements from employees. These acknowledgements must be made available for public inspection.²²

Publicity

A state agency or institution of higher education may not use appropriated money to publicize or direct attention to a state officer or employee.²³ In addition, a state agency or institution of higher education may not use appropriated money to maintain a publicity office or department, employ an

¹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 556.004(a).

¹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 556.004(c).

¹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 556.004(d).

¹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 556.004(b).

¹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 556.006.

²⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 556.005(a).

²¹ Texas Government Code, Section 556.005(b).

²² Texas Government Code, Section 556.009.

²³ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.011(a).

individual who has the title or duties of a public relations or press agent, or pay a public relations agent or business.²⁴

Employment Restrictions for Former Officers or Employees

A former member of a governing body or executive head of a regulatory agency may not make any communication to or appearance before an officer or employee of the agency in which the member or executive head served until two years after the member or executive head has ceased employment with the agency if the communication or appearance is made with the intent to influence and on behalf of any person in connection with any matter on which the person seeks official action.²⁵

A former state officer or employee of a regulatory agency who ceased service or employment with that agency on or after January 1, 1992, may not represent any person or receive compensation for services rendered for a particular matter (a specific investigation, application, request for a ruling or determination, rulemaking proceeding, contract, claim, charge, accusation, arrest, or judicial or other proceeding) in which the former officer or employee participated during his or her period of state service or employment.²⁶

A former state officer or employee of a state agency or institution of higher education who during the period of state service or employment participated on behalf of a state agency or institution of higher education in a procurement or contract negotiation involving a person or business entity may not accept employment from that person or entity before the second anniversary of the date on which the contract was signed or the procurement is terminated or withdrawn.²⁷

Unacceptable Solicitations and Benefits

State law requires that all individuals who are responsible to the State in the performance of their official duties observe certain standards of conduct and disclosure requirements.

Employees and officers should not:

- Accept or solicit any gift, favor, or service that might tend to influence the employee's or officer's discharge of official duties or that is offered with the intent to influence official conduct.
- Accept other employment or engage in a business or professional activity that might reasonably require the employee or officer to disclose confidential information acquired by reason of an official position.

Texas Ethics Commission

The Texas Ethics Commission issues written opinions on standards of conduct and conflict of interest provisions of state statute; such opinions may be requested by a person subject to those provisions. Written opinions are available on the Texas Ethics Commission's website at <https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/>.

²⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.011(b).

²⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 572.054(a).

²⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 572.054(b), (c), and (h).

²⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 572.069.

- Accept other employment or compensation that might impair the employee’s or officer’s independence of judgment in the performance of official duties.
- Make personal investments that might create a conflict between the employee’s or officer’s private interest and the public’s interest.
- Intentionally or knowingly solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit for having exercised official powers or performed official duties in favor of another.²⁸

A state agency or institution of higher education may not use appropriated money to compensate a state employee who violates a standard of conduct.²⁹ In addition, unless authorized by law, a state employee may not accept money for wages or travel expenses from a person that the employee’s state agency intends to, or is currently, auditing, examining, or investigating.³⁰

Use of Alcoholic Beverages

Except for legitimate law enforcement purposes, a state agency or institution of higher education may not use appropriated funds to compensate an officer or state employee who uses alcoholic beverages on active duty, or to reimburse a travel expense for the purchase of an alcoholic beverage.³¹

Use of State Property

State property may be used only for official state purposes and should not be used for personal purposes.³² This includes the use of state-owned or state-leased motor vehicles, which may be used only for official state business. The use of such vehicles to commute to and from work is acceptable if it is approved by the administrative head of a state agency or institution of higher education. The names and job titles of these employees and the reasons for authorization must be included in an annual report to the Office of the Governor, Legislative Reference Library, State Auditor’s Office, and Legislative Budget Board.³³ The reporting requirement does not apply to institutions of higher education.³⁴

²⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 572.051(a).

²⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.014(a).

³⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 660.016(a).

³¹ Texas Government Code, Section 660.113(e); and Texas Government Code, Sections 2113.012 and 2113.101.

³² Texas Government Code, Section 2203.004.

³³ Texas Government Code, Section 2101.0115(a) and (c)(13); and Texas Government Code, Section 2113.013.

³⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 2101.0115(e).

Chapter 2

Employment Discrimination and Anti-Retaliation Laws

General Information

Employment discrimination laws make it illegal for employers to treat employees and applicants adversely based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, or genetic information. This chapter summarizes some major federal and state laws that are applicable to state agencies and institutions of higher education.

Texas Workforce Commission

The Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) is responsible for the education on and enforcement of certain state and federal employment laws. The Commission serves as the State's Fair Employment Practices agency that is authorized, with respect to unlawful employment practices, to seek relief and grant relief related to state and federal employment laws. The Commission provides training to help state agencies and institutions of higher education improve their understanding of and compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity laws.³⁵

Each state agency and institution of higher education is required to provide training to each new employee on policies and procedures relating to employment discrimination, including employment discrimination involving sexual harassment, no later than 30 days after the date of hire. In addition, supplemental training is required every two years. Training materials are available from the Commission. A signed statement verifying attendance is required to be maintained in each employee's personnel file.³⁶

A person, or the person's agent, claiming to be discriminated against by an unlawful employment practice may file a complaint with the Commission.³⁷

Workforce Diversity Programs

State agencies and institutions of higher education are required to develop and implement personnel policies that comply with Chapter 21 of the Texas Labor Code (Employment Discrimination), including the development of a workforce diversity program.³⁸ The Commission is required to review these policies to ensure compliance with state statute. If the Commission finds that these policies do not comply with state statute, it will recommend revisions.³⁹

³⁵ Texas Labor Code, Sections 21.0015 and 21.003(a).

³⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.010.

³⁷ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.201(a).

³⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.452.

³⁹ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.453(a) and (c).

An employer does not commit an unlawful employment practice by developing and implementing personnel policies that incorporate workforce diversity programs.⁴⁰

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA)

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) and the Texas Labor Code prohibit discrimination against a person (employee or job applicant) because of his or her age with respect to any term, condition, or privilege of employment including, but not limited to, hiring, firing, promotion, layoff, compensation, benefits, job assignments, and training. Employees aged 40 and older are protected from such age-related discrimination.⁴¹

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

This law applies to state agencies and institutions of higher education and prohibits discrimination in all employment practices, including job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.⁴²

The ADA has been amended several times since its passage in 1990, including changes effective January 1, 2009, that clarified and broadened the definition of disability and expanded the population eligible for protections under the ADA.⁴³ The ADA undergoes continuous interpretation in the court systems; therefore, an agency or institution of higher education should consult with its legal counsel or subject matter experts in regard to these matters.

ADA Best Practices Tool Kit

The U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division has issued an *ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments* designed to help state and local government officials improve compliance requirements for access to programs, services, activities, and facilities. The tool kit is available at

<https://www.ada.gov/pccatoolkit/toolkitmain.htm>.

Bona-Fide Occupational Qualification (BFOQ)

No person must be subject to discriminatory employment practices based on race, color, disability, religion, sex, national origin, or age. However, there may be some exceptions based upon bona-fide occupational qualifications (BFOQ). A BFOQ is a requirement that is necessary and related to the performance of a job and that would otherwise be unlawful because of its discriminatory impact

⁴⁰ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.121.

⁴¹ Texas Labor Code, Sections 21.051 and 21.101; and Title 29, United States Code, Sections 621 – 634 (Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967).

⁴² *A Guide to Disability Rights Laws*, U.S. Department of Justice's website at <https://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm>.

⁴³ *The ADA Amendments Act of 2008: Frequently Asked Questions*, U.S. Department of Labor's website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/faqs/americans-with-disabilities-act-amendments>.

based on one's sex, religion, race, or other reasons.⁴⁴ The concept of BFOQ is interpreted very narrowly by federal courts and the U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, and state agencies and institutions of higher education should consult with their legal counsel before choosing to use a BFOQ.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as Texas Labor Code, Chapter 21, prohibits employment discrimination because of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability.⁴⁵ An employer commits an unlawful employment practice if, because of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability, the employer:

- Fails or refuses to hire an individual, discharges an individual, or discriminates in any other manner against an individual in connection with compensation or the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.
- Limits, segregates, or classifies an employee or applicant for employment in a manner that would deprive or tend to deprive an individual of any employment opportunity or adversely affect in any other manner the status of an employee.⁴⁶

Title VII also prohibits employment decisions based on stereotypes and assumptions about abilities, traits, or the performance of individuals of certain racial groups. Title VII not only prohibits intentional discrimination, it also prohibits neutral job policies that disproportionately impact minorities.⁴⁷

Religious Affiliation Discrimination

Texas Labor Code, Chapter 21, prohibits discrimination of an employee or applicant based on any aspect of religious observance, practice, or belief; unless an employer demonstrates that the employer is unable to reasonably accommodate the religious observance or practice of an employee or applicant without undue hardship to the conduct of the employer's business.⁴⁸

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of gender-based discrimination prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Sexual harassment is defined within the Code of Federal Regulations as:

“Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such

⁴⁴ *Especially for Texas Employers, Affirmative Action*, Texas Workforce Commission's website at https://twc.texas.gov/news/eft/affirmative_action.html.

⁴⁵ Texas Labor Code, Sections 21.051 and 21.110; and Title 42, United States Code, Section 2000e-2 (Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964).

⁴⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.051; and Title 42, United States Code, Section 2000e-2(a) (Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964).

⁴⁷ *Questions and Answers about Race and Color Discrimination in Employment*, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's website at <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/questions-and-answers-about-race-and-color-discrimination-employment>.

⁴⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.108.

conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."⁴⁹

A similar definition exists at the state level, and the Texas Labor Code provides that an employer commits an unlawful employment practice if sexual harassment of an employee occurs and the employer or the employer's agents or supervisors (1) know or should have known that the conduct constituting sexual harassment was occurring, and (2) fail to take immediate and appropriate corrective action.⁵⁰

New Requirement
The 87th Legislature enacted legislation defining sexual harassment and providing that an employer commits an unlawful employment practice if sexual harassment of an employee occurs and the employer knows or should have known that the conduct was occurring and fails to take immediate and appropriate corrective action.

Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA)

The Equal Pay Act (EPA) of 1963 requires that men and women be given equal pay for equal work in the same establishment. The jobs need not be identical, but they must be substantially equal. It is job content, not job titles, that determines whether jobs are substantially equal. Employers may not pay unequal wages to men and women who perform jobs that require substantially equal skill, effort, and responsibility and that are performed under similar working conditions within the same establishment.⁵¹

Federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978

The Federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 and Texas Labor Code, Chapter 21, prohibit discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions must be treated in the same manner as other employees or applicants who have medical conditions that place a similar limitation on their ability or inability to work.⁵²

⁴⁹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1604.11(a).

⁵⁰ Texas Labor Code, Chapter 21, Subchapter C-1, as added by Senate Bill 45 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁵¹ *The Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Equal Pay/Compensation Discrimination*, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's websites at <https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/equal-pay-act-1963> and <https://www.eeoc.gov/equal-paycompensation-discrimination>.

⁵² Texas Labor Code, Section 21.106; and *The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978*, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's websites at <https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/pregnancy-discrimination-act-1978> and <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/fact-sheet-pregnancy-discrimination>.

The Texas Department of Public Safety (Department) is required to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the request of a commissioned officer who is determined by a physician to be partially physically restricted by a pregnancy if the request is related to the officer's working conditions. If an officer's physician certifies that, because of the officer's pregnancy, the officer is unable to perform the duties of the officer's permanent work assignment and a temporary work assignment that the officer may perform is available, the Department must, on request of the officer, assign the officer to the temporary work assignment.⁵³

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) is a federal law that prohibits discrimination in health coverage and employment based on genetic information. GINA prohibits group health plans and health insurers from denying health insurance coverage or charging higher premiums based solely on a genetic predisposition. GINA also prohibits employers from using an individual's genetic information when making hiring, firing, job placement, or promotion decisions.⁵⁴

Genetic Testing Discrimination

State agencies and institutions of higher education are prohibited from discriminating against an individual on the basis of genetic information or an individual's refusal to submit to a genetic test. Routine physical exams; cholesterol, blood, or urine analyses; and tests to determine drug use are excluded from this definition of genetic testing.⁵⁵

Unless specifically exempted by law, an employee's genetic information is confidential, regardless of the source, and cannot be disclosed without written authorization from the employee.⁵⁶

Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 amends Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and it modifies the operation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 clarifies that a discriminatory compensation decision or other practice occurs each time compensation is paid pursuant to the discriminatory compensation decision or other practice. Also, it allows pay discrimination complaints to be filed 180 days (or 300 days in jurisdictions that have a local or state law prohibiting the same form of compensation discrimination) after any discriminatory paycheck.⁵⁷

⁵³ Texas Government Code, Section 411.0079.

⁵⁴ *The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008*, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's website at <https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/genetic-information-nondiscrimination-act-2008>.

⁵⁵ Texas Labor Code, Sections 21.401 and 21.402.

⁵⁶ Texas Labor Code, Sections 21.403, 21.4031, and 21.4032.

⁵⁷ *Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009*, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's websites at <https://www.eeoc.gov/lilly-ledbetter-fair-pay-act-2009-original-text> and <https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/notice-concerning-lilly-ledbetter-fair-pay-act-2009>.

Protections in Reporting Violations of Law

Employees are provided certain protections and relief against retaliation for reporting violations of laws, or “whistleblowing.” This subsection summarizes some major state laws that are applicable to state agencies and institutions of higher education.

Reporting Discrimination

The same laws that prohibit discrimination also prohibit retaliation against individuals who oppose unlawful discrimination or participate in an employment discrimination proceeding. An employer may not fire, demote, harass, or otherwise retaliate against individuals for filing a charge of discrimination, participating in a discrimination proceeding, or otherwise opposing discrimination.⁵⁸

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

An employer may not take an adverse employment action against a professional who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect to the person’s supervisor, administrator, a regulatory agency, or law enforcement. In this situation, “professional” means an employee of a facility licensed, certified, or operated by the State and who, in the normal course of official duties or duties for which a license or certification is required, has direct contact with children. The term includes teachers, nurses, doctors, day-care employees, employees of a clinic or health care facility that provides reproductive services, juvenile probation officers, and juvenile detention or correctional officers.⁵⁹

Persons initiating or cooperating with an investigation are also extended this protection. This protection does not apply to a person who discloses his or her own abuse or neglect of a child or who initiates or cooperates with an investigation or proceeding by a governmental entity relating to an allegation of the person’s own abuse or neglect of a child.⁶⁰

Texas Whistleblower Act

A state agency or institution of higher education may not suspend, terminate, or take other adverse personnel action against an employee who, in good faith, reports a violation of the law by the employing governmental entity or another public employee to an appropriate law enforcement authority.⁶¹ Agencies and institutions of higher education must inform its employees of their rights by posting a sign in a prominent location in the workplace.⁶² A copy of this sign may be obtained online from the Texas Office of the Attorney General at <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/divisions/general-oag/WhistleblowerPoster.pdf>.

⁵⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.055.

⁵⁹ Texas Family Code, Sections 261.101(b) and 261.110(a) and (b).

⁶⁰ Texas Family Code, Sections 261.110(b) and 261.110(m).

⁶¹ Texas Government Code, Section 554.002(a).

⁶² Texas Government Code, Section 554.009(a).

Public Employee Labor Unions

Texas is a “right-to-work” state. As such, no person can be denied public employment due to membership or non-membership in a labor union.⁶³

Strikes

Public employees may not strike or engage in an organized work stoppage against the State. A public employee who violates this statute forfeits all civil service rights, re-employment rights, and any other rights, benefits, and privileges the employee enjoys as a result of public employment or former public employment. The right of an individual to cease work may not be abridged if the individual is not acting in concert with others in an organized work stoppage.⁶⁴

Right to Express Breast Milk

State agencies and institutions of higher education are required to develop a written policy that supports the practice of expressing breast milk and make reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk.⁶⁵

In addition, a state agency and institution of higher education must:

- Provide a reasonable amount of break time for an employee to express breast milk as needed.
- Provide a place, other than a multiple user bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from other employees and the public where the employee can express breast milk.⁶⁶

A state agency or institution of higher education may not discriminate against, suspend or terminate the employment of an employee for asserting the employee’s rights regarding the expression of breast milk.⁶⁷

Required Posters at the Workplace

Various laws require employers to display posters communicating employment rights for individuals in the workplace. These posters are available free of charge from various state and federal agencies. Table 2-1 on the next page provides a list of posters that may be required as well as the agencies responsible for their distribution. Additional information, as well as links to these resources, is available through the Texas Workforce Commission’s website at <https://twc.texas.gov/businesses/posters-workplace>.

⁶³ Texas Labor Code, Section 101.052; and Texas Government Code, Section 617.004.

⁶⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 617.003.

⁶⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 619.003.

⁶⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 619.004.

⁶⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 619.005.

Table 2-1

Required Workplace Posters ⁶⁸	
Issuing Agency	Poster Title
Texas Office of Injured Employee Counsel	<i>Employer's Notice of Ombudsman Program</i>
Texas Department of Insurance	<i>Workers' Compensation Posters</i>
Texas Department of State Health Services	<i>Texas Hazard Communication Act</i>
Texas Office of the Attorney General	<i>You Have the Right to Not Remain Silent</i>
Texas Workforce Commission	<i>The Law in Texas (optional poster)</i>
U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration	<i>Job Service Complaint System</i>
U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)	<i>Job Safety and Health: It's the Law</i>
U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service	<i>Your Rights Under USERRA</i>
U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division	<i>Employee Rights Under the Fair Labor Standards Act</i>
U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division	<i>Employee Rights Under the Family and Medical Leave Act</i>
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	<i>Equal Employment Opportunity Is the Law</i>

⁶⁸ *Posters for the Workplace*, Texas Workforce Commission's website at <https://www.twc.texas.gov/businesses/posters-workplace>.

Chapter 3

Employee Recruitment and Selection

At-Will Employment

Unless explicitly exempted by written contract, statute, or policy, all state employees are employed “at-will” and there is no implied contract of employment.⁶⁹ “At-will” employment defines an employment relationship in which either party can terminate the relationship with no liability if there was no express contract for a definite term governing the employment relationship. Under this legal doctrine:

- Any hiring is presumed to be “at-will.” That is, the employer is free to discharge individuals “for good cause, or bad cause, or no cause at all.”
- The employee is equally free to quit or otherwise cease work.

Some state agencies may have employees who are subject to federal and state statutory provisions and regulations that may affect the “at-will” relationship. Agencies should consult their general counsel to determine if they are subject to any state or federal laws or regulations that would affect the “at-will” status of their employees.

Reference Checks

An employer in the State that discloses information about a current or former employee’s job performance to a prospective employer is immune from civil liability for that disclosure or any damages caused by that disclosure unless it is proven that the information was known to be false or was made with reckless disregard for the truth.⁷⁰ This applies to a managerial employee or other representative of the employer who is authorized to provide and who provides this information.⁷¹ An employer is not required to provide an employment reference to or about a current or former employee.⁷²

Additionally, although the employer is not required to do so, the employer may disclose information about a current or former employee’s job performance to a prospective employer at the request of either the prospective employer or the employee.⁷³

⁶⁹ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion JM-941 (1988).

⁷⁰ Texas Labor Code, Sections 103.001 and 103.004(a).

⁷¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 103.004(b).

⁷² Texas Labor Code, Section 103.005.

⁷³ Texas Labor Code, Section 103.003(a).

An employer may not disclose information about a licensed nurse or licensed vocational nurse that relates to conduct that is protected under Texas Occupations Code, Sections 301.352 and 303.005. The employer must provide the nurse with an opportunity to submit information that would allow the nurse to establish his or her protection under this code.⁷⁴

Criminal History Checks

Texas Government Code, Chapter 411, Subchapter F, establishes limitations on agency access to criminal history record information maintained by the Department of Public Safety (Department). The limitations in this chapter do not apply to all types of criminal history information. Agencies should consult Texas Government Code, Sections 411.089 through 411.1409, for more information on agency-specific access and limitations.

Dissemination of Criminal History Information

Criminal history record information maintained by the Department is confidential information for the use of the Department and may not be disseminated by the Department except to the following:

- Criminal justice agencies.
- Non-criminal justice agencies authorized by federal statute or executive order or by state statute to receive criminal history record information.
- The person who is the subject of the criminal history record information.
- A person working on a research or statistical project that is funded in whole or in part by state funds; or meets the requirements of Title 28, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 22, and is approved by the Department.
- An individual or an agency that has a specific agreement with a criminal justice agency to provide services required for the administration of criminal justice under that agreement, if the agreement:
 - ♦ Specifically authorizes access to the information.
 - ♦ Limits the use of information to the purposes for which it is given.
 - ♦ Ensures the security and confidentiality of the information.
 - ♦ Provides for sanctions if a requirement imposed is violated.
 - ♦ Requires the individual or agency to perform the applicable services in a manner prescribed by the Department.
- An individual or an agency that has a specific agreement with a non-criminal justice agency to provide services related to the use of criminal history record information, if the agreement:
 - ♦ Specifically authorizes access to the information.

⁷⁴ Texas Labor Code, Section 103.003(b).

- ◆ Limits the use of information to the purposes for which it is given.
 - ◆ Ensures the security and confidentiality of the information.
 - ◆ Provides for sanctions if a requirement imposed is violated.
 - ◆ Requires the individual or agency to perform the applicable services in a manner prescribed by the Department.
- A county or district clerk's office.
 - The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System.⁷⁵

The Department is not required to release or disclose criminal history record information to any person that is not in compliance with rules adopted by the Department or rules adopted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation that relate to the dissemination or use of criminal history record information.⁷⁶

Criminal history record information is for the exclusive use of the authorized recipient of the information and may be disclosed or used by the authorized recipient only if, and only to the extent that, disclosure or use is appropriately authorized or directed.⁷⁷ It is a criminal offense to obtain, use, or disclose a criminal history record in an unauthorized manner. Additionally, it is an offense to provide this information in exchange for money or to employ another person to do so. The Department must provide a copy of the penalties of unauthorized obtainment and the use of or disclosure of criminal history record information to a person who applies for access to criminal history record information maintained by the Department and to each private entity that purchases criminal history record information from the Department.⁷⁸

Criminal History Checks on Information Technology Employees

A state agency or institution of higher education can obtain the criminal history record information maintained by the Department that relates to a person who:

- Is an employee, applicant for employment, contractor, subcontractor, or intern or other volunteer with the state agency or institution of higher education or with a contractor or subcontractor for the state agency or institution of higher education; **and**
- Has access to information resources or information resources technologies, other than a desktop computer or telephone station assigned to that person.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 411.083(a) and (b).

⁷⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 411.083(d).

⁷⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 411.084.

⁷⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 411.085.

⁷⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 411.1405(b).

If a state agency or institution of higher education obtains criminal history record information, it may not release or disclose the information or any documents or other records derived from the information except:

- By court order;
- With the consent of the person who is the subject of the information; **or**
- To the affected contractor or subcontractor, unless the information was obtained by the Department from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.⁸⁰

A state agency or institution of higher education and the affected contractor or subcontractor are required to destroy criminal history information that relates to a person (1) after the information is used to make an employment decision or (2) after taking a personnel action relating to the person who is the subject of the information.⁸¹

A state agency or institution of higher education may not obtain criminal history record information unless the state agency or institution of higher education first adopts policies and procedures that provide that evidence of a criminal conviction or other relevant information obtained from the criminal history record information does not automatically disqualify an individual from employment.⁸²

The Texas Office of the Attorney General must review the agency's or institution's policies and procedures for compliance with due process and other legal requirements before adoption by the state agency or institution of higher education. The Texas Office of the Attorney General may charge a fee to the state agency or institution of higher education to cover the cost of the review. The policies and procedures adopted by the state agency or institution of higher education must provide that the hiring official will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether the individual is qualified for employment based on factors that include:

- The specific duties of the position.
- The number of offenses committed by the individual.
- The nature and seriousness of each offense.
- The length of time between the offense and the employment decision.
- The efforts by the individual at rehabilitation.
- The accuracy of the information on the individual's employment application.⁸³

⁸⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 411.1405(c).

⁸¹ Texas Government Code, Section 411.1405(d).

⁸² Texas Government Code, Section 411.1405(e).

⁸³ Texas Government Code, Section 411.1405(e).

Criminal History Checks on Security-Sensitive Positions in Higher Education

Institutions of higher education and the Higher Education Coordinating Board are also entitled to obtain criminal history information from the Department for persons who are applicants for security-sensitive positions.⁸⁴

A security-sensitive position is held by an employee who:

- Handles currency;
- Has access to a computer terminal;
- Has access to the personal information or identifying information of another person;
- Has access to the financial information of the employer or another person;
- Has access to a master key; **or**
- Works in a location designated as a security-sensitive area.⁸⁵

The information obtained may not be released or disclosed to any person except through court order or with the consent of the person who is the subject of the criminal history information.⁸⁶

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions under Title VII

In April 2012, the EEOC issued its Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Employers should ensure that their policies and procedures are in compliance with this guidance to reduce the risk of liability. The enforcement guidance is available on the EEOC's website at <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-consideration-arrest-and-conviction-records-employment-decisions>.

Employees Working Out of State

A state employee who is required to work outside of this state is entitled to the same benefits and is subject to the same restrictions provided by law for other state employees, including vacation, leave from employment, and the employment policies and restrictions provided by the General Appropriations Act.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 411.094(b).

⁸⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 411.094(a)(2).

⁸⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 411.094(d).

⁸⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 651.002.

Employment Preference for Former Foster Children

An individual may qualify for a former foster child employment preference, which gives the individual a preference in employment over other applicants for the same position who do not have greater qualifications, if the individual meets the following conditions:

- The individual was under the permanent managing conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services on the day preceding the individual's 18th birthday,⁸⁸ and
- The individual is under the age of 25.⁸⁹

These provisions apply to a department, commission, board, office, or other agency in the executive branch of state government, including an institution of higher education.⁹⁰ It does not apply to the position of private secretary, deputy to an official or department, or a position that has a strictly confidential relation to the employing officer.⁹¹

An individual entitled to the former foster child employment preference that is aggrieved by a state agency's hiring decision or a workforce reduction that affects the individual may appeal the agency's decision by filing a written complaint with the agency's governing board. The governing board is required to respond to a written complaint no later than 15 business days after the date the governing body received the complaint. The governing board may render a different hiring decision if the governing board determines that the former foster child employment preference was not properly applied.⁹²

Employment Preference for Veterans

An individual who qualifies for a veteran's employment preference is entitled to a preference in employment over other applicants who do not have a greater qualification for the same position.⁹³ See Chapter 14 (Military Leave and Employment Rights) for additional information on veteran's employment preferences.

Military Occupational Specialty Codes on Employment Openings

Each fiscal biennium the State Auditor's Office must research and identify the military occupational specialty codes for each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces that correspond to each position contained in the State's Position Classification Plan.⁹⁴

State agencies must include on all forms and notices related to a state agency employment opening the military occupational specialty codes for each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces that correspond

⁸⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 672.002(a).

⁸⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 672.005.

⁹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 672.001.

⁹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 672.002(b).

⁹² Texas Government Code, Section 672.004.

⁹³ Texas Government Code, Section 657.003(a).

⁹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 654.0375(a).

to the employment opening if the duties of the available position correlate with a military occupational specialty.⁹⁵

Report on Transition from Military Service to Employment

No later than September 1 of each year, the Texas Workforce Commission (Commission), in consultation with the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services, must submit a report on the transition of service members and veterans from military service to employment to the Office of the Governor, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the chairs of the legislative committees with appropriate jurisdiction that identifies:

- The five most common military occupational specialties of service members who are transitioning from military service to employment, and
- The five occupations from those military occupational specialties that best offer transferable skills that meet the needs of employers, and any industry-based certifications that align with those military occupational specialties.

The report must also include any other data or information identified by the Commission in administering the College Credit for Heroes program as useful for supporting the transition of service members and veterans into the occupations identified as offering the best transferable skills that meet the needs of employers.⁹⁶

Identification Cards for Peace Officers

A law enforcement agency or other governmental entity that appoints or employs a commissioned peace officer or reserve law enforcement officer is required to issue an identification card to its full-time or part-time peace officers or reserve law enforcement officers.⁹⁷

The head of a law enforcement agency or other governmental entity that appoints or employs a peace officer or reserve law enforcement officer must recover the identification card at the time of the peace officer's or law enforcement officer's resignation or termination.⁹⁸

In addition, honorably retired peace officers and qualified retired law enforcement officers who hold a certificate of proficiency under Texas Occupations Code, Section 1701.357, are also eligible to receive identification cards in accordance with Texas Government Code, Sections 614.124 and 614.1241. The head of a law enforcement agency or governmental entity that issued the identification card must recover the identification card on the date that the identification card expires.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 656.003.

⁹⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 302.020.

⁹⁷ Texas Government Code, Sections 614.122(a) and 614.123(a).

⁹⁸ Texas Government Code, Sections 614.122(d) and 614.123(d).

⁹⁹ Texas Government Code, Sections 614.124 and 614.1241.

Identification cards expire on a date specified by the law enforcement agency or other governmental entity issuing the card.¹⁰⁰

Merit Selection Principles - Federal Laws or Regulations

Some state agencies may be required by federal law or regulation to use a merit system of personnel administration for the agency or for a program administered under the agency.¹⁰¹ These agencies must, by rule, establish intra-agency policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the federal requirements and the recruitment, selection, and advancement of highly competent agency personnel.¹⁰²

A state agency must implement any additional merit principles required by federal law or regulation.¹⁰³ A state agency may create a separate division within the agency to administer merit selection policies and procedures if the chief executive of the agency considers the creation necessary.¹⁰⁴

Multiple Employment with the State

A person who is employed by more than one state agency or institution of higher education may not receive benefits from the State that exceed the benefits provided for one full-time employee.¹⁰⁵ State employees who are employed by multiple agencies and who work more than 40 hours per week may not accrue sick leave, vacation leave, or holidays at a rate that would exceed that for a full-time, 40 hour per week employee.¹⁰⁶

A person must be informed of the following requirements before he or she is employed by more than one agency or institution of higher education:¹⁰⁷

- Separate vacation and sick leave records must be maintained for each employment.¹⁰⁸
- Leave balance transfers are prohibited. For example, if the person separates from one employment, the person's leave balances that were accrued under that employment may not be transferred to the remaining employments.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 614.125.

¹⁰¹ Texas Government Code, Section 655.001.

¹⁰² Texas Government Code, Section 655.002.

¹⁰³ Texas Government Code, Section 655.003.

¹⁰⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 655.004.

¹⁰⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 667.001(a) and (b).

¹⁰⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 667.001(b).

¹⁰⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 667.001(c).

¹⁰⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 667.002.

¹⁰⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 667.003.

- The employee accrues state service credit for all purposes as if the employee had only one employment.¹¹⁰
- The total state contribution toward the employee's group insurance is limited to the amount specified in the General Appropriations Act for one full-time active employee.¹¹¹

Overtime compensation accrues for each employment independently of every other employment. However, in most situations, for the purposes of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the State is considered one employer. If an employee is subject to the overtime provisions of FLSA, the employing agencies and institutions of higher education are required to ensure that the person is compensated for all combined time actually worked that exceeds 40 hours per week. The agencies and institutions of higher education are required to cooperate to determine which agency or institution of higher education is responsible for ensuring that the employee is properly compensated according to those provisions.¹¹²

An employing agency or institution of higher education may not use multiple employments of an employee within the same agency or institution of higher education for the purpose of:

- Paying the employee for working more than 40 hours in a week instead of earning compensatory time in accordance with state law.
- Paying the employee a salary that is more than is allowed for either of the employee's positions.¹¹³

An employee must inform his or her employing state agency or institution of higher education before accepting additional employment with another agency or institution of higher education.¹¹⁴

A university system may establish a policy that defines a person's employment as the total hours the person is assigned to one component of the system or to all components of the system. The policy applies to a person only if the person is employed by more than one institution of higher education and all the employing institutions of higher education are within the same university system.¹¹⁵

Appointments at State Institutions of Higher Education

An institution of higher education is required to determine whether employees who have more than one appointment with the institution of higher education hold only one position or one position for each appointment. The institution of higher education's board of regents has the responsibility to determine whether an employee who holds more than one appointment at separate institutions of higher education (under the same board of regents) holds one position or one position for each

¹¹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 667.004.

¹¹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 667.005.

¹¹² Texas Government Code, Section 667.006(a) and (b).

¹¹³ Texas Government Code, Section 667.006(c).

¹¹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 667.007.

¹¹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 667.009.

appointment. If the two institutions of higher education are governed by separate boards, the employee is deemed to have more than one position.¹¹⁶

A full-time employee at an institution of higher education who has more than one position may receive pay for working more than 40 hours in a week if the institution of higher education determines that pay in lieu of compensatory time is in the best interest of the institution of the higher education.¹¹⁷

Posting Job Vacancies

State agencies and institutions of higher education with job vacancies are required to list these vacancies with the Texas Workforce Commission in the WorkinTexas.com system. This applies only to vacancies for which candidates from outside the agency will be considered.¹¹⁸ Each notice of a job vacancy must be posted for a minimum of 10 working days unless the agency notifies the Texas Workforce Commission that the vacancy has been filled within this time frame.¹¹⁹ In addition to using the statutorily required methods to announce job vacancies, state agencies and institutions of higher education are encouraged to make other efforts to inform outside applicant recruitment sources of job vacancies.¹²⁰

A state agency or institution of higher education is not required to comply with job vacancy notice requirements when it transfers or reassigns an employee as part of a reorganization or merger mandated by the Legislature, as long as the executive head of the agency or institution certifies that the transfer or reassignment is necessary for the proper implementation of the reorganization or merger.¹²¹

Online State Agency Employment Applications

The online system for listing state agency employment openings, excluding those for institutions of higher education or university systems, that the Texas Workforce Commission maintains must allow an applicant for employment to complete a single state application online and to enter the application into an online database from which the applicant may electronically send the application to multiple state agencies. The Texas Workforce Commission must ensure that the online system allows an applicant to submit, and a state agency to receive, an online application for state agency employment. State agencies must accept an application for an employment opening from the online system, but they are not prohibited from accepting an application for an employment opening in another form.¹²²

¹¹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.0411.

¹¹⁷ Texas Education Code, Section 51.963.

¹¹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 656.001.

¹¹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 656.024.

¹²⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 656.025.

¹²¹ Texas Government Code, Section 656.026.

¹²² Texas Government Code, Section 656.002.

Probationary or Introductory Period

There is no state law either requiring or prohibiting an employee probationary or introductory period. Agencies and institutions of higher education have discretion in this matter. The existence of a probationary or introductory period should be structured so that it does not diminish the State's employment-at-will doctrine.

Selective Service Registration

A state agency in any branch of state government may not hire a person as an employee unless the person presents proof that they have registered for or are exempt from registration with the selective service system.¹²³

The Texas Office of the Attorney General issued an opinion stating that only those males who are between the ages of 18 and 25 years (inclusive) are required to furnish proof of either selective service registration or exemption from selective service as a condition of state employment.¹²⁴

Additional information regarding selective service registration, including a list of individuals exempt from registration, is available on the Selective Service System's website at <https://www.sss.gov>.

Verification of Employment Eligibility

An individual who is not a citizen of this country is protected from discrimination in hiring and in employment under the provisions of federal law and the Texas Labor Code. It is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of citizenship.¹²⁵ Federal law also prohibits an employer from knowingly hiring an individual who is not authorized to work in this country. To ensure compliance, employers are required to complete federal form I-9 upon hiring a person. This form must be completed within three business days of the hire.¹²⁶ A state agency or institution of higher education must register and participate in the E-verify program to verify information of all new employees.¹²⁷

Additional information regarding the employment eligibility verification process is available on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' website at <https://www.uscis.gov/>.

Volunteer Programs

State agencies may use volunteer programs to assist the agency in providing quality services. A state agency that provides basic human mental or physical needs is required to consider volunteers as a resource, if feasible.¹²⁸

¹²³ Texas Government Code, Section 651.005(a).

¹²⁴ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion JC-0183 (2000).

¹²⁵ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.051; and Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324b.

¹²⁶ Title 8, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 274a.2(a)(2) and 274a.2(b)(B)(ii).

¹²⁷ Texas Government Code, Sections 673.001 and 673.002.

¹²⁸ Texas Government Code, Sections 2109.001, 2109.002, and 2109.003.

A volunteer program must include:

- An effective training program for paid staff and prospective volunteers.
- The use of paid staff to plan and implement the volunteer program.
- An evaluation mechanism to assess (1) the performance of the volunteers, (2) the cooperation of paid staff with the volunteers, and (3) the volunteer program.
- Follow-up studies to determine the effectiveness of the volunteer program.

State agencies with volunteer programs may:

- Reimburse volunteers for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of volunteer services.
- Establish an insurance program to protect volunteers in the performance of services.
- Cooperate with private organizations that provide services that are similar to those provided by the state agency.
- Purchase engraved certificates, plaques, pins, or awards of a similar nature, with a value that does not exceed \$75 for each volunteer, to recognize special achievement and outstanding services of volunteers.¹²⁹

A state agency that has a volunteer program must consider the use of volunteers in determining merit pay increases and performance evaluations.¹³⁰

Civilian Workforce Composition

Each biennium, the Texas Workforce Commission is required to determine the composition of the statewide civilian workforce and report this information to the Office of the Governor and the Legislature. This report is due by the fifth day of each regular legislative session. The report includes percentages of Caucasian Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, females, and males within the state workforce by job category.¹³¹

Workforce Analysis

Each biennium, state agencies and institutions of higher education must analyze their current workforces and compare the numbers employed in each demographic group and job category to those available in the statewide civilian workforce. The intent of this analysis is to determine the percentage of exclusion or underutilization by job category within each state agency.¹³²

¹²⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 2109.004.

¹³⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 2109.005.

¹³¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.0035.

¹³² Texas Labor Code, Section 21.501.

In addition, state agencies and institutions of higher education must report equal employment opportunity information to the Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) no later than November 1 of each year. The report must be submitted in the form prescribed by the Commission. The Commission will conduct an analysis of the equal employment opportunity information and report the results of the analysis to the Legislature, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Office of the Governor no later than January 1 of each odd-numbered year.¹³³

Recruitment Plans

Based on workforce availability analyses or court-ordered remedies or agreements, state agencies and institutions of higher education must develop and implement plans to recruit qualified African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and females (“protected classes”). The Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) monitors state agencies and institutions of higher education to ensure that the required plans are consistent with state statute. In addition, state agencies and institutions of higher education must report to the Commission the number of protected class hires in each class title that the agency and institution made during the preceding fiscal year. This report is due no later than November 1 of each year.¹³⁴

¹³³ Texas Labor Code, Sections 21.552(a) and 21.553(b).

¹³⁴ Texas Labor Code, Sections 21.502 and 21.504.

Chapter 4
**Federal Requirements: Fair Labor Standards Act
and the Family and Medical Leave Act**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) are federal laws that establish workplace requirements that may apply to state agencies and institutions of higher education. Specifically:

- FLSA establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in federal, state, and local governments.
- FMLA allows eligible employees to take unpaid leave, or to substitute appropriate paid leave, for an FMLA qualifying event without fear of being terminated from their jobs or being forced into a lower job upon their return.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in federal, state, and local governments. The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division is responsible for providing guidance on and enforcing the FLSA.

Additional information about the FLSA is available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa>.

The minimum wage in Texas is linked to the federal minimum wage under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.¹³⁵ As of July 24, 2009, the federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour.¹³⁶

In general, most employees working in state agencies and institutions of higher education are covered under the FLSA.¹³⁷

FLSA Nonexempt Employees

To be eligible for FLSA overtime pay, an employee must be considered nonexempt. A nonexempt employee covered by the FLSA must receive overtime pay for hours worked in excess of 40 in a workweek at a rate not less than 1.5 times the employee's regular rate of pay. In general, the employer must total all the hours worked by the employee for that workweek and pay overtime compensation for each hour worked in excess of the overtime standard.¹³⁸ However, the FLSA allows government employers to choose whether to compensate their nonexempt employees for overtime

Compliance Assistance

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division has several resources to assist employers with implementing the FLSA. These include:

- Handy Reference Guide to the Fair Labor Standards Act at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/compliance-assistance/handy-reference-guide-flsa>.
- Fact Sheets at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets>.

¹³⁵ Texas Labor Code, Section 62.051.

¹³⁶ *Wages and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)*, U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division's website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa>.

¹³⁷ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 553.3.

¹³⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015; and Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 778.101 and 778.110.

in cash or in compensatory time off.¹³⁹ In some situations, state agencies must pay FLSA overtime rather than providing FLSA compensatory time. These provisions are located in the Texas Government Code and in General Appropriations Act riders.

Employees subject to the FLSA are entitled to compensation for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one workweek in one of the following ways:

- The agency can allow or require the employee to take compensatory time off at the rate of 1.5 hours for each hour over 40 hours worked during the workweek.
- When granting FLSA compensatory time off is not practical, the employing agency has the discretion to compensate the employee at 1.5 times his or her regular rate of pay in effect at the time the work was performed for each hour worked over 40 during the workweek.¹⁴⁰

State agencies can require nonexempt employees who have requested leave to exhaust their FLSA overtime balances before using vacation leave. In addition, an employer remains free under the FLSA to decrease the number of hours that employees work. An employer may tell an employee to take off an afternoon, a day, or even an entire week to avoid the accumulation of additional overtime.¹⁴¹

Paid leave and holidays are not counted as hours worked for determining FLSA overtime hours.¹⁴² However, if the total number of hours worked (if less than 40) plus the hours of paid leave or hours of paid holidays exceeds 40, the nonexempt employee must be allowed state compensatory time off equal to the number of hours in excess of 40 hours.¹⁴³

Nonexempt employees may accumulate an overtime credit of up to 240 hours of FLSA overtime (160 overtime hours converted to straight time). Those employees engaged in public safety, emergency response, or a seasonal activity may accumulate up to 480 hours of FLSA overtime (320 overtime hours converted to straight time).¹⁴⁴

Nonexempt employees must be paid for any unused FLSA overtime at the time of separation from state employment. Upon separation from employment, an employee must be paid for unused FLSA compensatory time at either the final regular salary rate at the time of the employee's separation or the average regular salary rate during the last three years of employment immediately prior to separation, whichever is higher.¹⁴⁵ State agencies must pay employees for any accumulated FLSA overtime prior to transferring that employee to another agency.

See the section on Family and Medical Leave and the Use of Paid Leave in this chapter for additional information regarding FLSA compensatory time as it relates to the Family and Medical Leave Act.

¹³⁹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 553.20.

¹⁴⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015(c).

¹⁴¹ *Christensen v. Harris County* (98-1167), 529 U.S. 576 (2000).

¹⁴² Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 778.218.

¹⁴³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015(f).

¹⁴⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015(e); and Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 553.24.

¹⁴⁵ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 553.27(b).

See Chapter 20 (Workers' Compensation) for additional information regarding FLSA compensatory time use in relation to workers' compensation income benefits.

FLSA-Exempt Employees

An exempt employee is one that the U.S. Department of Labor has exempted from FLSA minimum wage and overtime requirements because the employee is employed in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity.¹⁴⁶ An employee's exemption status cannot be determined by the job title of the employee and must be determined on the basis of whether the employee's salary and duties meet the exempt requirements defined by applicable federal regulations.¹⁴⁷

An FLSA-exempt employee must receive his or her full salary for any week in which work is performed without regard to the number of days and hours worked. Exempt employees need not be paid for any workweek in which they perform no work. Exceptions to this general rule include the following:

- Deductions may be made for full-day absences for personal reasons other than sickness or disability.
- Deductions may be made for full-day absences for sickness or disability after the exhaustion of sick leave or workers' compensation benefits.
- While an employer cannot make deductions from pay for absences of an exempt employee occasioned by jury duty, witness at a judicial action, or military duty, the employer can offset any amounts received by an employee for jury fees, witness fees, or military pay for a particular week against the salary due for that particular week without loss of the exemption.
- Deductions may be made for penalties due to safety infractions of major significance. Safety infractions of major significance include those relating to the prevention of serious danger in the workplace or to other employees.
- Deduction from pay of exempt employees may be made for unpaid disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for infractions of workplace conduct rules. Such suspensions must be imposed pursuant to a written policy applicable to all employees. Thus, for example, an employer may suspend an exempt employee without pay for three days for violating a generally applicable written policy prohibiting sexual harassment. Similarly, an employer may suspend an exempt employee without pay for 12 days for violating a generally applicable written policy prohibiting workplace violence.
- An employer is not required to pay the full salary in the initial or final week of employment. Rather, an employer may pay a proportionate part of an employee's full salary for the time actually worked in the first and last week of employment.

¹⁴⁶ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 541.0.

¹⁴⁷ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 541.2.

- An employer is not required to pay the full salary for weeks in which an exempt employee takes unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.¹⁴⁸

State agencies may reduce the pay of FLSA-exempt employees for absences of less than a full day for personal reasons or because of injury or illness when permission to use leave was not sought or was denied, accrued leave was exhausted, or the employee chose to use leave without pay.¹⁴⁹

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows eligible employees to take unpaid leave, or to substitute appropriate paid leave, for an FMLA qualifying event without fear of being terminated from their jobs or being forced into a lower job upon their return.¹⁵⁰ The FMLA applies to all state agencies and institutions of higher education, with the exception of legislative agencies.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division is responsible for administering and enforcing the FMLA, and agencies and institutions of higher education should address specific questions related to the FMLA to the Wage and Hour Division. Additional information on the FMLA is available on the U.S. Department of Labor's website at <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/benefits-leave/fmla>.

Employees who do not qualify for family and medical leave may be entitled to parental leave. See Chapter 11 (General Leave Provisions) for information about state parental leave.

Family and Medical Leave Eligibility

Eligibility for family and medical leave is limited to employees who have worked for the State for at least 12 months. The 12 months of employment do not need to be consecutive or continuous. However, an agency or institution of higher education does not have to include employment prior to a break in service of seven or more years unless the break is occasioned by the employee's fulfillment of his or her covered service obligation (as protected under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act).¹⁵¹ In addition, the employee must have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the start date of family and medical leave.¹⁵²

For purposes of family and medical leave, the State is considered a single employer.¹⁵³ Agencies and institutions of higher education should credit time worked for other state agencies and institutions of higher education when considering family and medical leave eligibility.

¹⁴⁸ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 541.602(a) and (b).

¹⁴⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.016(e)(4).

¹⁵⁰ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.100.

¹⁵¹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.110(b).

¹⁵² Texas Government Code, Section 661.912(a).

¹⁵³ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.108(c)(1).

Family and Medical Leave Entitlement

The FMLA entitles all eligible employees to a total of 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave during a 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- The birth and subsequent care of a newborn child.
- The placement of a child into the home of an employee or with the employee for adoption or foster care.
- The need to care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition. (A child includes a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis. A parent is defined as a biological, adoptive, step, or foster parent, or an individual who stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child.)¹⁵⁴
- A serious health condition that renders the employee unable to work.
- A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty), or is in support of a contingency operation for covered members of a reserve component. Examples of a qualifying exigency may include: short notice deployment; military events and related activities; childcare duties and school activities; care of the military member’s parent who is incapable of self-care; financial and legal arrangements; counseling; rest and recuperation; and post-deployment activities.¹⁵⁵

If the leave is for the birth and care of a child, or placement for adoption or foster care, it must conclude within 12 months of the birth or placement of the child.¹⁵⁶

Military Caregiver Leave

State agencies and institutions of higher education must grant an eligible employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a current member of the U.S. Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) with a serious injury or illness up to a total of 26 workweeks of unpaid leave during a “single 12-month period” to care for the service member.¹⁵⁷ This is known as military caregiver leave. This approach is required regardless of the method used by

Additional Resources

Answers to common questions about military family leave provisions of the FMLA regulations and a Fact Sheet summary are available at:

- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/2013-rule/military-families/faq>
- <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28a.pdf>
- <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28f.pdf>
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/2013-rule/fact-sheet/military-families>
- <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28m.pdf>
- <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28ma.pdf>
- <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28mb.pdf>
- <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28mc.pdf>

¹⁵⁴ U.S. Department of Labor Fact Sheets #28B and #28C at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28b.pdf> and <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28c.pdf>.

¹⁵⁵ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.100(a); U.S. Department of Labor Fact Sheet #28M(c) at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHDLegacy/files/whdfs28mc.pdf>; and *Frequently Asked Questions: Final Rule to Implement Statutory Amendments to the Family and Medical Leave Act*, U.S. Department of Labor’s website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/2013-rule/military-families/faq>.

¹⁵⁶ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 825.120(a)(2) and 825.121(a)(2).

¹⁵⁷ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 825.100(a) and 825.127(a), (b), and (e).

the employer to determine the employee's 12 workweeks of leave entitlement for other FMLA qualifying reasons.¹⁵⁸

Spouses Employed by Same Employer

In cases in which eligible spouses are employed by the same employer, the married employees are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of family and medical leave for the following reasons:

- Birth of a child and care of a child after birth.
- Placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to care for a newly placed child.
- To care for a parent who has a serious health condition (or 26 workweeks if the leave is granted to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness).¹⁵⁹

Family and Medical Leave Notice and Certification

Employee Notice

If the need for family and medical leave is foreseeable, an employee seeking to use family and medical leave is required to provide a 30-day advance notice of the need for the leave. If notice cannot be provided 30 days in advance, the employee should notify his or her employer as soon as practicable. In most cases, this means the same day or the next business day; however, the determination of when an employee could practicably provide notice should take into consideration the individual facts and circumstances.¹⁶⁰

For the employer to determine whether FMLA applies to a leave request, the employee must provide sufficient information regarding the nature of the request. If an employee is seeking leave for the first time for a family and medical leave qualifying event, the employee does not need to expressly assert his or her family and medical leave rights or even mention family and medical leave. The employee must provide at least verbal notice sufficient to make the employer aware that the employee may qualify for family and medical leave.¹⁶¹

However, when an employee seeks leave due to a family and medical leave qualifying event for which the employer has previously provided the employee with family and medical leave protection, the employee must specifically reference either the qualifying reason for the leave or the need for family and medical leave.¹⁶²

Unless unusual circumstances exist, an employer may require an employee to comply with the employer's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ U.S. Department of Labor Fact Sheet #28M(a) at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/whdfs28ma.pdf>.

¹⁵⁹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 825.201, 825.121(a)(3), and 825.127(d), (e) and (f).

¹⁶⁰ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.302(a) and (b).

¹⁶¹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 825.302(c) and 825.303(b).

¹⁶² Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.302(c).

¹⁶³ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.302(d).

Employer Notice

State agencies and institutions of higher education are required to post in a location that can be seen by employees and applicants a notice that explains an employee's rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. Furthermore, employers must either include a general notice in the employee handbook or other written guidance provided to employees concerning family and medical leave benefits or distribute a general notice to each new employee upon hiring.¹⁶⁴

Within five days, absent extenuating circumstances, of when an employee requests family and medical leave or when the employer acquires knowledge that an employee's leave may be for a family and medical leave qualifying event, the employer must notify the employee verbally or in writing that the employee is eligible to take family and medical leave. The employer's written notice must include details about the specific expectations for and obligations of the employee and explain any consequences of a failure to meet the obligations.¹⁶⁵

Certification

A state agency or institution of higher education may require that an employee's request for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or a covered family member be supported by a health care provider's certification.¹⁶⁶ The employer may also request, at the employer's expense, second and third medical opinions.¹⁶⁷ In addition, the employer may require periodic recertification of a serious health condition.¹⁶⁸ An employer must use a health care provider, a human resource professional, a leave administrator, or a management official—but **not** the employee's direct supervisor—to authenticate or clarify a medical certification of a serious health condition.¹⁶⁹

If the family and medical leave is for a qualifying exigency, an employer may require a statement or description, signed by the employee, of appropriate facts regarding the qualifying exigency for which family medical leave is requested, including information on the type of qualifying exigency.¹⁷⁰

If the family and medical leave is to care for a covered service member, also known as military caregiver leave, an employer may require an employee to obtain a certification completed by an authorized health care provider of the covered service member. Included in the documentation should be a statement or description of appropriate medical facts, sufficient to support the need for leave, regarding the covered service member's health condition for which FMLA leave is requested.¹⁷¹

An employer may have a uniformly-applied policy or practice requiring employees returning from leave for their own serious health condition to submit a certification that they are able to resume

¹⁶⁴ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.300(a).

¹⁶⁵ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.300(b), (c), and (d).

¹⁶⁶ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.305(a).

¹⁶⁷ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.307(b) and (c).

¹⁶⁸ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.308.

¹⁶⁹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.307(a).

¹⁷⁰ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.309(b)(1).

¹⁷¹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.310(a) and (b)(4).

work. If reasonable safety concerns exist, an employer may, under certain circumstances, require such a certification for employees returning from intermittent family and medical leave.¹⁷²

Family and Medical Leave and the Use of Paid Leave

The FMLA entitlement of job-protected leave is generally unpaid; however, vacation leave, sick leave, state compensatory time, administrative leave, and banked holiday time are considered state benefits and can be counted toward an employee's 12-week FMLA entitlement (or 26 weeks of military caregiver leave entitlement). State agencies and institutions of higher education can require an employee to use all vacation and sick leave prior to being placed on a leave without pay status.¹⁷³

In addition, accrued Fair Labor Standards Act overtime for nonexempt employees may be counted against the 12-week FMLA entitlement (or 26 weeks of military caregiver leave entitlement). If an employee requests and is permitted to use accrued Fair Labor Standards Act compensatory time to receive pay for time taken off for a family and medical leave reason, or if the employer requires accrued Fair Labor Standards Act compensatory time to be taken, the compensatory time taken may be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.¹⁷⁴

Employees on workers' compensation or receiving temporary disability benefits cannot be required, but may elect to use, paid leave prior to taking unpaid family and medical leave.¹⁷⁵

Family and medical leave may be used intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary due to the serious health condition of a covered family member, the employee, or a service member, or because of a qualifying exigency. If the request to use intermittent leave is for a planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment in a manner that does not unduly disrupt the employer's business operations.¹⁷⁶ Employees requesting intermittent leave after the birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care must get employer approval for the intermittent leave.¹⁷⁷

As stated previously, for purposes of family and medical leave, the State is considered a single employer; therefore, agencies and institutions of higher education should research any leave taken by the employee while previously employed with the State.

Determining the 12-Month Leave Entitlement Period

State agencies and institutions of higher education may use any one of the following periods to administer the 12-week leave entitlement:

- A calendar year.
- Any fixed 12-month period, such as a fiscal year or anniversary date to anniversary date.

¹⁷² Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.312(a) and (f).

¹⁷³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.912(b); and Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.207(a).

¹⁷⁴ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.207(f).

¹⁷⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.912(b); and Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion JC-0040 (1999).

¹⁷⁶ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 825.202 and 825.203.

¹⁷⁷ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.202(c).

- A 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee first uses family and medical leave.
- A rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any family and medical leave.¹⁷⁸

State agencies and institutions of higher education wishing to change from one method of determining the 12-week leave entitlement to another method must give at least 60-days notice to all employees. Employees retain the full benefit of 12 weeks of leave under whichever method yields the greatest benefit to employees during the 60-day transition period.¹⁷⁹

Job Restoration and Maintenance of Health Benefits

An employer may have a uniformly-applied policy requiring employees returning from leave for their own serious health conditions to submit a certification that they are able to resume work.¹⁸⁰ If reasonable safety concerns exist, an employer may, under certain circumstances, require such a certification for employees returning from intermittent family and medical leave.¹⁸¹

An employee who takes family and medical leave must be returned to the same job or a job with equivalent status and pay, even if the employee has been replaced or his or her position has been restructured to accommodate the employee’s absence. Furthermore, the time that an employee was on such leave cannot be counted against the employee under a “no fault” attendance policy.¹⁸²

During the time an employee is on family and medical leave, the employer must continue the employee’s health benefits. An employee who takes family and medical leave is still responsible for paying his or her portion of health insurance premiums.¹⁸³

For purposes of determining the amount of leave used by an employee, the fact that a holiday may occur within a week taken as family and medical leave has no effect; the week is counted as a week of family and medical leave. However, if for some reason the employer’s business activity has temporarily ceased and employees generally are not expected to report for work for one or more weeks (for example, a school closing for two weeks during the Christmas/New Year holidays or for summer vacation), the days on which the employer’s activities have ceased do not count against the employee’s FMLA entitlement.¹⁸⁴

An employee, excluding an employee returning from unpaid military leave during a national emergency, does not earn state service credit, vacation leave, or sick leave for any full calendar months of leave without pay while on family and medical leave.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁸ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.200(b).

¹⁷⁹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.200(d)(1).

¹⁸⁰ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.312(a).

¹⁸¹ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.312(f).

¹⁸² Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 825.214, 825.215, and 825.220(c).

¹⁸³ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 825.209 and 825.210.

¹⁸⁴ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.200(h).

¹⁸⁵ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.904 and 661.909(f) and (g).

Chapter 5 **State and Holiday Compensatory Time**

State Compensatory Time

In some situations, state employees may be eligible for state compensatory time. State compensatory time is accrued on a “straight” time basis, or one hour for one hour worked.¹⁸⁶

State Compensatory Time for Nonexempt Employees Subject to FLSA

When a nonexempt employee takes leave or when a holiday occurs, the nonexempt employee is eligible for state compensatory time if the total number of hours worked (if less than 40 hours) plus any paid leave or paid holidays exceeds 40 in one workweek. If this occurs, the nonexempt employee must be allowed state compensatory time off for this additional time on an hour-for-hour basis. The state compensatory time off must be used within 12 months of the end of the workweek in which it was earned or it lapses.¹⁸⁷ This is different from Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime in which the nonexempt employee earns FLSA overtime by physically working more than 40 hours in a workweek. See Chapter 4 (Federal Requirements: Fair Labor Standards Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act) for additional information regarding FLSA overtime provisions.

State compensatory time off earned by Department of Criminal Justice correctional officers must be taken during the 24-month period following the end of the workweek in which the compensatory time was accrued or the compensatory time lapses.¹⁸⁸

Generally, employees will not be paid for any unused state compensatory time and there are no provisions in statutes or the General Appropriations Act that allow for the conversion of this time to any other type of leave.¹⁸⁹ However, there are some situations in which the payment for state compensatory time can be authorized. Those situations are identified and summarized below.

State Compensatory Time for Employees Exempt from FLSA Overtime Provisions

At the discretion of the agency’s executive director, an employee who is exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA may be allowed to accrue state compensatory time for work hours that exceed 40 in a workweek. Work hours, for the purpose of accruing state compensatory time, consist of paid leave, holidays, and actual hours worked. Part-time, FLSA-exempt employees may accrue state compensatory time when the number of actual work hours exceeds the number of hours that the employee was designated to work.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Texas Government Code, Sections 659.015(f) and 659.016(b).

¹⁸⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015(f) and (g).

¹⁸⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015(k).

¹⁸⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015(g).

¹⁹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.016(b).

If an exempt employee does not use state compensatory time within 12 months of when it was earned, the employee loses this time.¹⁹¹

Generally, an employee will not be paid for accrued but unused state compensatory time.¹⁹² However, there are some situations where the payment for state compensatory time can be authorized. These situations are identified and summarized below.

State Compensatory Time for Emergency Services Personnel

An exception for the use of state compensatory time exists for selected emergency services personnel who provide services during emergency situations. Emergency services personnel includes firefighters, police officers, and other peace officers; emergency medical technicians; emergency management personnel; and other individuals whose duties require them to provide services for the benefit of the general public during emergency situations.

State employees not subject to the overtime provisions of the FLSA and who qualify as emergency services personnel may be allowed to take state compensatory time during the 18-month period following the end of the workweek in which the compensatory time was accrued. Legislative employees, including employees of the Lieutenant Governor's Office or legislative agency employees, are not eligible to be classified as emergency services personnel for the purposes of accruing state compensatory time under these provisions.

In those situations in which an emergency personnel employee provides services during emergency situations, the employee may also be paid at the employee's regular hourly salary rate for all or part of the compensatory hours accrued during the disaster in the preceding 18 months. The employee's compensatory time balance must be reduced by one hour for each hour for which the employee is paid.¹⁹³

Payment for State Compensatory Time in Certain Situations

In certain situations, with the authorization of the administrative head or designee, an employee may be paid for state compensatory time that the employee earned for work directly related to a disaster or an emergency declared by the appropriate officer of the state or federal government.¹⁹⁴ In addition, an employee of a state mental health facility may be paid for state compensatory time if the agency determines that taking the compensatory time off would disrupt the business functions of the agency.¹⁹⁵

Employees at institutions of higher education and those involved in public safety work (for example, highway construction, highway maintenance, and emergency response activities) may be paid for

¹⁹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.016(c).

¹⁹² Texas Government Code, Section 659.016(i); and Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion H-883 (1976).

¹⁹³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.025.

¹⁹⁴ Texas Government Code, Sections 659.015(i) and 659.016(i).

¹⁹⁵ Texas Government Code, Sections 659.015(j) and 659.016(j).

state compensatory time if the employing agency or institution of higher education determines that taking the time off would be disruptive to normal teaching, research, or other critical functions.¹⁹⁶

Use of Compensatory Time before Lapsing

If an employee of a state agency, as defined by Texas Government Code, Section 658.001, submits a written request to use accrued compensatory time not later than the 90th day before the date on which the accrued compensatory time will lapse, the employing state agency must approve in writing the employee's request or provide the employee with an alternative date on which the employee may use the compensatory time.¹⁹⁷

The employing agency is encouraged to reasonably accommodate the employee's use of the accrued compensatory time before it lapses.¹⁹⁸

There are no statutory provisions that allow for the conversion of state compensatory time or holiday compensatory time to any other type of leave. Subject to the exceptions noted above, if an employee does not use the accrued time within 12 months of earning it, the employee loses this time.¹⁹⁹

Notification of Compensatory Time Policy

A state agency must notify its employees annually of the State's policy on compensatory time and must accommodate to the extent practicable an employee's request to use accrued compensatory time.²⁰⁰

For a state employee who has been activated to military service as a member of the reserve component of the armed forces, a state agency must:

- Provide a statement containing the balance of the employee's accrued state compensatory time, and
- Accommodate the employee's request to use the balance of his or her accrued state compensatory time before the compensatory time expires.²⁰¹

Compensatory Time for Persons Governing State Agencies and Institutions of Higher Education

A member of the governing body of a state agency or institution of higher education or a single state officer who governs a state agency or institution of higher education may not accrue compensatory time.²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.015(g).

¹⁹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.022(a).

¹⁹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.022(b).

¹⁹⁹ Texas Government Code, Sections 659.015(g) and 659.016(c).

²⁰⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.023(a) and (b).

²⁰¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.023(c).

²⁰² Texas Government Code, Section 659.024(c).

An employee who acts as the administrative head of a state agency, including an executive director, or institution of higher education is not prohibited from accruing compensatory time.²⁰³

Compensatory Time and Assigned Place of Employment

Except under circumstances specified in the General Appropriations Act, employees of a state agency or institution of higher education may not accumulate compensatory time for hours worked during any calendar week at a location other than the employee's regular or temporarily assigned place of employment. However, for compensatory time purposes, an employee may accumulate compensatory time for hours worked during any calendar week at the employee's personal residence if the employee obtains advance approval from the agency's administrative head or designee.²⁰⁴

Holiday Compensatory Time

State employees who must work on a designated national or state holiday will be allowed holiday compensatory time off during the 12-month period following the date of the holiday if the employee is entitled to a paid day off from working for a state agency on the holiday. Employees are required to give reasonable advance notice of their intention to use holiday compensatory time; however, employees do not have to specify how the compensatory time will be used.²⁰⁵ Holiday compensatory time is earned on an hour per hour basis.

An institution of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003 of the Texas Education Code, may allow an employee who is required to work on a national or state holiday that does not fall on a Saturday or Sunday to take holiday compensatory time off or may instead pay the employee at the employee's regular rate of pay for that time if the institution determines that allowing holiday compensatory time off would disrupt normal teaching, research, or other critical functions.²⁰⁶

The following state employees are entitled to one hour of holiday compensatory time off for each hour worked on a federal or state holiday that falls on a Saturday or Sunday:

- A peace officer commissioned under Article 2.12 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.
- A Department of Public Safety employee who performs communications or dispatch functions related to traffic law enforcement.
- A public security officer as defined by Section 1701.001 of the Texas Occupations Code.
- A Parks and Wildlife Department employee who performs communications and dispatch services to assist law enforcement officers in performing law enforcement duties.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.024(b).

²⁰⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.018.

²⁰⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 662.007(a) and (b).

²⁰⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 662.007(c).

²⁰⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 662.005(b).

Transfer of Holiday Compensatory Time between State Agencies

State agencies are required to accept a transfer balance of holiday compensatory time if the employee transfers as a direct result of the Legislature transferring authority or duties from one agency to another. State agencies are not required to accept a transfer balance of holiday compensatory time if the transferring employee is required to apply for the new position.²⁰⁸

The Texas Attorney General has determined that there is no authority that would authorize the transfer of compensatory time when an employee transfers from one agency to another or the payment of compensatory time when an employee separates from state employment.²⁰⁹ The Attorney General has also ruled that the estate of a deceased employee may not be paid for the employee's earned, but unused, compensatory time.²¹⁰

Authorizations for Payment of Holiday and State Compensatory Time

In most cases, state agencies are not allowed to pay for accrued holiday and state compensatory time; however, in certain circumstances the General Appropriations Act provides for payment of holiday and state compensatory time.

²⁰⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 662.0071.

²⁰⁹ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion H-883 (1976).

²¹⁰ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion H-899 (1976).

Chapter 6

Position Classification Plan

Position Classification Plan Overview

The Position Classification Plan (Plan), established by the Position Classification Act, requires most state agencies to comply with the salary schedules and compensation provisions of Article IX of the General Appropriations Act.²¹¹

The Plan is administered by the State Classification Team located in the State Auditor's Office.

Responsibilities of the State Classification Team include:

- Maintaining the Plan and ensuring that it is current.
- Advising and assisting state agencies to ensure equitable and uniform application of the Plan.
- Conducting position classification compliance audits to ensure conformity with the Plan.
- Making recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature as necessary and appropriate regarding the operation and improvement of the Plan.²¹²

The Plan establishes job classification titles for full-time, part-time, hourly, and temporary employees.²¹³ The job classifications within the Plan are defined as classified positions. Each job classification title is assigned to a salary group within a classification salary schedule. The classification salary schedules and job classification titles are contained in the most recent edition of the General Appropriations Act.²¹⁴

The Plan, the General Appropriations Act, and the Texas Government Code provide guidelines for all classified positions.

Agencies Subject to the Position Classification Plan

State agencies that are subject to the Plan include:

- General government agencies.
- Health and human services agencies.
- The judiciary (except for judges, district attorneys, and assistant district attorneys).
- Public safety and criminal justice agencies.

²¹¹ Texas Government Code, Sections 654.001 and 654.011(a).

²¹² Texas Government Code, Sections 654.036 and 654.031.

²¹³ Texas Government Code, Section 654.011(a).

²¹⁴ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 2.01.

- Natural resources agencies.
- Business and economic development agencies.
- Regulatory agencies.
- Agencies of public education (limited to the Texas Education Agency, the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the School for the Deaf).²¹⁵

Agencies' Use of the Position Classification Plan

Agencies should use an occupationally specific job classification title contained in the Plan that is appropriate to a position and is not agency specific.

Agencies may determine the appropriate rate of pay within the appropriate salary range for employees at the time of initial employment with the agency, which includes rehires and employees who transfer from another state agency or institution of higher education.²¹⁶ State agencies subject to the Position Classification Act are responsible for ensuring that all positions are classified properly on an annual basis and may perform a monthly review of job assignments.²¹⁷

Information and guidance on reviewing jobs and conducting job analyses is available in the *Job Classification Review Guide* on the State Auditor's Office's State Classification Team website at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Resources/Guides/>.

Bona Fide New Positions

The Texas Government Code gives the Governor the authority to exempt bona fide new positions during the biennium. A "bona fide new position" is defined as a new position established to accomplish duties related to programs or functions that were not anticipated, and for that reason not funded under the General Appropriations Act. A new position may not be established for the sole purpose of adjusting the salary of an existing position.

The Comptroller may not pay compensation for the new position until formal notification of the action of the Governor to exempt the position is filed with the State Auditor's Office and the Legislative Budget Board.

An exemption made in the first year of a biennium may continue into the second year. The salary rate established for the position may be adjusted for the second year of the biennium, but the adjustment can be no higher than adjustments authorized for classified positions.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 654.011(a).

²¹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 654.014.

²¹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 654.0155.

²¹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 654.0125.

State Job Descriptions

The State Classification Team prepares general job descriptions for state agencies to use. Agencies should use the state job descriptions as guidelines and develop functional job descriptions that are more specific to the work of the agency and its employees.

The Plan provides that whenever “General Qualification Guidelines” are specified for each job, they are only meant to represent the qualifications commonly wanted by employing officers of the State and do not have the force of law. This includes specifications for experience, training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and physical conditions.²¹⁹

Classification Salary Schedules

The Plan has three salary schedules: A, B, and C. Schedule A includes paraprofessional, administrative support, maintenance, service, and technical positions. Schedule B includes primarily professional and managerial positions. Schedule C covers commissioned law enforcement officers who are employed by the Department of Public Safety, the Parks and Wildlife Department, the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, the Department of Criminal Justice, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Department of Insurance.²²⁰ Only executive directors and other specified positions remain exempt from the Plan.²²¹

Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Classification Salary Schedules A and B

The classification salary schedules for Schedules A and B for the 2022–2023 biennium are listed in Tables 6-1 and 6-2 (on the next two pages), respectively.²²²

²¹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 654.015.

²²⁰ State Auditor’s Office’s State Classification Team website at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/CompensationSystem/SalarySchedules>.

²²¹ Texas Government Code, Section 654.012.

²²² General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 2.01.

Table 6-1

Classification Salary Schedule A			
Fiscal Years 2022-2023			
Salary Group	Minimum Salary	Midpoint	Maximum Salary
A4	\$18,893	\$23,209	\$27,525
A5	\$19,777	\$24,309	\$28,840
A6	\$20,706	\$25,464	\$30,221
A7	\$21,681	\$26,679	\$31,677
A8	\$22,705	\$27,967	\$33,229
A9	\$23,781	\$29,320	\$34,859
A10	\$24,910	\$30,741	\$36,571
A11	\$26,332	\$33,844	\$41,355
A12	\$27,840	\$35,819	\$43,798
A13	\$29,439	\$37,914	\$46,388
A14	\$31,144	\$40,139	\$49,134
A15	\$32,976	\$42,511	\$52,045
A16	\$34,918	\$45,024	\$55,130
A17	\$36,976	\$47,688	\$58,399
A18	\$39,521	\$51,985	\$64,449
A19	\$42,244	\$55,602	\$68,960
A20	\$45,158	\$59,473	\$73,788
A21	\$48,278	\$63,616	\$78,953

Table 6-2

Classification Salary Schedule B			
Fiscal Years 2022-2023			
Salary Group	Minimum Salary	Midpoint	Maximum Salary
B10	\$24,910	\$30,741	\$36,571
B11	\$26,332	\$33,844	\$41,355
B12	\$27,840	\$35,819	\$43,798
B13	\$29,439	\$37,914	\$46,388
B14	\$31,144	\$40,139	\$49,134
B15	\$32,976	\$42,511	\$52,045
B16	\$34,918	\$45,024	\$55,130
B17	\$36,976	\$47,688	\$58,399
B18	\$39,521	\$51,985	\$64,449
B19	\$42,244	\$55,602	\$68,960
B20	\$45,158	\$59,473	\$73,788
B21	\$48,278	\$63,616	\$78,953
B22	\$51,614	\$68,047	\$84,479
B23	\$55,184	\$72,789	\$90,393
B24	\$59,004	\$77,862	\$96,720
B25	\$63,104	\$83,298	\$103,491
B26	\$69,415	\$93,406	\$117,397
B27	\$76,356	\$102,747	\$129,137
B28	\$83,991	\$113,022	\$142,052
B29	\$92,390	\$124,323	\$156,256
B30	\$101,630	\$136,756	\$171,881
B31	\$111,793	\$150,431	\$189,069
B32	\$122,972	\$165,475	\$207,977
B33	\$135,269	\$182,022	\$228,775
B34	\$148,796	\$200,224	\$251,652
B35	\$163,676	\$220,247	\$276,817
B36	\$180,044	\$242,272	\$304,499

Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Classification Salary Schedule C

Salary Schedule C contains salaries for the State’s commissioned law enforcement positions and is part of the Plan (see Table 6-3).²²³

Table 6-3

Classification Salary Schedule C						
Fiscal Years 2022-2023						
Salary Group	Years of Service					
	Less than 4	Equal to or More Than 4	Equal to or More Than 8	Equal to or More Than 12	Equal to or More Than 16	Equal to or More Than 20
C1	\$45,255					
C2	\$49,441					
C3	\$59,715	\$72,811	\$77,995	\$81,441	\$85,204	\$88,966
C4		\$81,615	\$87,147	\$90,718	\$94,725	\$97,087
C5		\$92,672	\$98,647	\$102,438	\$106,793	\$109,474
C6		\$115,449	\$119,374	\$121,785	\$124,207	\$125,697
C7		\$120,031	\$120,998	\$123,237	\$125,630	\$128,023
C8		\$135,817	\$135,906	\$135,960	\$135,960	\$135,960

Classification Compliance Audits

As required by the Texas Government Code, the State Classification Team in the State Auditor’s Office conducts classification compliance audits. The objective of these audits is to determine whether agencies conform to the State Position Classification Plan by ensuring the proper classification of positions.²²⁴ If these audits reveal misclassifications, the State Classification Team provides written notice to the appropriate agency heads.

Salary Studies

Each biennium, the State Classification Team submits to the Legislature recommended changes to the Position Classification Plan (Plan). Changes may take the form of new job classification titles; reallocations of existing job classification titles; changes to job classification titles and job classification numbers; and deletion of job classification titles. In reviewing the Plan, the State Classification Team makes periodic studies of salary rates in the public and private sectors for work similar to that performed in state government. The objective of the review is to determine (1) the competitiveness of the Plan and (2) whether changes to the Plan are needed to ensure that the Plan effectively meets the needs of its users. The results of those studies are reported to the Governor’s

²²³ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 2.01.

²²⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 654.036(3).

Budget Office and the Legislative Budget Board prior to October 1 preceding each regular session of the Legislature.²²⁵

In addition, before September 1 of each even-numbered year, the State Classification Team will survey the local law enforcement departments that employ more than 1,000 commissioned law enforcement officers to gather information about the total compensation provided by the departments to law enforcement officers. The results of this survey will be analyzed and reported to the Legislature before January 1 of each odd-numbered year. The report will identify the five local law enforcement departments that provide the highest average total compensation to local law enforcement officers who have been employed by the local law enforcement departments at the maximum salary level.²²⁶

These studies and recommendations are available on the State Auditor's Office's State Classification Team website at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Reports/>.

²²⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 654.037(a); and *A Biennial Report on the State's Position Classification Plan for the 2022-2023 Biennium* (State Auditor's Office Report No. 21-701, October 2020).

²²⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 654.037(b).

Chapter 7
Positions Exempt from the Position Classification Plan

Positions Exempt from the Position Classification Plan

The State has a limited number of positions that are exempt from the Position Classification Plan (Plan) at state agencies. These positions include:

- A constitutional officer or official.
- An elected officer or official.
- An officer appointed by the Governor.
- The chief executive of a state agency.
- A teacher in public schools, a special school of the State, or state institution of higher education.
- Personnel employed by state institutions of higher education.
- A professional compensated for services on a fee basis.
- An employee excluded from the Plan by executive order of the Governor or at the direction of the Legislature.²²⁷

The number of authorized positions for a title listed in a “Schedule of Exempt Positions” may be exceeded only:

- For the purpose of hiring a replacement in a key management position as certified by the chief administrator of the agency.
- If the current incumbent of the position has formally resigned or otherwise announced irrevocable plans to vacate the position.
- For a period of time not to exceed the equivalent of one month’s salary per fiscal year per terminating incumbent (excluding time spent on the payroll for the purpose of exhausting accrued vacation leave or state compensatory time).
- If exceptions are reported as prescribed for payroll reporting procedures.²²⁸

²²⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 654.012.

²²⁸ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(e)(2).

Salary Groups and Not-to-Exceed Rates for Exempt Positions

Salary Groups

The State currently has nine salary groups for positions exempt from the Position Classification Plan. Each salary group has a corresponding salary range that establishes the appropriate minimum and maximum annual salary for each position assigned to that group (see Table 7-1). Within the General Appropriations Act, the Legislature authorizes and designates the title and assigned salary group for each position listed in an agency's Schedule of Exempt Positions.

Table 7-1

Scheduled Exempt Position Salary Rates Fiscal Years 2022 - 2023 ²²⁹		
Group	Minimum Salary	Maximum Salary
1	\$70,000	\$112,750
2	\$80,500	\$129,765
3	\$92,600	\$149,240
4	\$106,500	\$171,688
5	\$122,500	\$197,415
6	\$140,900	\$227,038
7	\$162,000	\$261,068
8	\$186,300	\$299,813
9	\$214,200	\$345,240

Not-to-Exceed Rates

In addition to having assigned salary groups, most exempt positions have "authorized salaries" listed in the agencies' Schedule of Exempt Positions, often referred to as "not-to-exceed (NTE) rates," which are set by the Legislature and identified in the General Appropriations Act. If an agency's Schedule of Exempt Positions has an NTE rate that is less than the maximum salary listed in Table 7-1, the NTE rate listed in the agency's Schedule of Exempt Positions in the General Appropriations Act prevails. These NTE rates cannot be changed unless specifically authorized in accordance with the General Appropriations Act.²³⁰

Exempt Employee Salaries

As noted above, the Legislature sets an agency's NTE rate for exempt positions identified within the agency's Schedule of Exempt Positions. The Governor has the authority to set compensation in an amount not to exceed the maximum salary but not less than the minimum salary for the assigned salary group for positions within specific agencies listed in Table 7-2 on the next page, notwithstanding the salary rate listed in an agency's Schedule of Exempt Positions.²³¹ In addition,

²²⁹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(b)(2).

²³⁰ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(a).

²³¹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(b)(1).

the Governor may designate the title and set the compensation rate of positions exempt from the Position Classification Plan that are used by the Office of the Governor.²³² The salary provided by the General Appropriations Act for the Governor is an annual salary and is not reduced during the Governor’s absence from the state.²³³

Table 7-2 lists the agencies, positions, and salary groups for which the Governor is authorized to designate the compensation rate.

Table 7-2

Agencies Authorized to Have Exempt Positions Titles and Salaries Set by the Governor ²³⁴		
Agency	Position	Salary Group
Secretary of State	Secretary of State	Group 5
Office of State-Federal Relations	Executive Director	Group 4
Health and Human Services Commission	Executive Commissioner	Group 9
Texas Education Agency	Commissioner of Education	Group 8
Military Department	Adjutant General	Group 6
Department of Criminal Justice	Presiding Officer, Board of Pardons and Paroles	Group 5
Department of Criminal Justice	Parole Board Members (6)	Group 3
Commission on Environmental Quality	Commissioners (3)	Group 6
Department of Housing and Community Affairs	Executive Director	Group 6
Texas Workforce Commission	Commissioners (2)	Group 5
Texas Workforce Commission	Commission Chair	Group 6
State Office of Administrative Hearings	Chief Administrative Law Judge	Group 5
Department of Insurance	Commissioner of Insurance	Group 7
Office of Public Insurance Counsel	Public Counsel	Group 4
Office of Public Utility Counsel	Public Counsel	Group 4
Bond Review Board	Executive Director	Group 4
Water Development Board	Commission Chair	Group 6
Water Development Board	Commissioners (2)	Group 6
Water Development Board	Executive Administrator	Group 6

Some state agencies can request to set the rate of compensation of certain exempt positions at an amount within their assigned salary group. Those agencies and exempt positions are listed in Table

²³² General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article I, Office of the Governor, Riders 2 and 4.

²³³ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article I, Office of the Governor, Rider 3.

²³⁴ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(b)(1) and (3).

7-3 (on the next page). The request must be submitted by the governing board (when applicable for an agency with a governing board) and may include:

- The date that the board (when applicable for an agency with a governing board) approved the request.
- A statement that justifies the need to exceed the salary limitations in the agency's Schedule of Exempt Positions.
- The source of funds to be used to pay the additional salary amount.

An agency's governing board (when applicable for an agency with a governing board) may make this request no more than once per fiscal year and additionally upon a vacancy in the exempt position. After submission of the request, the agency can consider it approved if neither the Legislative Budget Board nor the Office of the Governor issues a written disapproval by:

- The 30th business day after the Legislative Budget Board staff submits the results of its review to the chairperson of the House Appropriations Committee, the chairperson of the Senate Finance Committee, the Speaker of the House, and the Lieutenant Governor; and
- The 30th business day after the Office of the Governor received the request for the increase.

If a proposed salary increase is approved, the Legislative Budget Board must notify the affected agency, the Office of the Governor, and the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts.²³⁵

Table 7-3 (on the next page) lists the agencies, positions, and salary groups that are authorized to request an increase in the salary (NTE rate) of an exempt position by submitting a request to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board.

²³⁵ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(c).

Table 7-3

Agencies Authorized to Request a Salary Increase for Exempt Positions within the General Appropriations Act ²³⁶		
Agency	Position	Salary Group
Department of State Health Services	Commissioner	Group 8
Department of Family and Protective Services	Commissioner	Group 8
Higher Education Coordinating Board	Commissioner	Group 8
Department of Information Resources	Executive Director	Group 6
Texas Lottery Commission	Executive Director	Group 7
Texas Juvenile Justice Department	Executive Director	Group 7
Preservation Board	Executive Director	Group 6
School for the Blind and Visually Impaired	Superintendent	Group 5
School for the Deaf	Superintendent	Group 5
Animal Health Commission	Executive Director	Group 6
Texas Public Finance Authority	Executive Director	Group 6
Alcoholic Beverage Commission	Executive Director	Group 6
Public Utility Commission of Texas	Commissioners (3)	Group 7
Public Utility Commission of Texas	Executive Director	Group 7

In addition to all other requirements and limits established under an agency’s bill pattern, any requests for a salary increase from appropriated funds for exempt positions listed in Table 7-2 (on Page 51) and Table 7-3 must be:

- In writing;
- Approved by the governing board (for an agency with a governing board) in a public meeting;
- Signed by the presiding officer of the governing board (for an agency with a governing board); and
- Submitted to the Governor, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts.²³⁷

²³⁶ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(c)(6).

²³⁷ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04(d).

Salary Supplements for Exempt Positions

Classified employees or employees in exempt positions funded by the General Appropriations Act cannot receive a salary supplement from any source unless specifically authorized by statute or the General Appropriations Act.²³⁸

In addition to salary amounts appropriated by the General Appropriations Act and identified in the schedule of exempt positions, some exempt positions may receive a salary supplement. See Chapter 8 (Salary Administration) for additional information about reporting and disclosing salary supplements.

Provisions for Educational Institutions

Out of the educational and general funds appropriated to general academic institutions, community colleges, health centers, health science centers, and medical education programs, the Legislature sets a not-to-exceed rate for the salary of a president or chancellor. All presidents and chancellors may receive additional amounts for a house, utilities, and/or supplement from institutional funds. Table 7-4 lists those rates and the positions to which they apply.

Table 7-4

Provisions for Salaries for Educational Institutions ²³⁹		
Title	Not To Exceed Rate (Paid from Appropriated Funds)	Not to Exceed Rate for Housing Allowance ^a
President, Higher Education Institution	\$65,945	\$7,200
Chancellor, Higher Education Institution	\$70,231	\$7,200
Campus President, Texas State Technical College	\$63,654	\$7,200
Chancellor, Texas State Technical College	\$70,231	\$7,200

^a If a house owned by the institution, system, or program is not available, an amount not to exceed \$7,200 per year from appropriated funds and additional amounts from private or institutional funds, when required, may be provided in lieu of housing and utilities.

Salary Study on Exempt Positions

The State Auditor's Office is directed to conduct a study similar to the biennial study on the State's Position Classification Plan that reviews the compensation of exempt positions and executive compensation as provided in Articles I through VIII of the General Appropriations Act. The study should compare exempt positions from different agencies and take into account the following:

²³⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.020.

²³⁹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article III, Special Provisions Relating Only to State Agencies of Higher Education, Section 5(2) and (3); and General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article III, Special Provisions Relating Only to Components of Texas State Technical College, Riders 9 and 10.

- Size of an agency's annual appropriations.
- Full-time equivalent (FTE) level.
- Market average compensation for similar executive positions.
- Exempt position salary as compared to classified positions within the agency.
- Other objective criteria the State Auditor's Office deems appropriate.

The study must be submitted to all members of the Legislature and the director of the Legislative Budget Board no later than September 1, 2022.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.08.

Chapter 8 Salary Administration

General Information

For salary administration purposes, there are two types of positions:

- Classified positions paid in accordance with the Classification Salary Schedules.²⁴¹
- Positions that are exempted from the Position Classification Plan by authority of the Legislature or the Governor. Salaries for these positions must be set in accordance with the General Appropriations Act.²⁴²

Administration by the Comptroller of Public Accounts

The Comptroller of Public Accounts may establish procedures and adopt rules to administer promotions, reclassifications, and other adjustments to salary. These procedures and rules may be found in the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource at the following website:
https://fmxcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/pa_ypol/index.php.

The following sections relate primarily to salary administration for classified employees in state agencies.

Part-time and Hourly Employees

Regular, full-time positions may be filled by part-time and hourly employees.²⁴³ The salary rates for part-time and hourly employees are to be proportionate to those of full-time employees. Part-time employees must be appropriately classified with titles from the Position Classification Plan or appropriate exempt titles.²⁴⁴ For group benefits purposes, a full-time employee is an employee who works 30 or more hours per week.²⁴⁵

Salary at the Time of Hire

State agencies have the authority to determine, at the time of initial employment, the salary rate within the applicable salary group for all classified positions.²⁴⁶ Initial employment includes rehires and interagency transfers.

Salary Limitations

State employees must be paid at a salary rate that falls within the salary range of the applicable salary group.²⁴⁷ Therefore, a promotion, reclassification, or other salary adjustment may not result in an employee receiving a salary in excess of the maximum rate authorized for his or her salary

²⁴¹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 2.01.

²⁴² Texas Government Code, Sections 654.012 and 654.0125; Texas Government Code, Section 659.011; and General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.04.

²⁴³ Texas Government Code, Section 658.009.

²⁴⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.019(a).

²⁴⁵ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.003(9).

²⁴⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 654.014(b).

²⁴⁷ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.01(d).

group.²⁴⁸ Additionally, state employees may not be paid less than the minimum rate of the salary range of his or her applicable salary group.

Salary Supplementation

Classified employees or employees in exempt positions funded by the General Appropriations Act cannot receive a salary supplement from any source unless specifically authorized by statute or the General Appropriations Act.²⁴⁹

Additionally, funds appropriated to state agencies and institutions of higher education may not be expended for a salary payment to a person whose classified salary or exempt salary is supplemented from other than appropriated funds until a report showing the sources and amounts of the non-appropriated funds for the salary has been submitted to the Secretary of State, State Auditor, and Comptroller of Public Accounts.²⁵⁰

State agencies—including institutions of higher education as defined by the Texas Education Code, Section 61.003—that accept from a person gifts, grants, donations, or other considerations that the person designates to be used as a salary supplement for an employee of the agency or institution must post on their websites the amount of each gift, grant, donation, or other consideration provided. In addition, a state agency or institution of higher education that accepts a gift, grant, donation, or other consideration from a person that is designated to be used as a salary supplement for an employee of the agency or institution must by rule adopt conflict of interest provisions regarding the acceptance of gifts, grants, donations, or other considerations to be used as salary supplements. The conflict of interest provisions must be posted on the agency’s or institution’s website.²⁵¹

When a state agency or institution of higher education receives a gift, grant, donation, or other consideration for the purpose of a salary supplement from an entity created solely to provide support for the agency or institution, the agency or institution must compile and report to the State Auditor and the Legislature certain information regarding the gift, grant, donation, or other consideration as described in Texas Government Code, Section 659.0201 (d).²⁵²

In addition, when a state agency or institution of higher education receives from a person a gift, grant, donation, or other consideration that is designated to be used as a salary supplement for a named person, position, or endowment, the agency or institution must report to the State Auditor certain information regarding the gift, grant, donation, or other consideration as described in Texas Government Code, Section 659.0201(i).²⁵³

²⁴⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.259(b) and (c).

²⁴⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.020.

²⁵⁰ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.02.

²⁵¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.0201(a), (b), and (c).

²⁵² Texas Government Code, Section 659.0201(d) and (e).

²⁵³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.0201(i).

Conversion of Exempt Employees to Classified Positions

An employee who transfers from an exempt position to a classified position within an agency is entitled to receive an annual salary in the salary group to which the classified position is allocated. The employee's annual salary after the transfer may not exceed the rate received by the employee when holding the exempt position or the maximum rate of the salary group to which the classified position is allocated. The employee may receive his or her current salary or the maximum rate of the new salary group, whichever is lower.²⁵⁴

A merit salary increase for an employee who transfers to a classified position from an exempt position may not take effect if the employee has spent fewer than six months in the classified position or the increase would take the employee's salary beyond the maximum of his or her new salary group.²⁵⁵

The Legislative Budget Board and the Governor may approve, upon receiving the employing state agency's application, an exception to the salary limitation for a state employee who transfers from an exempt position to a classified position if the employee's job responsibilities with the agency have changed substantially during the biennium.²⁵⁶

A transfer from an exempt position to a classified position is not considered initial employment; therefore, agency heads can designate an employee's pay rate only in accordance with the provisions stating that the compensation rate must not exceed an employee's current salary rate or the maximum rate of the employee's salary group.²⁵⁷

Reassignment of Executive Directors

An executive director may not be reassigned to another position within the agency or at another agency that is controlled by the same governing body unless, in an open meeting, the governing body votes to approve the proposed reassignment.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.253(a) and (b).

²⁵⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 659.253(c).

²⁵⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.253(d).

²⁵⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.253(b).

²⁵⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 669.002.

Demotions

A demotion is a change from one classification title to another classification title in a salary group with a lower minimum salary rate.²⁵⁹ The salary of a demoted employee in Classification Salary Schedule A will be reduced at least \$30 a month from the base salary for full-time employees. The salary of a demoted employee in Classification Salary Schedule B will be reduced by at least 3.4 percent.²⁶⁰

An agency is not required to reduce a demoted employee's salary if:

- The demotion was accepted in lieu of a layoff that resulted from a reduction in force. An employee demoted under these circumstances may not receive a salary rate that exceeds the employee's salary rate before the demotion.
- The employee was selected for another position in a lower salary group as a result of applying for the position. An employee under these circumstances may not receive a salary rate that exceeds the maximum rate of the lower salary group.²⁶¹

Equity Adjustments

A state agency may increase the salary of a classified employee to any rate within the employee's salary group as necessary to maintain desirable salary relationships between and among employees of the agency or between employees of the agency and employees who hold similar positions in relevant labor markets.²⁶² A state agency may award an equity adjustment to an employee under this section only if the adjustment does not conflict with other law.²⁶³

State agencies must establish written rules regarding equity adjustments and must consider the education, skills, related work experience, length of service, and job performance of agency employees and similar employees in the relevant labor market. These rules must include procedures under which the agency will review and analyze the salary relationships between agency employees who receive salaries under the same job classification and perform the same type and level of work to determine if inequities exist.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.257(b).

²⁶⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.257(c) and (d); Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Salary Adjustments for State Agency Employees*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/index.php>; and *Reason Codes Quick Reference for State Agencies*, Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (Salary Action Code 021), Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/payper/reascode/22-23/ReasonCodeQuickRef.php>.

²⁶¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.257(f) and (g).

²⁶² General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.07(a).

²⁶³ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.07(c).

²⁶⁴ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.07(b) and (d).

In providing an equity adjustment, the salary must increase but still remain within the same salary group without a change to the job classification or salary group.²⁶⁵

Lateral Transfers

A lateral transfer is a change-in-duty assignment of an agency employee that moves the employee to different job classification title in the same salary group. An example might be an Accountant V (Salary Group B21) who moves to Accounts Examiner V (Salary Group B21). When a lateral transfer occurs, the salary can be increased, it can remain the same, or it can decrease within the salary group. If an increase is provided, it can be no more than 3.4 percent higher than the employee's salary prior to the transfer. If the salary decreases, it may not decrease below the minimum of the salary group. A state employee's annual salary rate immediately after a transfer may not exceed the maximum rate for the employee's salary group.²⁶⁶ An increase in salary is not authorized for an employee who moves to a different position but remains in the same job classification title at the same agency. An example might be an Administrative Assistant IV in an agency's finance division who moves to an Administrative Assistant IV position in the same agency's human resources division.

Reallocations

In this chapter, "higher salary group" means a salary group with a higher minimum salary rate, and "lower salary group" means a salary group with a lower minimum salary rate.²⁶⁷

Reallocations refer to the process by which the General Appropriations Act assigns specific classified positions to a salary group that differs from the previously designated salary group.²⁶⁸

A classified employee whose position is reallocated to a higher salary group will receive the minimum rate in the higher salary group or the salary he or she would have received without the reallocation, whichever is higher. Salaries of employees may not be increased more than 6.8 percent for the purpose of maintaining desirable salary relationships among employees in the affected positions.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁵ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Salary Adjustments for State Agency Employees*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/index.php>; and *Reason Codes Quick Reference for State Agencies*, Fiscal Years 2022-2023 (Salary Action Code 040), Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/payper/reascode/22-23/ReasonCodeQuickRef.php>.

²⁶⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.2531; Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Salary Adjustments for State Agency Employees*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/index.php>; and *Reason Codes Quick Reference for State Agencies*, Fiscal Years 2022-2023 (Salary Action Code 046), Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/payper/reascode/22-23/ReasonCodeQuickRef.php>.

²⁶⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.254(b).

²⁶⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.254(c) and (d).

²⁶⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.254(c).

Employees whose positions are reallocated to lower salary groups will receive the salaries they would have received had their positions not been reallocated. However, the employees' salaries must not exceed the maximum rates for the lower salary groups.²⁷⁰

Reclassifications

Reclassification is defined as a change in the classification of a position to another classification title as a result of a classification review or agency reorganization. The purpose of a reclassification is to properly classify a position based on the actual duties currently performed by an employee. It does not refer to a change in an employee's duty assignment. A position may be reclassified at any time to correct a discrepancy.²⁷¹ Annually, all agencies covered by the Position Classification Act are required to review individual job assignments to ensure that each employee is classified properly. In addition, an agency may perform a monthly review of job assignments.²⁷²

A classified employee whose position is reclassified to a higher salary group will receive the minimum rate in the higher salary group or the salary he or she would have received without the reclassification, whichever is higher. Salaries of employees may not be increased more than 6.8 percent for the purpose of maintaining desirable salary relationships among employees in the affected positions.²⁷³

Employees whose positions are reclassified to a lower salary group will receive the salaries they would have received had their positions not been reclassified. However, the employees' salaries must not exceed the maximum rates for the lower salary groups.²⁷⁴ Consequently, if the employee's salary prior to the reclassification is higher than the maximum salary of the lower salary group, the employee will receive the maximum salary of the lower salary group.

Salary Reduction for Disciplinary Reasons

Agency heads may reduce a classified employee's pay for disciplinary reasons if warranted by the employee's performance. The reduced salary cannot be lower than the minimum rate of the employee's current salary group. Pay may be restored to any rate within the same salary group, up to and including the employee's prior rate, as performance improves, without accounting for the increase as a merit increase.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.254(d).

²⁷¹ Texas Government Code, Section 654.0156.

²⁷² Texas Government Code, Section 654.0155.

²⁷³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.254(c).

²⁷⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.254(d).

²⁷⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 659.258(b).

Promotions

A promotion is a change in classification title that provides a higher minimum salary rate, requires higher qualifications, and involves a higher level of responsibility.²⁷⁶

An employee promoted to a position in Classification Salary Schedule A will receive at least a \$30 per month increase to the base salary for a full-time employee or the minimum salary rate of the new salary group, whichever is higher. An employee promoted to a position in Classification Salary Schedule B will receive at least a 3.4 percent increase or the minimum salary rate of the new salary group, whichever is higher. In addition, agency administrators have the discretion to grant a promoted employee a salary amount up to and including the maximum rate of the new salary group.²⁷⁷

Temporary Assignments

To facilitate the work of state agencies during emergencies or special circumstances, an employee may be temporarily assigned to other duties for a period not to exceed six months. During that time, the employee will receive at least the same amount of pay he or she received prior to the reassignment. An employee may not be temporarily assigned to a position with a lower minimum salary rate. Temporary assignments will not exceed 6 months in a 12-month period. An employee temporarily designated to act as the administrative head of a state agency may continue to receive a salary for a classified position in an amount not to exceed the amount established by the General Appropriations Act for the administrative head of the agency. During the temporary assignment, an agency cannot award a merit increase to, promote, or demote the employee.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.256(b).

²⁷⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.256(c) and (d); and *Reason Codes Quick Reference for State Agencies*, Fiscal Years 2022-2023 (Salary Action Code 020), Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/payper/reascode/22-23/ReasonCodeQuickRef.php>.

²⁷⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.260.

Chapter 9

Employee Compensation

Employee Compensation Overview

Various statutes and policies determine pay for employees in state agencies and institutions of higher education. This chapter provides an overview of these statutes but does not cover individual state agency or higher education institution policies and procedures related to employee compensation.

Salary Limitations

The General Appropriations Act does not limit the total amount agencies may expend for merit salary increases and promotions.²⁷⁹

Recovering Excess Compensation Paid

State agencies and institutions of higher education are authorized to recover overpayments of compensation to employees.²⁸⁰ The Comptroller of Public Accounts may adopt rules and establish procedures to administer the recovery of overpayments.²⁸¹ Compensation subject to recovery for overpayment includes base salary or wages, longevity or hazardous duty pay, benefit replacement pay, payment for the balance of vacation and sick leave, payment for the accrued balance of vacation time, and an emolument in lieu of base salary or wages.²⁸²

If requesting recovery of an overpayment, the state agency or institution of higher education must first notify the employee before a collection action.²⁸³ The state agency or institution of higher education may request that the Comptroller of Public Accounts recover the overpayment.²⁸⁴ No statute of limitations bars the State's recovery of employee indebtedness.²⁸⁵

Benefit Replacement Pay

Prior to January 1, 1996, the State paid a portion of the federal taxes for eligible state employees and eligible state-paid judges under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). This payment was commonly known as state-paid Social Security. Beginning with wages paid January 1, 1996, this state-paid Social Security ceased. The Legislature chose to offset the effects of the repeal of the state's payment of the taxes imposed on state employees and state-paid judges under FICA by paying a new entitlement called benefit replacement pay.

²⁷⁹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.03.

²⁸⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 666.002(a).

²⁸¹ Texas Government Code, Section 666.008.

²⁸² Texas Government Code, Section 666.001(1).

²⁸³ Texas Government Code, Sections 666.002(a)(1) and 666.003.

²⁸⁴ Texas Government Code, Sections 666.002(b) and 666.005.

²⁸⁵ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion GA-0171 (2004).

To be eligible, an employee must have been employed by the State on August 31, 1995, and must have been:

- Eligible for the state-paid Social Security contribution under Section 606.064 of the Texas Government Code.
- Using unpaid leave from a position with a state agency, if the employee would have been otherwise eligible; or
- Not working because his or her employment customarily did not include summer months; he or she had contracted to resume employment before September 2, 1995; and such employment would have made the employee eligible for the state-paid tax if the employee had held that position at that time.²⁸⁶

Benefit replacement pay is equal to 5.85 percent of the first \$16,500 of FICA wages earned during the pay period and the additional retirement contribution that would have been paid by the employee because of receiving benefit replacement pay. The total benefit replacement pay may not exceed \$1,026.86 each calendar year for state agency employees participating in the Employees Retirement System.²⁸⁷ The benefit replacement pay for employees at institutions of higher education participating in the Teacher Retirement System may not exceed \$1,031.25.²⁸⁸

State agencies have the option of providing benefit replacement pay in equal installments during the calendar year. This practice is known as “leveling.” This option exists if the employee’s FICA wages are anticipated to be at least \$16,500 during the year in which the leveling would occur. If an employee chooses to receive benefit replacement pay in equal installments and then terminates his or her employment before year end, the employee will not be paid the difference between the benefit replacement pay received and the amount the employee would have received had the installment plan not been chosen.²⁸⁹

An eligible employee who leaves state employment for 30 or more consecutive days becomes ineligible to receive benefit replacement pay upon re-employment with the State.²⁹⁰ An eligible state employee who retired from state employment on or after June 1, 2005, and who receives an annuity based wholly or partly on services as a state officer or state employee in a public retirement system, is ineligible to receive benefit replacement pay upon re-employment with the State.²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.121(2); and Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource’s *Benefit Replacement Pay for State Agencies*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts’ website at https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/nonsalary_provisions/index.php.

²⁸⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.123; and Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource’s *Benefit Replacement Pay for State Agencies*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts’ website at https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/nonsalary_provisions/index.php.

²⁸⁸ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource’s *Benefit Replacement Pay for Institutions of Higher Education*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts’ website at https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/hied_provisions/.

²⁸⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.125; and Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource’s *Benefit Replacement Pay for State Agencies*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts’ website at https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/nonsalary_provisions/index.php.

²⁹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.126(a).

²⁹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.126(d).

Hazardous Duty Pay

A state employee is eligible for hazardous duty pay if he or she is a state employee for any portion of the first work day of the month and has completed at least 12 months of lifetime service credit (by the last day of the preceding month).²⁹² Those state employees eligible for hazardous duty pay include:

- A commissioned law enforcement officer of the Department of Public Safety, the Texas Facilities Commission, the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, the Department of Criminal Justice, the Office of the Attorney General, or the Insurance Fraud Unit of the Department of Insurance.
- A commissioned security officer of the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts.
- A law enforcement officer commissioned by the Parks and Wildlife Commission.
- A commissioned peace officer of an institution of higher education.
- An employee or official of the Board of Pardons and Paroles or the Department of Criminal Justice's Parole Division if the employee or official has routine, direct contact with inmates or with administratively released prisoners.
- An individual certified as having begun employment as a law enforcement officer or custodial officer unless the employee ceased that employment.
- An employee who received hazardous duty pay before May 29, 1987, based on the terms of any state law if the individual holds a position designated under that law as eligible for pay.
- A security officer employed by the Military Department.²⁹³

The Alcoholic Beverage Commission is authorized to pay hazardous duty pay to any commissioned law enforcement personnel as prescribed by law. It is further provided that individuals who had received hazardous duty pay as of August 31, 1981, will continue to receive hazardous duty pay for the 2022-2023 biennium. Individuals hired after August 31, 1981, will not be eligible to receive hazardous duty pay unless so authorized by statute.²⁹⁴

Hazardous Duty Pay Lifetime Service Credit

The amount of an employee's hazardous duty pay is based on the number of months served in a hazardous duty position, which is also known as "lifetime service credit."²⁹⁵ The number of months is determined on the last day of the preceding month. To be eligible, the employee must be an

²⁹² Texas Government Code, Section 659.302(a).

²⁹³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.301(5).

²⁹⁴ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article V, Alcoholic Beverage Commission, Rider 3.

²⁹⁵ Texas Government Code, Sections 659.305(a) and 659.307(a).

employee for a portion of the first workday of the month.²⁹⁶ For a part-time employee, hazardous duty pay is proportional to the amount given to a full-time employee.²⁹⁷

Amount of Hazardous Duty Pay

In most cases, the amount of a full-time employee's hazardous duty pay for a particular month is \$10 for each 12-month period of lifetime service credit accrued by the employee.²⁹⁸ The state agency that employs the individual at the beginning of the first workday of the month is responsible for paying hazardous duty pay for that month.²⁹⁹

Jury Service and Witness Fees

A deduction may not be made from the salary or wages of a state employee because the employee is called for jury service, including a deduction for any fee or compensation the employee receives for the jury service.³⁰⁰

A state officer or employee who appears as a witness in an official capacity in a judicial proceeding or legislative hearing may not accept or receive a witness fee for the appearance.

A state officer or employee who appears as a witness in a capacity that is other than as a state officer or employee in a judicial proceeding or legislative hearing to testify from personal knowledge concerning matters related to the proceeding or hearing is entitled to receive any customary witness fees for the appearance.

A state officer or employee who appears as an expert witness in a judicial proceeding or legislative hearing may accept compensation for the appearance only if the person is not also compensated by the State for his or her time in making the appearance. Additionally, the state officer or employee may accept reimbursement for travel expenses only if the expenses are not reimbursed by the State. For these purposes, paid leave is not considered time compensated by the State.

A state officer or employee may receive reimbursement for travel and a per diem or reimbursement for expenses connected to an appearance in an official capacity as a witness in a judicial proceeding or legislative hearing only from the State or the judicial body, but not from both the State and the judicial body.³⁰¹

Longevity Pay

Longevity pay is provided to all eligible full-time employees who are not on leave without pay the first workday of the month and who have at least two years of lifetime service credit. Part-time

²⁹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.302(a).

²⁹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.305(f).

²⁹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.305(a).

²⁹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.306.

³⁰⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.005(a).

³⁰¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.005(b), (c), (d), and (e).

employees do not receive longevity pay.³⁰² Those ineligible for longevity pay include members of the Legislature; individuals elected to public office; an independent contractor or an employee of an independent contractor; temporary state employees; officers or employees of public junior colleges; academic employees of institutions of higher education; and return-to-work employees who retired from state employment on or after June 1, 2005, and who receive an annuity based wholly or partly on service as a state officer or state employee.³⁰³ The Comptroller of Public Accounts is responsible for adopting rules for the administration of longevity pay.³⁰⁴

Accrual of Lifetime Service Credit

For the purposes of longevity pay, an employee accrues lifetime service credit for the period in which the employee:

- Serves as a full-time, part-time, or temporary state employee or otherwise serves as an employee of the state;
- Serves as a member of the Legislature;
- Holds a statewide office that is normally filled by a vote of the people; or
- Serves as an academic employee of a state institution of higher education.

An employee who is on leave without pay for an entire calendar month does not accrue lifetime service credit for the month. An employee who is on leave without pay for less than an entire calendar month accrues lifetime service credit for the month if the employee otherwise qualifies to accrue credit.

An employee who simultaneously holds two or more positions that each accrues lifetime service credit accrues credit for only one of the positions.

An employee who begins working on the first workday of a month in a position that accrues lifetime service credit is considered to have begun working on the first day of the month.

An employee does not accrue lifetime service credit for a period in which the employee serves as an officer or employee of a public junior college.

The amount of an employee's lifetime service credit does not include the period served in a hazardous duty position if the employee is entitled to receive hazardous duty pay or is receiving the maximum amount of hazardous duty pay that the Juvenile Justice Department may pay to the employee.³⁰⁵

³⁰² Texas Government Code, Section 659.043(a).

³⁰³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.042; and Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Longevity Pay*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/nonsalary_provisions/index.php.

³⁰⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.047.

³⁰⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 659.046.

Table 9-1 lists the amounts of longevity pay that eligible employees receive based upon years of service.³⁰⁶

Table 9-1

Longevity Pay	
Years of Service	Monthly Longevity Pay
Less than 2 years	\$0
At least 2 but less than 4 years	\$20
At least 4 but less than 6 years	\$40
At least 6 but less than 8 years	\$60
At least 8 but less than 10 years	\$80
At least 10 but less than 12 years	\$100
At least 12 but less than 14 years	\$120
At least 14 but less than 16 years	\$140
At least 16 but less than 18 years	\$160
At least 18 but less than 20 years	\$180
At least 20 but less than 22 years	\$200
At least 22 but less than 24 years	\$220
At least 24 but less than 26 years	\$240
At least 26 but less than 28 years	\$260
At least 28 but less than 30 years	\$280
At least 30 but less than 32 years	\$300
At least 32 but less than 34 years	\$320
At least 34 but less than 36 years	\$340
At least 36 but less than 38 years	\$360
At least 38 but less than 40 years	\$380
At least 40 but less than 42 years	\$400
At least 42 years or greater	\$420

Longevity Pay for State Judges and Justices

A judge or justice who receives a salary paid by the State, is a member of the Judicial Retirement System of Texas, and is an active judge (as defined by Texas Government Code, Section 74.041) is entitled to longevity pay. The monthly amount of longevity pay to which a judge or justice is entitled is equal to the product of 0.05 multiplied by the amount of the judge’s or justice’s current monthly state salary. Longevity pay becomes payable beginning with the month following the month in which the judge or justice completes 12 years of service for which credit is established in the applicable retirement system.³⁰⁷ Longevity pay paid to a judge or justice is not included as part of

³⁰⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.044.

³⁰⁷ Texas Government Code, Sections 659.0445(a) and 659.0445(b).

the judge's or justice's combined salary from state and county sources for purposes of the salary limitations provided by Texas Government Code, Section 659.012.³⁰⁸

Longevity Pay for Return-to-Work Retirees

A state employee who retired from state employment **before** June 1, 2005, and who returned to state employment **before** September 1, 2005, is entitled to receive longevity pay. The monthly amount of longevity pay the employee is entitled to receive equals the amount of longevity pay that the employee was entitled to receive immediately before September 1, 2005. A state employee who retired from state employment **before** June 1, 2005, and who returned to state employment **on or after** September 1, 2005, is not entitled to receive longevity pay.³⁰⁹

Longevity Pay When an Employee's Status Changes

If an employee changes from a full-time state employee after the first workday of a month to another status (for example, a part-time employee), but otherwise qualifies for longevity pay, the employee's compensation for the month includes full longevity pay.³¹⁰

Merit Salary Increases and One-time Merit Payments

State agencies may award merit salary increases and one-time merit payments to classified employees whose job performance and productivity in their current position is consistently above what is normally expected and required.³¹¹ Each state agency must adopt policies to ensure that an employee's performance expectations are linked to the goals in the agency's strategic plan.³¹²

For classified employees in Classification Salary Schedules A and B, a merit salary increase consists of an increase in the employee's base salary within the range of the employee's salary group.³¹³ For Classification Salary Schedule A employees, the minimum amount for a merit increase is \$30 per month. For Classification Salary Schedule B employees, there is no specified minimum amount for a merit increase.³¹⁴

For classified employees in Classification Salary Schedules A, B, and C, there is no minimum or maximum amount that may be awarded for a one-time merit payment. A one-time merit payment is a single payment to an employee that does not change the employee's base salary.³¹⁵

³⁰⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.0445(e).

³⁰⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.044(f).

³¹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.045.

³¹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.255(e)(4) and (f)(4).

³¹² Texas Government Code, Section 659.2551.

³¹³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.255(a)(3).

³¹⁴ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Salary Adjustments for State Agency Employees*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/index.php>.

³¹⁵ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Salary Adjustments for State Agency Employees*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/index.php>.

Agencies should ensure that merit increases and one-time merit payments are distributed throughout the range of classified salary groups.³¹⁶

Employees may receive a merit salary increase or a one-time merit payment for performance if the criteria listed below are met. A state agency may award a merit salary increase or a one-time merit payment to a classified employee in relation to his or her current performance if:³¹⁷

- The employee has been employed by the agency for six continuous months in their classified position before the effective date of the merit salary increase or one-time merit payment.
- The effective date of the merit salary increase or one-time merit payment is at least six months after the effective date of the employee's last promotion, enhanced compensation award, merit salary increase for performance in that position, or a one-time merit payment for performance in that position (including a one-time merit payment given for an employee's performance during a natural disaster or other extraordinary circumstance). The six-month limitation between salary actions does not apply to one-time merit payments that are awarded for performance during a natural disaster or other extraordinary circumstance. The administrative head of an agency must document the employee's performance during a natural disaster or other extraordinary circumstance.³¹⁸
- The agency has established a procedure for determining the eligibility of a classified employee to receive a merit salary increase or a one-time merit payment.
- The employee's job performance and productivity in that position are consistently above that normally expected or required.

Employees Not Eligible for Merit Increases

Merit increases are prohibited for all Department of Criminal Justice employees who are receiving or are eligible to receive career ladder adjustments, such as:

- Correctional officers.
- Sergeants, Lieutenants, Captains, and Majors of correctional officers.
- Food service managers.
- Laundry managers.
- Parole officers.³¹⁹

³¹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.255(d).

³¹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.255(e) and (f).

³¹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.255(g).

³¹⁹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article V, Department of Criminal Justice, Rider 7.

Merit increases are also prohibited for all Juvenile Justice Department juvenile correctional officers who are receiving or are eligible to receive career ladder adjustments.³²⁰

Employees in a temporary assignment or currently under a disciplinary reduction in pay are not eligible to receive merit salary increases.³²¹

Merit Increases at Institutions of Higher Education

Merit salary increases are awarded to employees whose job performance and productivity is consistently above that normally expected or required.³²² An institution of higher education may grant merit salary increases, including one-time merit payments, to employees.³²³

An institution of higher education may pay merit salary increases from any funds. Before awarding a merit salary increase, an institution of higher education must adopt criteria for the granting of merit salary increases. To be eligible for a merit salary increase, an employee must have been employed by the institution of higher education for the six months immediately preceding the effective date of the increase and at least six months must have elapsed since the employee's last merit salary increase. The required six-month lapse between merit increases does not apply to a one-time merit payment if the chief administrative officer of the institution of higher education determines in writing that the one-time payment is made in relation to the employee's performance during a natural disaster or other extraordinary circumstances.³²⁴

Salary increases for faculty or faculty-equivalent employees at institutions of higher education must be awarded on the basis of merit and job performance. This does not include salary adjustments designed to avoid salary inequities.³²⁵

An institution of higher education that has adopted a pay-for-performance program that is in effect when an across-the-board salary increase for state employees takes effect may use the amount appropriated for (1) an across-the-board salary increase or (2) increases in compensation under the institution's pay-for-performance program.³²⁶

³²⁰ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article V, Juvenile Justice Department, Rider 22.

³²¹ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Salary Adjustments for State Agency Employees*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/index.php>.

³²² General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article III, Special Provisions Relating Only to State Agencies of Higher Education, Section 5(4).

³²³ Texas Education Code, Section 51.962(a).

³²⁴ Texas Education Code, Section 51.962(c), (d), (e), and (f).

³²⁵ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article III, Special Provisions Relating Only to State Agencies of Higher Education, Section 5(5).

³²⁶ Texas Education Code, Section 51.0065.

Recruitment Bonuses

To enhance the recruitment of competent personnel for certain classified positions, a state agency may provide to a state employee, at the time of the employee's hiring for a classified position, additional compensation in the form of a one-time payment not to exceed \$5,000.

If the employee discontinues employment with the state agency for any reason less than three months after the date of receiving the recruitment payment, the employee must refund to the state agency the full amount of the recruitment payment.

If the employee discontinues employment with the state agency for any reason 3 months or more but less than 12 months after the date of receiving the recruitment payment, the employee must refund to the state agency an amount computed by:

- Subtracting from 12 months the number of complete calendar months the employee worked after the date of receiving the recruitment payment;
- Dividing the number of months above by 12 months; and
- Multiplying the fraction computed by the amount of the recruitment payment.³²⁷

Before an agency provides or enters into a contract to provide additional compensation to an employee under Texas Government Code, Section 659.262, the chief administrator of the state agency must certify in writing to the Comptroller of Public Accounts the reasons the additional compensation is necessary. Additional compensation paid to an employee in accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 659.262, is specifically exempted from any limitation on salary or salary increases.³²⁸

Recruitment bonuses do not constitute compensation or salary and wages for purposes of determining the amount of the State's contribution for retirement.³²⁹

Retention Bonuses

To enhance the retention of employees who are employed in certain classified positions that are identified by the chief administrator of the agency as "essential for the state agency's operations," a state agency may enter into a deferred compensation contract with an employee to provide the employee a one-time payment not to exceed \$5,000.³³⁰

To be eligible to enter into a contract for deferred compensation, the state employee must have already completed at least 12 months of service in a classified position. The retention bonus will be

³²⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 659.262(b).

³²⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.262(f) and (g).

³²⁹ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Recruitment and Retention Bonuses*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/nonsalary_provisions/index.php.

³³⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.262(c).

added to the employee's salary payment the month after the conclusion of the 12-month period of service under the deferred compensation contract.³³¹

The chief administrator of a state agency must determine whether additional compensation is necessary on a case-by-case basis and must consider the following:

- The criticality of the employee position in the operation of the agency.
- Evidence of high turnover rates among employees filling the position or an extended period during which the position has been vacant.
- Evidence of a shortage of employees qualified to fill the position or a shortage of qualified applicants.
- Other relevant factors.³³²

Before an agency provides or enters into a contract to provide additional compensation to an employee under Texas Government Code, Section 659.262, the chief administrator of the agency must certify in writing to the Comptroller of Public Accounts the reasons why the additional compensation is necessary. Additional compensation paid to an employee in accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 659.262, is specifically exempted from any limitation on salary or salary increases.³³³

Retention bonuses do not constitute compensation or salary and wages for purposes of determining the amount of the State's contribution for retirement.³³⁴

Savings Incentive Program for State Agencies

State agencies that realize savings in accordance with Texas Government Code, Sections 2108.101 and 2108.102, may retain and use part of the savings to provide bonuses, in the amounts prescribed by Texas Government Code, Section 2108.103, to each agency employee who:

- Is a current full-time employee of the agency,
- Worked for the agency as a full-time employee for the entire fiscal year in which the savings were realized, **and**
- Is directly responsible for, or worked in, a department, office, or other division within the agency that is responsible for the savings.

A state agency is allowed to retain one-half of the amount of savings verified by the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts, and it may use one-half of the retained amount to provide the employee bonuses if the agency does not have to make additional principal payments for general

³³¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.262(c) and (d).

³³² Texas Government Code, Section 659.262(e).

³³³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.262(f) and (g).

³³⁴ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Recruitment and Retention Bonuses*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/nonsalary_provisions/index.php.

obligation bonds issued by the agency or on behalf of the agency. A state agency may not provide a bonus under this program to an employee of the agency who serves in an upper management position, including the chief executive or chief administrator of the agency. To implement this program, a state agency must adopt rules.³³⁵

Salary Stipends for Employees in Classification Salary Schedule C

Certain commissioned peace officers in Classification Salary Schedule C are eligible to receive salary stipends. These stipends must be paid to officers who achieve certain levels of skill or certifications as approved by the eligible employing agencies. Commissioned peace officers may receive a stipend for education level or certification level, but not both.

These salary stipends for skills and certifications include:

Education Level

- Associate Degree – \$50 per month.
- Bachelor’s Degree – \$100 per month.
- Master’s Degree – \$150 per month.

Commission on Law Enforcement Certification Level

- Intermediate – \$50 per month.
- Advanced – \$100 per month.
- Masters – \$150 per month.

Bilingual Capabilities

Commissioned peace officers can receive a salary stipend of \$50 per month for the ability to speak a language other than English.³³⁶

Salary Stipends and Pay for Special Assignments

Salary stipends may be used to provide additional salary to employees in certain circumstances. Specific agencies are provided authority in the General Appropriations Act for using stipends to supplement employee pay for special assignments or duties.

³³⁵ Texas Government Code, Sections 2108.101, 2108.102, and 2108.103.

³³⁶ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 3.12(b).

Shift Differentials, Standby, or On-Call Pay

Shift differentials may be paid to employees to compensate them for working shifts different than a normal schedule. Standby or on-call pay may be used to compensate certain employees who are required to be on call and in the event of an emergency, return to work when they are contacted.

Specific agencies are provided authority in the General Appropriations Act to provide shift differential and standby or on-call pay.

Chapter 10

Payroll and Personnel Reporting

Payroll Overview

For payroll and personnel reporting purposes, “state agency” means:

- A board, commission, department, institution, office, or other agency in the executive branch of state government that is created by the constitution or a statute of this state, including an institution of higher education as defined by the Texas Education Code, Section 61.003, other than a public junior college; or
- The Supreme Court of Texas, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, a court of appeals, or other agency in the State’s judicial branch.³³⁷

The Comptroller of Public Accounts (Comptroller), in consultation with the State Auditor, must adopt rules that prescribe uniform procedures for payroll and personnel reporting for all state agencies and that are designed to:

- Facilitate the auditing of payrolls.
- Facilitate a classification compliance audit for agencies covered by the State’s Position Classification Plan.
- Assure conformity with state statute and the General Appropriations Act.
- Provide the Legislative Audit Committee with current information on employment and wage rate practices in state government.³³⁸

Payday

The Comptroller may not pay the salary of a state officer or employee before the first working day of the month following the payroll period unless the employee is paid twice a month. For employees paid twice a month, the first payment is made on the first working day of the month following the payroll period that covers the last half of the preceding month; and the second payment is made on the 15th day of the month or the first working day after the 15th for the payroll period that covers the first half of the month.³³⁹

"Working day" for payroll purposes means a day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a national holiday as listed in the General Appropriations Act or state statute. A day does not cease to be a national holiday because a state agency maintains or is required to maintain a minimum working staff on the holiday.³⁴⁰

³³⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 658.001(2); and Texas Government Code, Section 659.004 (a).

³³⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.004(b); and Texas Government Code, Section 654.036 (3).

³³⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.083(a) and (b).

³⁴⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.083(c).

Salaries for state officers and employees paid once a month must be paid through electronic funds transfer unless paid on warrant as permitted by state statute.³⁴¹

Method and Frequency of Pay

Except as provided by state statute or the General Appropriations Act, annual salaries for state officers and employees must be paid once a month.³⁴²

Employees of certain state agencies are entitled to be paid twice a month if the employees hold certain classified positions under the State's Position Classification Plan and if the employing agency satisfies the Comptroller's requirements related to the payment of compensation twice a month. Additional information is available through the Comptroller's website at <https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/>.³⁴³

Employees of an institution of higher education as defined by the Texas Education Code, Section 61.003, may be paid twice a month at the election of the employing institution of higher education.³⁴⁴

Determining Amounts for Monthly or Hourly Pay

The amount of monthly salary for an employee who maintains a 40-hour work week and works for a state agency is determined by the General Appropriations Act and rules adopted by the Comptroller.

For purposes of partial payment or other applicable situations, an employee's hourly rate of pay for a given month is computed based on the salary schedules located within the General Appropriations Act and rules adopted by the Comptroller.

Alternatively, an institution of higher education, as defined by the Texas Education Code, Section 61.003, may compute an employee's hourly rate of pay for a given month by dividing the employee's annual salary by 2,080, which is the number of working hours in the standard work year.

When an employee is on leave without pay, compensation for the pay period will be reduced by an amount computed in accordance with the General Appropriations Act and rules adopted by the Comptroller.

An agency that may contract with its employees for employment for less than a 12-month period may make equal monthly salary payments under the contract during the contract period or during the fiscal year in accordance with the General Appropriations Act and rules adopted by the Comptroller.³⁴⁵

³⁴¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.084.

³⁴² Texas Government Code, Section 659.081.

³⁴³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.082(a); and Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Method and Frequency of Payroll*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/>.

³⁴⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.082(b).

³⁴⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 659.085.

Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA)

The State must withhold money from salaries and wages paid to state officers and employees in accordance with applicable federal law, including federal law relating to withholding for purposes of the federal income tax. The State must make any required employer contributions in accordance with applicable federal law. The Comptroller must make payments in accordance with applicable state and federal law.³⁴⁶

The Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) is also known as the U.S. Social Security tax. It is composed of Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance benefits (OASDI) and Medicare.

For 2021, the OASDI tax rate for wages paid is 6.2 percent for employees and 6.2 percent for employers. The maximum taxable earnings amount for 2021 is \$142,800. The Medicare tax rate is 1.45 percent for employees and employers and currently has no income limit.³⁴⁷ All employees are subject to both types of FICA taxes.³⁴⁸

Payroll Deductions

A state agency may not make a deduction from the compensation paid to an officer or employee whose compensation is paid in full or in part from state funds unless the deduction is authorized by law.

For payroll deduction purposes, “state agency” means:

- A board, commission, department, office, or other agency in the executive branch of state government and that was created by the constitution or a statute of this state, including an institution of higher education as defined by Texas Education Code, Section 61.003, other than a public junior college;
- The Legislature or a legislative agency; or
- The Supreme Court of Texas, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, a court of appeals, the State Bar of Texas, or another state judicial agency.

To the extent that the laws, regulations, and rules of Texas or the United States do not specify the priority of deductions, the Comptroller by rule may determine the priority for compensation paid by a state governmental body.³⁴⁹

Some of the authorized payroll deductions are explained below. For a complete list of authorized payroll deductions, state agencies and institutions of higher education should contact the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts.

³⁴⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.002(d).

³⁴⁷ *Contribution and Benefit Base*, U.S. Social Security Administration’s website at <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/cbb.html>.

³⁴⁸ Title 26, United States Code, Section 3101.

³⁴⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.002(a), (b), and (c).

Charitable Contribution Deductions

A state employee may authorize a deduction each pay period from the employee's salary or wage payment for a charitable contribution as authorized by state law. In most cases, a state employee may authorize a deduction only during a state employee charitable campaign. However, a state employee who begins working for the State when a campaign is not being conducted may authorize a deduction according to the Comptroller's requirements.

A state agency other than an institution of higher education is not required to permit an employee to authorize a deduction until the first full payroll period after the agency converts to a system in which uniform statewide payroll procedures are followed. In such situations, a state employee who works for a state agency that does not allow deduction authorizations may authorize a deduction that is effective with the first full payroll period after the agency is converted to a system in which uniform statewide payroll procedures are followed.

A state employee who authorized a deduction while working for a state agency may continue the deduction after transferring to another state agency if the Comptroller's rules for continuing the deduction are followed.

An authorization must direct the Comptroller to distribute the deducted funds to a participating federation or fund or a local charitable organization selected by the State Policy Committee as prescribed by rule. Deductions must be in the form prescribed by the Comptroller. The Comptroller by rule may establish a reasonable minimum deduction for each pay period.³⁵⁰

Credit Union Deductions

An employee of a state agency may provide written authorization to make a deduction each pay period from the employee's salary or wage payment to an account with a credit union.³⁵¹

Deductions for Membership Fees for Eligible State Employee Organizations

An employee of a state agency may authorize monthly deductions from the employee's salary or wages to pay membership fees to eligible state employee organizations.³⁵² For information about eligible state employee organizations, state agencies should contact the Comptroller of Public Accounts.

Deductions for Supplemental Optional Benefits Program

An employee of a state agency may authorize in writing a deduction each pay period from the employee's salary or wage payment for coverage of the employee under an eligible supplemental optional benefits program. A deduction may be made each pay period from the employee's salary or wage payment without authorization in writing from the employee for participation in a 401(k) plan as provided by state law.

³⁵⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 659.132.

³⁵¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.103(a).

³⁵² Texas Government Code, Section 403.0165; and Texas Government Code, Section 659.1031.

The Employees Retirement System of Texas must designate eligible supplemental optional benefits programs that promote the interests of the State and state agency employees.³⁵³ Detailed information on eligible supplemental optional benefits programs is available through the Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/>.

Payroll Reductions or Deductions Authorized for Institutions of Higher Education

An employee of an institution of higher education may provide written authorization to reduce the employee's salary or wage payment each pay period for the payment of any fee or charge for parking, a parking permit, a transportation pass, or other qualified transportation benefit authorized by the federal Internal Revenue Code. An authorization for a reduction by the employee must be voluntary. The institution determines the fee or charge an employee may pay.

An employee of an institution of higher education may authorize in writing a deduction each pay period from the employee's salary or wage payment for the payment of any fee or charge for parking or for a club membership, recreational sports membership, or similar activity or program. An authorization for a deduction by the employee must be voluntary. The institution must determine which fee or charge an employee may pay.³⁵⁴

The governing board of a university system or of an institution of higher education that is not a component institution of a university system may authorize employees of the system or institution to elect a payroll deduction for any purpose that the governing board determines serves a public purpose and benefits employees. The governing board also may adopt policies and procedures governing payroll deductions.

A payroll deduction must be at the written request of the employee and the request must state the amount to be deducted and the entity to which the deducted amount is to be transferred. A payroll deduction is in effect until the employee revokes the deduction in writing. A university system's or institution of higher education's policies and procedures may provide for enrollment periods.

A university system or institution of higher education may collect an administrative fee to cover the costs of making a deduction. A payroll deduction is not authorized for dues or membership fees payable to a labor union or employees association.³⁵⁵

Withholding of Administrative Fee for Supplemental Deductions

The state may withhold from the employee's salary or wage payment an administrative fee for making a supplemental deduction. In addition, an institution of higher education that is authorized to operate a payroll system reimbursable from the state treasury may withhold from the employee's salary or wage payment an administrative fee for making a supplemental deduction.

³⁵³ Texas Government Code, Section 659.102.

³⁵⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 659.202.

³⁵⁵ Texas Education Code, Section 51.9611.

The administrative fee may not exceed the lower of the actual administrative cost of making the deduction or the highest fee charged by the state or institution, as appropriate, for making another similar deduction.³⁵⁶

Deductions for Prepaid Higher Education Tuition Program

The following prepaid tuition or college savings contracts can be paid through a payroll deduction:

- Texas Guaranteed Tuition Plan (formerly known as the Texas Tomorrow Fund),
- Texas Tuition Promise Fund,
- Texas College Savings Plan, and
- LoneStar 529 College Savings Plan.

An employee of a state agency or institution of higher education may have one or more separate contracts in one or more of the available plans. Agencies must set up a separate deduction for each plan for the sum of the contract amounts designated by the employee.³⁵⁷

Limitations on State Employment Levels

State agencies and institutions of higher education may not use funds appropriated by the General Appropriations Act (GAA) to pay all or part of the salaries or benefits of a number of employees that would cause the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions paid from funds appropriated by the GAA to exceed the number of FTE positions authorized by the GAA without reporting the use of those funds to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board. That report must be completed no later than the last day of the first month following each fiscal year quarter for state agencies subject to a fiscal quarter limitation and no later than the last day of the first month following the last quarter of the fiscal year for state agencies and institutions of higher education subject to an annual limitation.³⁵⁸ The time frame controlling the FTE limitation varies by state agency or institution of higher education. Some entities are assigned quarterly FTE limitations and others are assigned annual FTE limitations. The limit on FTEs for most entities:

- Is determined in accordance with the report filed pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 2052.103.
- Includes only employees paid with funds appropriated through the GAA.
- Does not include overtime hours.
- Includes positions filled by temporary or contract workers for more than half of the workdays of the year preceding the final day of the reporting period. Temporary or contract workers include

³⁵⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.108.

³⁵⁷ Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Texas Prepaid Higher Education Tuition Program*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/voluntary_deductions/index.php.

³⁵⁸ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(a)(1)(A) and (a)(2)(A).

workers employed under contract to fill specific positions customarily filled by state employees. The State Auditor is authorized to provide interpretations of this requirement.³⁵⁹

State agencies and institutions of higher education may not expend funds appropriated by the GAA to pay all or part of the salaries or benefits of a number of employees that would cause the number of FTEs paid from appropriated funds for a fiscal quarter or a fiscal year, respectively, to exceed the lesser of either 110 percent of the authorized FTEs funded by the GAA or 100 percent of the authorized FTEs plus 50.³⁶⁰

The report made to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board on exceeding the FTE limitation established by the GAA must be submitted by the governing board of an institution of higher education or state agency (if the agency has a governing board) or by the agency's chief administrative officer (if the agency does not have a governing board or the governing board has not met) and must include:

- The date on which the board (if the agency has a governing board) or the chief administrative officer (if the agency does not have a governing board or the governing board has not met) approved the report.
- A statement justifying the need to exceed the limitation.
- The source of funds to be used to pay any additional salaries.
- An explanation for why the functions of any proposed additional FTEs cannot be performed within current staffing levels.³⁶¹

The limitations on FTEs do not apply to employment, including employment of a temporary or contract worker, that is directly associated with the declaration of a disaster by the Governor. Each year, state agencies and institutions of higher education must notify the State Auditor's Office, Comptroller of Public Accounts, Legislative Budget Board, and Office of the Governor of any FTE positions created in response to a declared disaster.³⁶²

According to the GAA, the limitations on FTEs do not apply to employment by a state agency or institution of higher education, including employment of a temporary or contract worker, associated with the implementation of a new, unanticipated project (or the unanticipated expansion of an existing project) that is 100 percent federally funded. Specifically, the state agency or institution of higher education is exempt from the FTE limitation only for the duration of the federal funding for the employment related to the project. In addition, all salaries, benefits, and other expenses incurred that are related to that employment must be paid from federal funds. Each state agency or institution of higher education is required to notify the State Auditor's Office, Comptroller of Public Accounts, Legislative Budget Board, and Office of the Governor of any FTEs that are exempted because of those circumstances. This exemption does not apply to any employees associated with

³⁵⁹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(c) and (d).

³⁶⁰ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(a)(1)(B) and (a)(2)(B).

³⁶¹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(b).

³⁶² General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(f).

existing projects who are 100 percent federally funded **and** who are included in the number of FTEs allowed in the agency's or institution of higher education's bill pattern.³⁶³

If a program is transferred from a state agency or institution of higher education, then at any time during the biennium, the Legislative Budget Board and the Office of the Governor may agree to reduce the number of FTEs paid from funds appropriated by the GAA for one or more fiscal quarters to a figure less than that indicated by the GAA for that state agency or institution of higher education.³⁶⁴

Certain state agencies may have specific riders in the GAA (87th Legislature) that increase or decrease agency FTE limitations or provide specific exemptions from mandated FTE caps.

The FTE limitations under the GAA (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10, do not apply to a state agency or institution of higher education in an instance of employment of an intern or a worker who is paid from appropriations of gifts and grants under the GAA (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 8.01. In addition, the reporting requirements under the GAA (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10, do not apply to a state agency or institution of higher education with fewer than 50 FTEs allowed in the agency's or institution of higher education's bill pattern.³⁶⁵

Agencies and institutions of higher education should refer to the GAA (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10, for additional FTE reporting requirements on exceeding the limitations established by the Legislature.

Full-Time Equivalent Employees Reporting

Following each fiscal quarter, each state agency and institution of higher education must file with the State Auditor's Office a report for that fiscal quarter that provides:

- The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees paid from funds in the state treasury and the number of FTE employees paid from funds outside the state treasury.³⁶⁶
- The increase or decrease, if any, in the number of FTE employees from the fiscal quarter preceding the quarter covered by the report.
- The number of positions paid from funds in the state treasury and the number of positions paid from funds outside the state treasury.
- The number of individuals who performed services for the agency under contracts, including consultants and individuals employed under contracts for temporary help services.

³⁶³ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(g).

³⁶⁴ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(h).

³⁶⁵ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 6.10(i) and (j).

³⁶⁶ For quarterly FTE reporting by state agencies and institutions of higher education to the State Auditor's Office, the State Auditor's Office considers "funds in the state treasury" and "funds outside the state treasury" to be "appropriated funds" and "non-appropriated funds," respectively. For additional information on quarterly FTE reporting to the State Auditor's Office, see the *State Auditor's Office Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Employee Reporting Instructions and Information* at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Resources/Guides/>.

- The number of managers, supervisors, and staff.³⁶⁷

The report must be made in a format requested by the State Auditor's Office and include the following:

- An organizational chart detailing the total number of FTE employees, without regard to the source of funds used to pay all or part of the salary of an employee, and the total number of managers, supervisors, and staff for each functional area in the state agency.
- The management-to-staff ratio for each functional area.
- A separate organizational chart that summarizes the categories of employees in the agency's regional offices without regard to the source of funds used to pay all or part of the salary of an employee.³⁶⁸

The State Auditor's Office publishes an annual FTE Employees report for the Legislative Budget Board, the Office of the Governor, and the Comptroller of Public Accounts summarizing the results of the information provided by agencies.³⁶⁹

The State Auditor's Office provides additional data analysis and reports from its FTE State Employee System through its State Classification Team website at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Tools/>.

³⁶⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 2052.103(a).

³⁶⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 2052.103(b).

³⁶⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 2052.104(b).

Chapter 11

General Leave Provisions

The State Auditor’s Office is responsible for providing uniform interpretation of certain leave provisions and for reporting any exceptions made by individual agencies to the Office of the Governor and the Legislature.³⁷⁰ These interpretations are advisory in nature.³⁷¹

Employee Leave Policies

State agencies and institutions of higher education must adopt a policy governing leave provided for employees under Texas Government Code, Chapter 661.³⁷² This chapter addresses vacation leave and sick leave provided under Texas Government Code, Chapter 661. See Chapter 12 (Miscellaneous Leave Provisions) for additional types of leave provided under Texas Government Code, Chapter 661.

The policy must provide clear and objective guidelines to establish under what circumstances an employee may be entitled to, or granted, each type of leave provided by Texas Government Code, Chapter 661. The policy must be posted on the state agency’s or institution of higher education’s website in a location easily accessible by its employees and the public.³⁷³

The governing board of a university system may adopt a comprehensive leave policy that applies to employees of the university system or any component institution of the system.³⁷⁴ The comprehensive leave policy may combine vacation, sick, and holiday leave into a paid leave system that does not distinguish or separate the types of leave to be awarded and may award leave in an amount that the governing board determined to be appropriate and cost-effective.³⁷⁵

Leave Records

Each state agency must keep a record of time and attendance for each of its employees. Such records include:

- The accrual and use of vacation and sick leave.
- The reason an employee takes leave if the law requires the employee to inform the agency of the reason.

³⁷⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.151.

³⁷¹ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion M-984 (1971).

³⁷² Texas Government Code, Sections 661.251 and 661.252(a).

³⁷³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.252(b) and (c).

³⁷⁴ Texas Education Code, Section 51.961(b).

³⁷⁵ Texas Education Code, Section 51.961(c).

- Whether any leave taken is accounted for as sick leave, vacation leave, other paid leave, leave without pay, or other absence.³⁷⁶

Leave Reporting

State agencies and institutions of higher education subject to Texas Government Code, Section 2101.036(d), must use the uniform system adopted by the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts (Comptroller's Office) to report leave taken by agency employees.³⁷⁷

Reporting of Emergency Leave and Leave During an Investigation

State agencies have certain reporting requirements concerning the granting of emergency leave and leave during an agency investigation. Specifically:

- No later than October 1 of each year, state agencies are required to report the following information to the Comptroller's Office for each employee who is granted more than 32 hours of emergency leave during the previous fiscal year: (1) the employee's name and position, (2) the reason the employee was granted the emergency leave, and (3) the total number of hours of emergency leave granted to the employee.³⁷⁸
- No later than the last day of each fiscal year quarter, state agencies that grant 168 hours or more of leave to an employee who is the subject of an investigation being conducted by the agency are required to report to the Legislative Budget Board and the State Auditor's Office (1) the name of the employee and (2) a brief statement regarding the reason the employee was granted the leave.³⁷⁹

See *Emergency Leave and Leave During an Agency Investigation* in Chapter 12 (Miscellaneous Leave Provisions) for more information about the reporting requirements discussed above.

Vacation Leave

State employees are entitled to paid vacation leave (also referred to as annual leave) each year. Exceptions to this policy include faculty members of institutions of higher education who worked less than 12 months during the year and instructors at the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the School for the Deaf, and the Juvenile Justice Department who worked less than 12 months during the year. Additionally, employees not entitled to vacation leave include higher education employees who do not work at least 20 hours per week for a period of at least 4.5 months or employees in positions that require student status as a condition of employment.³⁸⁰ Employees of independent school districts and junior colleges are not considered state employees for purposes of this section.³⁸¹

³⁷⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.908.

³⁷⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 2101.042.

³⁷⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.902(d).

³⁷⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.923(c).

³⁸⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(a).

³⁸¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.915.

Vacation Leave Accruals and Utilization

Employees begin to accrue vacation leave on their first day of employment and on the first calendar day of each succeeding month of state employment.³⁸² However, vacation leave may not be taken until the employee has been employed with the State for six continuous months.³⁸³

A full or partial calendar month of leave without pay does not constitute a break in state employment nor does it require the employee to start over in the calculation of the employee's continuous months of employment. However, if an employee is on leave without pay for a full calendar month, that month is not counted in computing:

- Total state service credit for purposes of vacation leave accruals.
- Total state service credit for purposes of longevity pay.
- Continuous state service for purposes related to merit increases or vacation leave.³⁸⁴

In addition, if the employee is on any type of paid leave that extends into the following month, the employee's accrual of leave will not be posted until the employee returns to duty, which means the employee may not take vacation leave accrued for that month until the employee returns to work. An employee forfeits this accrual if he or she does not return to duty.³⁸⁵

Vacation leave accruals for full-time employees are the same whether they are hourly or salaried employees.³⁸⁶ Part-time hourly and salaried employees are also eligible for vacation leave, but their accrual rate is proportionate to the number of hours they work.³⁸⁷ The amount of vacation leave an employee accrues is also determined by his or her length of state service. To determine an employee's length of state service, state agencies and institutions of higher education should count actual days, months, and years of total state employment.³⁸⁸

Employees may carry unused vacation leave from one year to the next. The amount of allowable carryover hours depends on the length of state service and the number of hours worked (see Table 11-1 on the next page).³⁸⁹ State employees who are employed by multiple state agencies or institutions of higher education may not accrue vacation leave at a rate that exceeds that of a full-time employee.³⁹⁰

³⁸² Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(e).

³⁸³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(f).

³⁸⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.909(f) and (h).

³⁸⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(j).

³⁸⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.121.

³⁸⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(c).

³⁸⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(d); and Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion H-341 (1974).

³⁸⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(d).

³⁹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 667.001(b).

Table 11-1

Schedule of Vacation Leave Accruals for Full-Time Employees			
Length of Service	Hours Accrued per Month	Days Accrued per Year	Allowable Carryover (Hours)
Less than 2 years	8	12.0	180
At least 2 but less than 5 years	9	13.5	244
At least 5 but less than 10 years	10	15.0	268
At least 10 but less than 15 years	11	16.5	292
At least 15 but less than 20 years	13	19.5	340
At least 20 but less than 25 years	15	22.5	388
At least 25 but less than 30 years	17	25.5	436
At least 30 but less than 35 years	19	28.5	484
At least 35 years or more	21	31.5	532

Credit for the higher rate of accrual will be given on the first calendar day of each month only if the employee's anniversary falls on that day. Otherwise, the increase in vacation leave accrual will be given on the first calendar day of the following month.³⁹¹ All vacation leave hours in excess of the maximum allowable carryover remaining at the end of a fiscal year must be credited to the employee's sick leave balance.³⁹²

Accruals of vacation leave end on an employee's last day of duty, which is an employee's last physical day on the job.³⁹³

Appendices 3 and 4 contain tables that detail leave entitlements for state agency employees and employees of institutions of higher education, respectively.

Vacation Leave for Legislative Employees

Vacation leave for employees of the legislative branch, including employees of the Lieutenant Governor's Office, is determined as follows:

- For employees of either house of the legislature, members of the Legislature, or the Lieutenant Governor's Office, vacation leave will be determined by the presiding officer of the appropriate house of the Legislature.
- For employees of a legislative agency, vacation leave will be determined by the agency's administrative head.³⁹⁴

³⁹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(g).

³⁹² Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(h).

³⁹³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(e).

³⁹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.154.

Vacation Leave and Employee Transfers and Separations

Employees who transfer directly from one state agency or institution of higher education to another will have their vacation leave balances transferred.³⁹⁵

If an employee separates from a state agency and is re-employed within 30 calendar days by another state agency or institution of higher education to a position that accrues vacation leave, his or her vacation leave balance will transfer to the new agency or institution of higher education.³⁹⁶

Separation includes, but is not limited to, (1) leaving one state agency to work for another, provided at least one workday passes between those employments, and (2) moving from a position in a state agency or institution of higher education that accrues vacation leave to a position within the state agency or institution of higher education that does not accrue vacation leave if the agency or institution of higher education agrees to pay for the employee's accrued balance of vacation leave.³⁹⁷

State agency employees who have accrued six months of continuous state employment are entitled to be paid for the accrued balance of the employee's vacation leave as of the date of separation, if the employee is not re-employed by a state agency or institution of higher education in a position that accrues vacation leave during the 30-day period immediately following the date of separation from state employment. The six months of continuous state employment may have been accrued at any time during the employee's lifetime, which means that it may have been accrued during a previous period of employment and not during the employment from which the employee is currently separating. Employees of institutions of higher education who do not directly transfer to another state agency or institution of higher education do not have a 30-day waiting period for payment of vacation leave and must be paid for accrued and unused vacation leave immediately upon their separation.³⁹⁸

A terminating employee may, with the approval of the employing agency, remain on the payroll after separation to use accrued vacation leave rather than receive a lump-sum payment.³⁹⁹ No additional accruals will be made during this period. The employee may not use sick leave or accrue sick leave or vacation leave while exhausting vacation leave. However, an employee allowed to remain on an agency's payroll is entitled to continue to receive all compensation and benefits that the employee was receiving on the employee's last day of duty.⁴⁰⁰

Upon separation, lump-sum payments for accrued but unused vacation leave will include payment for any holidays that the employee would have observed had he or she remained on the payroll. Eight hours per holiday will be added for employees who are normally scheduled to work 40 hours per week. Employees who are normally scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week will receive a proportionate payment. An employee moving to a position in a state agency that does not accrue

³⁹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.153.

³⁹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(k).

³⁹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.062(b).

³⁹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.062(a).

³⁹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.067(a).

⁴⁰⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.067(b).

vacation leave is not entitled to added time for holidays that fall within the accrual period.⁴⁰¹ In no case is the employee entitled to receive longevity or hazardous duty pay for the accrual period.⁴⁰²

An employee who returns to state employment following military service is entitled to have his or her vacation leave balance restored.⁴⁰³

Appendices 5 and 6 contain tables that detail the payment entitlements upon separation from state employment, transfer, or rehire.

Vacation Leave Accruals and Retirees

Vacation leave accruals for return-to-work retirees are based on retirement and rehire dates. An employee returning to state employment who retired from state employment on or after June 1, 2005, and who receives a state retirement annuity, accrues vacation leave based only on the employee's length of service earned after the employee's retirement date. Otherwise, the return-to-work retiree accrues vacation leave based on total state service.⁴⁰⁴

Sick Leave

Sick leave is a benefit to state employees that allows for a paid absence from work under certain conditions.⁴⁰⁵ Exceptions include employees who work at institutions of higher education less than 20 hours per week or less than 4.5 months and who are employed in positions that require student status as a condition of employment.⁴⁰⁶

Sick Leave Accruals and Utilization

A full-time employee accrues sick leave at a rate of eight hours per month; a part-time employee accrues sick leave proportionately.⁴⁰⁷ An employee accrues sick leave beginning on the first day of state employment and ending on the last duty day of state employment. Duty day means an employee's last physical day on the job.⁴⁰⁸ An employee who is on leave the first day of the month may not use that month's sick leave accrual until he or she returns to duty.⁴⁰⁹

Accrued sick leave may be used immediately upon employment when an employee is prevented from performing his or her job due to sickness, injury, or pregnancy and confinement. It may also be used to care for an employee's immediate family member who is ill. "Immediate family" is defined as individuals related by kinship, adoption, or marriage who live in the same household; foster

⁴⁰¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.064.

⁴⁰² Texas Government Code, Section 661.063(c)(2).

⁴⁰³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.904(c).

⁴⁰⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(l); and Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Retired State Employees Who Resume State Employment - Vacation Leave Accruals and Retirees*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/>.

⁴⁰⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(a).

⁴⁰⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.201(b).

⁴⁰⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(c).

⁴⁰⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(b).

⁴⁰⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(k).

children who reside in the same household; and minor children regardless of whether they live in the same household.⁴¹⁰ Sick leave may be used to care for immediate family members who do not reside in the same household only for a documented medical condition. In this instance only, “immediate family” is interpreted as spouse, parent, or child.⁴¹¹ An employee who will be absent from work must notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible.⁴¹² An absence of more than three days requires the employee to provide the administrative head of the agency a doctor’s certification or a written statement of the facts surrounding the absence and the nature of the illness. The need to provide such documentation for absences of three days or fewer is done at the discretion of the administrative head of the agency.⁴¹³

Appendices 3 and 4 contain tables that detail leave entitlements for state agency employees and employees of institutions of higher education, respectively.

Sick Leave Records for Faculty at Institutions of Higher Education

Faculty members at institutions of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003, Texas Education Code, are required to submit prescribed leave forms for all sick leave taken if the absence occurs during the normal workday for regular employees, even if no classes are missed.⁴¹⁴

Sick Leave and Employee Transfers and Separations

Employees who transfer directly from one state agency or institution of higher education to another will have their sick leave balances transferred.⁴¹⁵

Employees who separate from state employment under a formal reduction in force are entitled to have their sick leave balances restored if they are re-employed by the State within 12 months.⁴¹⁶

Employees separated for reasons other than a formal reduction in force and re-employed by a state agency or institution of higher education may have their sick leave balances restored only if:

- The employee is re-employed by the same state agency or institution of higher education within 12 months after the end of the month in which the employee separates from state employment, and if there has been a break in employment with the State of at least 30 calendar days; or
- The employee is re-employed by a different state agency or institution of higher education within 12 months after the end of the month in which the employee separates from state employment.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(b) and (d).

⁴¹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(e).

⁴¹² Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(f).

⁴¹³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(g).

⁴¹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.203.

⁴¹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.204.

⁴¹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.205(a).

⁴¹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.205(b).

There is no authority to make a lump sum payment for an employee's accrued but unused sick leave balance upon separation from state employment.⁴¹⁸

An employee who returns to state employment following military service is entitled to have his or her sick leave balance restored.⁴¹⁹

Extended Sick Leave

State agencies and institutions of higher education that grant extended sick leave are required to have an extended sick leave policy. All agencies and institutions of higher education are required to provide a copy of such policies to the State Auditor's Office upon request. Such policies must also be made available to all agency employees.⁴²⁰

Sick Leave Pool

Each state agency is required to establish a program that allows employees to voluntarily transfer sick leave to a sick leave pool.⁴²¹ The sick leave pool is intended to assist employees and their immediate families in dealing with catastrophic illnesses or injuries that force the employees to exhaust all of their available sick leave.⁴²² An employee becomes eligible to withdraw time from the sick leave pool if the employee has exhausted his or her sick leave because of a catastrophic illness or injury of the employee or of a member of the employee's immediate family.⁴²³ "Immediate family" is defined as individuals related by kinship, adoption, or marriage who live in the same household; foster children who reside in the same household; and minor children regardless of whether they live in the same household.⁴²⁴

Administering the Sick Leave Pool

The program must be administered by the executive director or his or her designee.⁴²⁵ State agencies and institutions of higher education should ensure that their sick leave pool policies do not conflict with their extended sick leave policies.

Contributions to the sick leave pool must be in increments of one or more days with the exception of retiring employees, who may designate the number of hours to be donated.⁴²⁶

An employee may draw from the sick leave pool only with the approval of the pool administrator. Supporting documentation from a medical practitioner must be submitted to the pool administrator. The documentation must contain sufficient information to allow the pool

⁴¹⁸ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion GA-0201 (2004).

⁴¹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.904(c).

⁴²⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(i) and (j).

⁴²¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.002(a).

⁴²² Texas Government Code, Sections 661.004(a) and 661.006(a).

⁴²³ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.004(a) and 661.005(b).

⁴²⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(d).

⁴²⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.002(b).

⁴²⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.003(a) and (c).

administrator to evaluate the employee's eligibility.⁴²⁷ An employee may not receive sick leave in excess of one-third of the total time in the pool or 90 days, whichever is less.⁴²⁸

An employee may use the time withdrawn from the sick leave pool as sick leave earned by the employee. The employee must be treated for all purposes as if the employee is out on earned sick leave. The estate of a deceased employee is not entitled to payment for unused time withdrawn by the employee from the sick leave pool.⁴²⁹

Family Leave Pool

Each state agency is required to establish a program that allows employees to voluntarily transfer accrued sick leave or vacation leave to a family leave pool.⁴³⁰ The family leave pool is intended to provide eligible state employees the flexibility to bond with and care for children during a child's first year following birth, adoption, or foster placement; or to care for a seriously ill family member or the employee, including illnesses or complications resulting from a pandemic.⁴³¹

An employee is eligible to use time contributed to the family leave pool if the employee has exhausted his or her eligible compensatory, discretionary, sick, and vacation leave because of:

- The birth of a child,
- The placement of a foster child or adoption of a child under 18 years of age,
- The placement of any person 18 years of age or older requiring guardianship,
- A serious illness to an immediate family member or the employee; including a pandemic-related illness,
- An extenuating circumstance created by an ongoing pandemic, including providing essential care to a family member, or
- A previous donation of time to the pool.⁴³²

An employee who applies to use time to care for another person must submit and be listed on that other person's birth certificate, birth facts, or adoption or foster paperwork for a child under 18 years of age, including being listed as the mother, father, adoptive parent, foster parent, or partner of the child's mother, adoptive parent, or foster parent, **or** provide documentation that the employee is the guardian of a person who is 18 years of age or older and requires guardianship.⁴³³

⁴²⁷ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.005(a) and (b) and 661.006(c).

⁴²⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.006(b).

⁴²⁹ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.007 and 661.008.

⁴³⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.022(a), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴³¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.021, as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴³² Texas Government Code, Section 661.024(a), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴³³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.024(b), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

Administering the Family Leave Pool

The family leave pool must be administered by the executive head of the agency or his or her designee. In addition, state agencies must adopt rules and procedures relating to the operation of its family leave pool.⁴³⁴ State agencies and institutions of higher education should ensure that their family leave pool policies do not conflict with other leave policies.

Contributions to the family leave pool must be in increments of one or more days of an employee's accrued sick leave or vacation leave, with the exception of a retiring employee, who may designate the number of sick leave or vacation leave hours to be donated.⁴³⁵

An employee may draw from the family leave pool only with the approval of the pool administrator.⁴³⁶ If an employee is seeking permission to withdraw time from the pool because of a serious illness, including a pandemic-related illness, of an immediate family member or the employee, and the employee does not qualify for or has exhausted time available in the sick leave pool, the employee must provide the pool administrator with a written statement from a licensed practitioner who is treating the employee or the employee's immediate family member.⁴³⁷

If an employee is seeking permission to withdraw time from the family leave pool because of an extenuating circumstance created by an ongoing pandemic, including providing essential care to a family member, the employee must provide any applicable documentation, including an essential caregiver designation, proof of closure of a school or daycare, or other appropriate documentation.⁴³⁸

An employee may not withdraw from the family leave pool an amount that exceeds one-third of the total time in the pool or 90 days, whichever is less.⁴³⁹

An employee may use the time withdrawn from the family leave pool as sick leave earned by the employee. The employee must be treated for all purposes as if the employee is out on earned sick leave. The estate of a deceased employee is not entitled to payment for unused time withdrawn by the employee from the family leave pool.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.022(b) and (c), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴³⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.023(a) and (c), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session)

⁴³⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.025(a) and (d), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴³⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.025(b), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴³⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.025(c), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴³⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.026(a), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁴⁴⁰ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.027 and 661.028, as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

New Requirement

The 87th Legislature enacted legislation that requires state agencies to establish a program that allows employees to voluntarily transfer sick leave or vacation leave to a family leave pool. The family leave pool is intended to provide eligible state employees the flexibility to bond with and care for children during a child's first year following birth, adoption, or foster placement, or to care for a seriously ill family member or the employee, including illnesses or complications resulting from a pandemic.

Donation of Sick Leave to Another Employee

Employees of state agencies and institutions of higher education, as defined by Texas Government Code, Section 661.001, may donate any amount of the employee's accrued sick leave to another employee who:

- Is employed in the same agency as the donor employee, and
- Has exhausted his or her sick leave, including any time he or she may be eligible to withdraw from a sick leave pool.

Employees may not provide or receive remuneration or a gift in exchange for a sick leave donation. An employee who receives donated sick leave may not:

- Use the donated sick leave except as provided by Texas Government Code, Section 661.202(d) and (e), or
- Receive service credit in the Employees Retirement System of Texas for any donated sick leave that is unused on the last day of the employee's employment.⁴⁴¹

Parental Leave

Employees who do not qualify for family and medical leave are entitled to parental leave not to exceed 12 weeks for the birth of a child or the adoption or foster care placement of a child under the age of three. To be eligible for parental leave, an employee must not meet the eligibility requirements for family and medical leave because:

- The employee has worked for the State for less than 12 months, or
- The employee has worked fewer than 1,250 hours during the 12-month period preceding the leave.

The employee must first use all available and applicable paid vacation and sick leave while taking parental leave prior to going on leave without pay. Parental leave is limited to, and begins on the

⁴⁴¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.207.

date of, the birth of the employee's natural child or the adoption by or foster care placement with the employee of a child younger than three years of age.⁴⁴²

Education Service Centers and Leave

Education Service Centers were established to assist school districts in improving student performance and increasing the efficiency of school operations.⁴⁴³ Education Service Centers are not considered state agencies for benefits purposes; however, sick leave may be transferred from Education Service Centers to a state agency at a rate not to exceed five days per year for each year of employment.⁴⁴⁴

Vacation leave is not transferable to Education Service Centers; therefore, state employees transferring to Education Service Centers should be paid for accumulated vacation leave.⁴⁴⁵

Leave without Pay

State agencies or institutions of higher education may grant leave without pay (LWOP), including a leave of absence without pay, subject to the following provisions:

- The leave may not exceed 12 months.
- All accumulated paid leave must be exhausted except in instances of disciplinary suspension, leave covered by workers' compensation benefits, or active military duty situations. Sick leave must first be used only if the employee is eligible to use sick leave under Texas Government Code, Chapter 661, Subchapter G.
- Subject to fiscal constraints, approval of LWOP constitutes a guarantee of employment at the conclusion of the specified leave period.

The administrative head of an agency or institution of higher education may allow for exceptions to these limitations in certain situations.

A full-calendar month in which an employee is in LWOP status does not constitute a break in state employment. However, except for employees who return to state employment from military leave under Texas Government Code, Section 661.904, a full calendar month in which an employee is in LWOP status is not counted in the calculation of:

- The employee's total state service for the purpose of determining the amount of longevity pay or the accrual rates for vacation leave, or

⁴⁴² Texas Government Code, Section 661.913.

⁴⁴³ Texas Education Code, Section 8.002.

⁴⁴⁴ Texas Education Code, Section 8.007(b).

⁴⁴⁵ Texas Education Code, Section 8.007(a).

- The number of months of continuous state service for the purposes of the merit salary provisions or for the eligibility to use vacation leave.⁴⁴⁶

In addition, an employee who is in LWOP status for the entire month will not accrue vacation or sick leave for that month.⁴⁴⁷

An employee who is on LWOP will have his or her compensation reduced for the pay period by an amount in accordance with the General Appropriations Act and rules adopted by the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts.⁴⁴⁸

Please refer to Texas Government Code, Chapter 659, for specific guidelines concerning salary reductions for employees who are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Payment of Accrued Leave of Deceased Employees

In the event of an employee's death, the employee's estate is entitled to payment by the State for (1) all accumulated vacation leave and (2) one-half of accumulated sick leave or 336 hours, whichever is less.⁴⁴⁹ The payment is calculated by multiplying the employee's hourly rate at the time of death by the total number of leave hours applicable. The calculation does not include longevity or hazardous duty pay.⁴⁵⁰ The estates of appointed officers or employees of the State who normally work at least 900 hours per year and who have accrued six months of continuous state employment are eligible for this benefit.⁴⁵¹

However, a deceased employee's estate is not entitled to payment for earned but unused state compensatory time.⁴⁵² In addition, for a state employee who at the time of death was working at least 40 hours a week, a state agency or institution of higher education must allocate the deceased employee's accrued sick and vacation leave over the workdays following the employee's death. The state agency or institution of higher education must then add eight hours to the employee's accrued sick and vacation leave for each state or national holiday scheduled to occur during the time period to which the accrued leave was allocated. Employees who work fewer than 40 hours a week will receive a proportionate payment.⁴⁵³

Leave Policies and Provisions for Institutions of Higher Education

The governing board of a university system may adopt a leave policy for employees that combines vacation, sick, and holiday leave into a paid leave system that does not distinguish or separate the

⁴⁴⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.909; and Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource's *Leave without Pay; Leave of Absence*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/>.

⁴⁴⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.909(g).

⁴⁴⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 659.085(c).

⁴⁴⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.033.

⁴⁵⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.034.

⁴⁵¹ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.031(2) and 661.032.

⁴⁵² Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion H-899 (1976).

⁴⁵³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.035.

types of leave awarded. The governing board of the university system may award leave in amounts that it determines to be appropriate and cost-effective.

The policy adopted must include provisions for all of the following:

- Payment of accrued leave for:
 - ♦ The estates or heirs of deceased employees.
 - ♦ Separating employees.
 - ♦ Contributing members of state retirement systems who retire.
- Awards of accrued leave to employees who are transferring to other state agencies or institutions of higher education.

Chapters 661 and 662 of the Texas Government Code do not apply to employees covered by a paid leave policy adopted by a university system.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵⁴ Texas Education Code, Section 51.961.

Chapter 12

Miscellaneous Leave Provisions

In addition to the vacation and sick leave provisions, the State offers leave to employees for specific situations. This chapter covers various leave provisions that may be granted to state employees. Agencies and institutions of higher education should review these provisions carefully to determine if employees are eligible to use these leave types.

An employee of an institution of higher education may not be eligible to accrue or take paid leave listed within this chapter if: (1) the employee works fewer than 20 hours per week, (2) the employee is appointed for fewer than 4.5 months, **or** (3) the employee is in a position for which he or she must be a student as a condition of employment.⁴⁵⁵

State agencies and institutions of higher education must adopt and post on their websites a policy governing leave provided for employees under Texas Government Code, Chapter 661, and use the uniform system adopted by the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts (Comptroller's Office) to report leave taken by agency employees.⁴⁵⁶ Below are miscellaneous leave types provided under Texas Government Code, Chapter 661, that are subject to those requirements. (See Chapter 11 for general leave provided under Texas Government Code, Chapter 661, that is subject to those requirements.)

Administrative Leave for Outstanding Performance

Administrative leave with pay may be granted by the head of an agency as a reward for outstanding performance. This performance should be documented by the agency. The total amount of leave granted may not exceed 32 hours per employee during a fiscal year.⁴⁵⁷

Amateur Radio Operator Leave

A state employee with an amateur radio station license issued by the Federal Communications Commission may be granted leave not to exceed 10 days each fiscal year to participate in specialized disaster relief services without a deduction in salary or loss of vacation leave, sick leave, overtime leave, or state compensatory time. The amateur radio operator leave should be authorized by the employee's supervisor and have the approval of the Governor.⁴⁵⁸

The number of amateur radio operators eligible for this type of leave may not exceed 350 state employees at any time during a fiscal year. The Texas Division of Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating the establishment and maintenance of the list of employees eligible for this leave.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.901(c).

⁴⁵⁶ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.251 and 661.252; and Texas Government Code, Section 2101.042.

⁴⁵⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.911.

⁴⁵⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.919(a).

⁴⁵⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.919(b).

Assistance Dog Training

A state employee with a disability as defined by Texas Human Resources Code, Section 121.002, is entitled to a paid leave of absence not to exceed 10 working days in a fiscal year to attend a training program to acquaint the employee with an assistance dog that the employee will use.⁴⁶⁰

Blood Donation

A state agency shall allow employees sufficient time off, without a deduction in salary or accrued leave, to donate blood. An employee may not receive time off to donate blood unless the employee obtains approval from his or her supervisor before taking time off. Upon returning to work, the employee shall provide his or her supervisor with proof that the employee donated blood during the time off. If an employee fails to provide proof that he or she donated blood during the time off, the agency must deduct the time off from the employee's salary or accrued leave, whichever the employee chooses. An employee may receive time off to donate blood not more than four times in a fiscal year.⁴⁶¹

Bone Marrow and Organ Donation

A state employee is entitled to a leave of absence without a deduction in salary for the time necessary to permit the employee to serve as a bone marrow or organ donor. The leave of absence may not exceed:

- Five working days in a fiscal year to serve as a bone marrow donor; or
- Thirty working days in a fiscal year to serve as an organ donor.⁴⁶²

Volunteers of Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

A state employee who is a volunteer of an organization that is a member of the Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster may be granted leave not to exceed 10 days each fiscal year, without a deduction in salary or loss of vacation time, sick leave, earned overtime credit, or state compensatory time, to participate in disaster relief services if:

- The employee's supervisor authorizes the leave;
- The services in which the employee participates are provided for a state of disaster declared by the Governor under Texas Government Code, Chapter 418; and
- The executive director of the employee's state agency approves the leave.⁴⁶³

⁴⁶⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.910.

⁴⁶¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.917.

⁴⁶² Texas Government Code, Section 661.916.

⁴⁶³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.9075, as added by Senate Bill 44 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

New Requirement

The 87th Legislature enacted legislation allowing state employees who are volunteers of an organization that is a member of the Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster to be granted leave to participate in disaster relief services without a deduction in salary or loss of vacation time, sick leave, earned overtime credit, or state compensatory leave. An employee may be granted up to 10 days of leave each fiscal year if the employee's supervisor authorizes the leave, the services in which the employee participates are provided for a state of disaster as declared by the Governor, and the executive director of the employee's state agency approves the leave. The same legislation repealed the Red Cross Disaster Service Volunteer leave previously authorized under Texas Government Code, Section 661.907.

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteers

A state employee may be provided paid leave not to exceed five hours each month to participate in mandatory training or to perform volunteer services for Court Appointed Special Advocates. This leave is provided to an employee without a deduction in salary or loss of vacation leave, sick leave, overtime leave, or state compensatory time.⁴⁶⁴

Emergency Leave

Death of an Employee's Family Member

An employee is entitled to emergency leave with pay for a death in the employee's family. An employee's family is defined as the employee's spouse, as well as the employee's and spouse's parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and grandchildren.⁴⁶⁵

There is nothing in statute that requires an agency to provide a specific number of days of emergency leave for a death in the employee's family. In addition, there is nothing in statute that requires an employee to attend a funeral to be entitled to emergency leave. The amount of emergency leave for the death of an employee's family member is dependent on agency policy.⁴⁶⁶

Good Cause

In addition to granting employees emergency leave for the death of an employee's family member, an agency's administrative head may grant emergency leave for other reasons if:

- The employee requests the leave,

⁴⁶⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.921.

⁴⁶⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.902(a).

⁴⁶⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.151.

- The agency’s administrative head determines that the employee has shown good cause for taking the leave, and
- The agency’s administrative head believes in good faith that the employee being granted the emergency leave intends to return to his or her position with the agency upon expiration of the emergency leave.⁴⁶⁷

An employee is not required to request emergency leave if the agency head grants emergency leave because the agency is closed due to weather conditions or in observance of a holiday.⁴⁶⁸

Reporting of Emergency Leave

There is nothing in statute that limits the number of emergency leave hours that can be granted to an employee. However, not later than October 1 of each year, the agency’s administrative head must report to the Comptroller’s Office the name and position of each agency employee who was granted more than 32 hours of emergency leave during the previous fiscal year. In addition, the agency must report for each of those employees:

- The reason for granting the emergency leave.
- The total number of hours of emergency leave granted to that employee in that fiscal year.⁴⁶⁹

Employees who are on emergency leave are considered to be in a “paid leave status.” Therefore, they are eligible for holiday pay if a holiday occurs during the time they are on emergency leave.⁴⁷⁰

Foster Parent Leave

An employee who is a foster parent to a child under the protection of the Department of Family and Protective Services (Department) is entitled to a paid leave of absence to attend meetings held by the Department regarding the foster child. In addition, the employee may use this entitlement to attend admission, review, and dismissal meetings held by a school district regarding the foster child.⁴⁷¹

Injury Leave for Certain Peace Officers

Peace officers injured in the course of duty may be entitled to paid injury leave without a deduction in salary. This covers commissioned law enforcement officers or agents commissioned by the Public Safety Commission and the director of the Department of Public Safety, the Parks and Wildlife Commission, the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, the Office of the Attorney General, or the Insurance Fraud Unit of the Department of Insurance.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 661.902(b).

⁴⁶⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.902(c).

⁴⁶⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.902(d).

⁴⁷⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 662.010.

⁴⁷¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.906.

⁴⁷² Texas Government Code, Section 661.918(a).

Peace officers who are injured in the line of duty as a result of the performance of their duties may be entitled to paid injury leave. An officer who qualifies for injury leave is not required to use compensatory time off or any other type of leave for an injury that occurs in the line of duty. However, a peace officer is not entitled to injury leave if the officer's own gross negligence contributed to the injury or if the injury was related to performing routine office duties.⁴⁷³

To be eligible for injury leave, the peace officer must submit evidence of a medical examination and a recommendation for a specific period of leave from a physician licensed to practice in Texas.⁴⁷⁴ The maximum amount of leave allowed for all injuries occurring at one time is one year.⁴⁷⁵

The injured peace officer may simultaneously be on injury leave and receive workers' compensation medical benefits but is not eligible for disability retirement benefits during the leave period. The injured peace officer is entitled to workers' compensation indemnity benefits after the discontinuation or exhaustion of injury leave.⁴⁷⁶

Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers

Each state agency authorized by law to employ peace officers must develop and adopt a policy allowing for the use of mental health leave by its peace officers who experience a traumatic event in the scope of their employment as peace officers. The mental health leave policy must:

- Provide clear and objective guidelines establishing the circumstances under which a peace officer is granted and may use mental health leave;
- Entitle a peace officer to mental health leave without a deduction in salary or other compensation;
- Specify the number of mental health leave days available to a peace officer; and
- Detail the level of anonymity for a peace officer who takes mental health leave.

The mental health policy adopted by the agency may also provide a list of mental health services available to peace officers in the agency's area.⁴⁷⁷

New Requirement

The 87th Legislature enacted legislation requiring state agencies that are authorized by law to employ peace officers to develop and adopt a policy allowing for the use of mental health leave by their peace officers who experience a traumatic event in the scope of their employment as peace officers.

⁴⁷³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.918(b).

⁴⁷⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.918(c).

⁴⁷⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.918(d).

⁴⁷⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.918(e).

⁴⁷⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 614.015, as added by Senate Bill 1359 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

Leave During an Agency Investigation

An agency's administrative head may grant leave without a deduction in salary to a state employee who is:

- The subject of an investigation being conducted by the agency, or
- A victim of, or witness to, an act or event that is the subject of an investigation being conducted by the agency.

A state employee who is the subject of an investigation being conducted by the agency is ineligible to receive leave for that reason under any other provision of Texas Government Code, Chapter 661.

No later than the last day of each state fiscal quarter, an agency must submit a report to the State Auditor's Office and the Legislative Budget Board that includes the name of each agency employee who is the subject of an investigation being conducted by the agency and who has been granted 168 hours or more of leave for that reason during that fiscal quarter. The report must include, for each employee, a brief statement as to the reason that the employee was granted the leave.⁴⁷⁸

Medical and Mental Health Care Leave for Certain Veterans

A state employee who is a veteran, as defined by Texas Government Code, Section 434.023(a), and who is eligible for health benefits under a program administered by the Veterans Health Administration of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, may be granted leave without a deduction in salary or loss of vacation and sick leave, earned overtime, or state compensatory time, to obtain medical or mental health care (including physical rehabilitation) administered by the Veterans Health Administration of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Leave granted for this reason may not exceed 15 days each fiscal year unless the agency's administrative head determines that additional days of this leave is appropriate for the employee.⁴⁷⁹

Sick Leave for Educational Activities

An employee may use up to eight hours of sick leave each fiscal year to attend educational activities of the employee's children who are in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. The employee must give reasonable notice of his or her intention to use this leave. Educational activities are school-sponsored activities, including parent-teacher conferences, tutoring, volunteer programs, field trips, classroom programs, school committee meetings, academic competitions, and athletic, music, or theater programs.⁴⁸⁰

Time Off to Vote

Employers shall allow sufficient time off to employees, without a deduction in salary or accrued leave, to vote in each national, state, or local election if there is not sufficient time to vote outside

⁴⁷⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.923.

⁴⁷⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.924.

⁴⁸⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.206.

regular working hours.⁴⁸¹ There is no consistent standard or formal guidance regarding how much time should be provided to employees for this purpose; however, employers should adopt a written voting policy and procedures. State law does not differentiate between regular and runoff elections.

Volunteer Firefighters, Emergency Medical Services Volunteers, and Search and Rescue Volunteers Training Leave

Volunteer firefighters, emergency medical services volunteers, and search and rescue volunteers are entitled to paid leave not to exceed five working days each fiscal year to attend training conducted by a state agency or institution of higher education. Also, a state agency or institution of higher education may grant paid leave to a volunteer firefighter, an emergency medical services volunteer, or a search and rescue volunteer for the purpose of responding to emergency fire, medical, or search and rescue situations if the agency or institution of higher education has a policy for granting the leave.⁴⁸²

Reserve Law Enforcement Officer Training Leave

State employees who are reserve law enforcement officers as defined by Texas Occupations Code, Section 1701.001, are entitled to paid leave not to exceed five working days each fiscal biennium to attend training required by Texas Occupations Code, Section 1701.351.⁴⁸³

Additional Miscellaneous Leave Types Provided Under Texas Labor Code and Texas Government Code

The following types of leave are permitted under Texas Labor Code, Chapter 52, and Texas Government Code, Chapters 659 and 664.

Compliance with a Subpoena

An employer may not discharge, discipline, or penalize an employee for complying with a subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding. Any organization that violates this may be found in contempt of court or subject to a monetary penalty, depending upon the issuing authority.⁴⁸⁴

Agencies should use their own discretion in instances of unofficial testimony to decide whether such an absence is considered good cause for emergency leave.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸¹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.914; and Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion V-1532 (1952).

⁴⁸² Texas Government Code, Section 661.905.

⁴⁸³ Texas Government Code, Section 661.922.

⁴⁸⁴ Texas Labor Code, Section 52.051.

⁴⁸⁵ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion JM-785 (1987).

Jury Service

An employee is entitled to serve on a jury without a deduction in salary, including a deduction for any fee or compensation the employee receives for jury service.⁴⁸⁶

Officers or employees of the Senate, the House of Representatives, or any agency in the legislative branch of state government may establish an exemption from jury service.⁴⁸⁷

Wellness Leave

A state agency may:

- Allow an employee 30 minutes during their normal working hours for exercise three times each week.
- Allow an employee to attend on-site wellness seminars.
- Provide eight hours of additional leave time each year to an employee who receives a physical examination and completes either an online health risk assessment tool or a similar health risk assessment conducted in person by a worksite wellness coordinator.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.005(a).

⁴⁸⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 62.106(a)(5).

⁴⁸⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 664.061(a).

Chapter 13 State Employee Holidays

Overview of Holidays for State Employees

State agency employees are entitled to a paid day off from work on national, state, and optional holidays observed by the State.⁴⁸⁹

Institutions of higher education can establish their own holiday schedules, as long as the total number of holidays observed does not exceed the number of holidays observed by an employee of a state agency. Eligible employees of institutions of higher education are entitled to a paid day off from work on the holidays observed by the institution.⁴⁹⁰

An employee is eligible to a paid day off for a holiday if:

- The holiday does not fall on a weekend.
- The employee is not on leave without pay.⁴⁹¹

A state agency and institution of higher education must have enough state employees on duty during a state holiday to conduct the public business of the agency or institution with the exception of those state holidays that fall on a Saturday or Sunday, the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, December 24, or December 26.⁴⁹²

State employees who work on an observed national or state holiday that does not fall on a weekend will be allowed compensatory time off during the 12-month period following the date of the holiday worked.⁴⁹³ (At times, those state holidays are referred to as “skeleton crew days.”) For additional information on holiday compensatory time, see Chapter 5 (State and Holiday Compensatory Time).

To be paid for a holiday that falls on a day other than the first or last workday of the month, the employee must be a state employee on the day before and the day after the holiday. For the purposes of determining holiday pay, a state employee

⁴⁸⁹ Texas Government Code, Sections 662.003, 662.005, and 662.006.

⁴⁹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 662.011.

⁴⁹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 662.005(a) and (c).

⁴⁹² Texas Government Code, Section 662.004.

⁴⁹³ Texas Government Code, Section 662.007(a).

Applicability of State Holiday Section

Unless specifically stated, the information in this section regarding holidays pertains only to state agencies and does not pertain to institutions of higher education.

The applicability of holidays for state employees of the Texas House of Representatives or the Senate applies only at the discretion of the presiding officer or the administration committee of each respective house.

Source: Texas Government Code, Sections 662.001 and 662.002.

Types of Holidays

National Holidays:

- New Year’s Day.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- Presidents’ Day.
- Memorial Day.
- Independence Day.
- Labor Day.
- Veterans Day.
- Thanksgiving Day.
- Christmas Day.

State Holidays:

- Confederate Heroes Day.
- Texas Independence Day.
- San Jacinto Day.
- Emancipation Day in Texas.
- Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) Day.
- The Friday after Thanksgiving Day.
- December 24.
- December 26.

Optional Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah.
- Yom Kippur.
- Good Friday.
- Cesar Chavez Day.

Source: Texas Government Code, Sections 662.003 and 662.013.

includes someone who is using paid leave from a state agency. It does not include an individual who is taking leave without pay.⁴⁹⁴

However, if the holiday falls on the first workday of a month, the employee must be a state employee on the day immediately after the holiday to be paid. If the holiday falls on the last workday of the month, the employee must be a state employee on the day immediately before the holiday to be paid.⁴⁹⁵

Table 13-1 provides examples of these types of scenarios.

Table 13-1

Scenarios in which a State Agency Would or Would Not Pay an Employee for a Holiday						
In the first example, an employee begins work on January 2. This employee would be paid for the holiday observed on January 1 because it falls on the first workday of the month and the employee is a state employee on the day after the holiday.						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1 Holiday	2 Employee Begins Work	3	4	5
In the second example, an employee works December 31 and then terminates employment. This employee would not be paid for the January 1 holiday because it fell on the first workday of the month, and the employee was not a state employee on the day after the holiday.						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Employee Terminates Employment	1 Holiday	2	3	4	5

⁴⁹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 662.010.

⁴⁹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 662.010(a).

Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 Holiday Schedules

State employees receive most federal and state holidays, as well as optional holidays. Tables 13-2 and 13-3 list the state holiday schedules for fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

Table 13-2

State Holiday Schedule for Fiscal Year 2022			
Holiday	Agency Status	Date	Day of Week
Labor Day	All agencies closed.	9-06-21	Monday
<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	9-07-21	Tuesday
<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	9-08-21	Wednesday
<i>Yom Kippur</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	9-16-21	Thursday
Veterans Day	All agencies closed.	11-11-21	Thursday
Thanksgiving Day	All agencies closed.	11-25-21	Thursday
Day after Thanksgiving	All agencies closed.	11-26-21	Friday
Christmas Eve Day	All agencies closed.	12-24-21	Friday
Christmas Day		12-25-21	Saturday
Day after Christmas		12-26-21	Sunday
New Year's Day		1-01-22	Saturday
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	All agencies closed.	1-17-22	Monday
Confederate Heroes Day	Skeleton crew required.	1-19-22	Wednesday
Presidents' Day	All agencies closed.	2-21-22	Monday
Texas Independence Day	Skeleton crew required.	3-02-22	Wednesday
<i>Cesar Chavez Day</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	3-31-22	Thursday
<i>Good Friday</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	4-15-22	Friday
San Jacinto Day	Skeleton crew required.	4-21-22	Thursday
Memorial Day	All agencies closed.	5-30-22	Monday
Emancipation Day		6-19-22	Sunday
Independence Day	All agencies closed.	7-04-22	Monday
LBJ Day		8-27-22	Saturday

Table 13-3

State Holiday Schedule for Fiscal Year 2023			
Holiday	Agency Status	Date	Day of Week
Labor Day	All agencies closed.	9-05-22	Monday
<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	9-26-22	Monday
<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	9-27-22	Tuesday
<i>Yom Kippur</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	10-05-22	Wednesday
Veterans Day	All agencies closed.	11-11-22	Friday
Thanksgiving Day	All agencies closed.	11-24-22	Thursday
Day after Thanksgiving	All agencies closed.	11-25-22	Friday
Christmas Eve Day		12-24-22	Saturday
Christmas Day		12-25-22	Sunday
Day after Christmas	All agencies closed.	12-26-22	Monday
New Year's Day		1-01-23	Sunday
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	All agencies closed.	1-16-23	Monday
Confederate Heroes Day	Skeleton crew required.	1-19-23	Thursday
Presidents' Day	All agencies closed.	2-20-23	Monday
Texas Independence Day	Skeleton crew required.	3-02-23	Thursday
<i>Cesar Chavez Day</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	3-31-23	Friday
<i>Good Friday</i>	<i>Optional Holiday</i>	4-07-23	Friday
San Jacinto Day	Skeleton crew required.	4-21-23	Friday
Memorial Day	All agencies closed.	5-29-23	Monday
Emancipation Day	Skeleton crew required.	6-19-23	Monday
Independence Day	All agencies closed.	7-04-23	Tuesday
LBJ Day		8-27-23	Sunday

Optional Holidays

An employee who works for a state agency is entitled to observe Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Good Friday, and Cesar Chavez Day.⁴⁹⁶ A state agency employee is entitled to each optional holiday if the employee qualifies for the paid day off and agrees to give up during the same fiscal year an equivalent number of state holidays that do not fall on a Saturday or Sunday and that are not otherwise prohibited from being observed; however, the employee may not agree to give up the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, December 24, or December 26. Optional holidays cannot be substituted for national holidays.⁴⁹⁷

Holidays and Employee Separations

If an employee of a state agency or institution of higher education separates from the State and is exhausting unused vacation leave, the employee receives payment for any holidays that the employee would have observed had he or she remained on the payroll. The number of hours that is added to the employee's accrued vacation leave is to be proportionally reduced for part-time employees.⁴⁹⁸

Holidays and Employee Transfers

With the exception of a transfer directed by the Legislature, there is no authority to transfer accrued holiday compensatory time between state agencies.⁴⁹⁹

In the event that a state or national holiday falls between the periods an employee transfers from one state agency or institution of higher education to another without a break in service, the receiving agency or institution of higher education must pay for the holiday regardless of whether the agency or institution of higher education recognizes that particular holiday.⁵⁰⁰

Holidays for Employees Working Non-Traditional Schedules

A state employee who works 40 hours a week on a schedule other than Monday through Friday is entitled to paid holiday time off during the fiscal year equal to eight hours multiplied by the number of national and state holidays in the fiscal year.⁵⁰¹

A state employee working a non-traditional schedule who works less than the entire fiscal year is entitled to paid holiday time off during the fiscal year equal to eight hours multiplied by the number of national and state holidays that occur during the time period worked by the employee.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁶ Texas Government Code, Sections 662.003(c) and 662.013.

⁴⁹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 662.006(b) and (c).

⁴⁹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 661.064(a) and (b).

⁴⁹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 662.0071(a); and Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion H-883 (1976).

⁵⁰⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 662.0072.

⁵⁰¹ Texas Government Code, Section 662.009(a).

⁵⁰² Texas Government Code, Section 662.009(b).

Paid holiday time off for a part-time employee who works on a schedule other than Monday through Friday is proportionate to the number of hours normally worked by the employee.⁵⁰³

Holidays for Institutions of Higher Education

Institutions of higher education may establish their own holiday schedules. However, the number of observed holidays may not exceed the number of holidays observed by state agencies.⁵⁰⁴

Employees who work 20 hours per week or more and who are employed for a period of at least four-and-one-half months in a position that does not require student status as a condition for employment are eligible for paid holidays.⁵⁰⁵

Employees of institutions of higher education may be paid for working national or state holidays if taking holiday compensatory time off would be disruptive to normal teaching, research, or other critical functions.⁵⁰⁶

Holiday Time Payment for Deceased Employees

When a full-time state employee is deceased, eight hours must be added to that employee's total accumulated leave balance (sick and vacation leave) under Texas Government Code, Section 661.034, for each state or national holiday that is scheduled to occur within the period following the date of the employee's death and during which the employee could have remained on the payroll to expend his or her sick and vacation leave balance. The estates of appointed officers or employees of the State who normally work at least 900 hours per year and who have accrued six months of continuous state employment are eligible for this benefit.

Holiday pay for a deceased part-time employee should be proportionate to the number of hours normally worked by the deceased employee.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰³ Texas Government Code, Section 662.009(c).

⁵⁰⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 662.011(a) and (b).

⁵⁰⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 662.011(c).

⁵⁰⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 662.007(c).

⁵⁰⁷ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.031(2), 661.032, and 661.035.

Chapter 14

Military Leave and Employment Rights

Military Leave Overview

Both state and federal law provide employment and reemployment rights to individuals who are called to military service. These laws provide job and income protection, as well as a means for employees to secure time off when called to military service.

Veteran's Liaisons

Each state agency or institution of higher education that has at least 500 full-time equivalent positions **must** designate an individual to serve as a veteran's liaison. A state agency or institution of higher education that has fewer than 500 full-time equivalent positions **may** designate an individual to serve as a veteran's liaison.⁵⁰⁸

Each state agency or institution of higher education that designates a veteran's liaison must make the liaison's work contact information available on the agency's or institution's website.⁵⁰⁹

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) is the federal law intended to ensure that persons are not disadvantaged in their civilian careers because of their current or past service in the U.S. Armed Forces, the U.S. Armed Forces Reserves (Reserves), the National Guard, or other uniformed services.⁵¹⁰ USERRA prohibits an employer from denying initial employment, reemployment, retention in employment, promotion, or any benefit of employment on the basis of an individual's membership, application for membership, performance of service, application for service, or obligation for service in the uniformed services.⁵¹¹

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

The U.S. Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee and the U.S. Department of Labor published an *Employer Resource Guide* that provides additional information on USERRA. This guide is located at <https://www.esgr.mil/USERRA/USERRA-for-Employers>.

State agencies and institutions of higher education that have qualifying service members must provide to the service members the following:

- Prompt job reinstatement.
- Accumulation of seniority, including pension plan benefits.

⁵⁰⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 657.0046(a) and (b).

⁵⁰⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 657.0046(c).

⁵¹⁰ U.S. Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve website at <https://www.esgr.mil/USERRA/What-is-USERRA>.

⁵¹¹ Title 38, United States Code, Section 4311(a); and Title 20, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1002.18.

- Reinstatement of health insurance.
- Training/retraining of job skills, including accommodations for the disabled.
- Protection against discrimination.⁵¹²

In addition, USERRA provides protection for disabled veterans, requiring employers to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the disability.⁵¹³

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) administers USERRA, and all questions should be directed to that office. Contact and additional information about USERRA is available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets>.

Military Leave Entitlements and Eligibility

State employees who are members of the State’s military forces, a reserve branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, or a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team are entitled to 15 workdays in each fiscal year without loss of pay or benefits to accommodate authorized training or duty for the State’s military forces, a reserve branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, or a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team.⁵¹⁴

The 15 days of paid leave need not be consecutive. These days are considered business days, not calendar days.⁵¹⁵ In addition, if the employee does not use the 15 days of military leave in a fiscal year, the employee is entitled to carry forward from one fiscal year to the next fiscal year the net balance of the unused accumulated leave, not to exceed 45 workdays.⁵¹⁶

State agencies and institutions of higher education are required to adjust the work schedule of an employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard or a reserve branch of the U.S. Armed Forces so that two of the employee’s days off each month coincide with two days of military duty.⁵¹⁷

In addition to the leave provided under Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(a) for authorized training or duty, state employees who are members of the State’s military forces, a reserve branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, or a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team who are called to **state** active duty by the Governor or another appropriate authority in response to a disaster, are entitled to a paid leave of absence (not to exceed seven workdays in a fiscal year) for each day they are called to active duty during a disaster. For the purposes of this leave, “disaster” has the meaning assigned in Texas Government Code, Section 418.004.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹² *Employer Resource Guide*, Pages 3 and 4, U.S. Department of Defense’s Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve website at <https://www.esgr.mil/USERRA/USERRA-for-Employers>.

⁵¹³ Title 38, United States Code, Section 4313(a)(3).

⁵¹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(a).

⁵¹⁵ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion C-679 (1966).

⁵¹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(b).

⁵¹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 658.008.

⁵¹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(a-1), as added by House Bill 1589 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

New Requirement

The 87th Legislature enacted legislation that entitles a state employee who is a member of the State's military forces, a reserve branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, or a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team, **and** who is called to **state** active duty by the Governor or another appropriate authority in response to a disaster, to a paid leave of absence (not to exceed seven workdays in a fiscal year) for each day the employee is called to active duty during a disaster.

An employee called to active duty during a national emergency to serve in a reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces under Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code is entitled to an unpaid leave of absence. The employee may choose (but is not required) to use all or some portion of another form of paid leave before he or she chooses to go on leave without pay while on military leave.⁵¹⁹

A state employee called to **state** active duty as a member of the state military forces by the Governor or other appropriate authority because of an emergency or a natural or man-made disaster is entitled to receive emergency leave without loss of military or vacation leave. This leave will be provided without a deduction in salary.⁵²⁰ This time is not limited and does not count against the 15 days maximum military leave per fiscal year.

A state employee called to **federal** active duty for the purpose of providing assistance to civil authorities in a declared emergency or for training for that purpose is entitled to receive paid emergency leave for not more than 22 workdays without loss of military leave or vacation leave.⁵²¹

A member of the state military forces who is ordered to state active duty by the Governor or by another proper authority under Texas law is entitled to the same benefits and protections provided:

- To persons performing service in the uniformed services in accordance with Title 38, United States Code, Sections 4301–4313 and Sections 4316–4319; and
- To persons in the military service of the United States in accordance with Title 50, United States Code, Sections 3901-3959, 3991, and 4011-4026.⁵²²

⁵¹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.904.

⁵²⁰ Texas Government Code, Sections 437.254(a) and 437.305; and Texas Government Code, Section 661.903.

⁵²¹ Texas Government Code, Section 437.254(b).

⁵²² Texas Government Code, Section 437.213.

Military Family Leave Entitlements

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave in the applicable 12-month period for any “qualifying exigency” arising out of the active duty or call to active duty status of a spouse, son, daughter, or parent.⁵²³

In addition, the FMLA also allows eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of job-protected leave in a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness.⁵²⁴ Those two types of FMLA leave are known as the “military family leave entitlements.”

See Chapter 4 (Federal Requirements: Fair Labor Standards Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act) and Chapter 11 (General Leave Provisions) for additional information on the Family and Medical Leave Act and parental leave, respectively.

Paid Leave and State Service

Employees called to active duty during a national emergency to serve in a reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces under Title 10 or 32 of the United States Code are entitled to state service credit for longevity pay purposes, vacation leave accruals, and sick leave accruals while on an unpaid leave of absence. This leave will be accrued but not posted until the employee returns to state employment. In addition, the employee retains his or her leave balances unless the employee chooses to use any accrued vacation leave, compensatory time, or overtime leave to maintain benefits for the employee or the employee’s dependents while on military duty.⁵²⁵

Additionally, the employee may continue to accrue service credit with the Employees Retirement System by receiving at least one hour of state pay during each month of active military service. The employee may use any combination of paid leave to qualify for state pay.⁵²⁶

State agencies and institutions of higher education must provide written notice regarding the number of workdays of paid leave to which state employees who are members of the State’s military forces, a reserve branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, or a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team are entitled to each fiscal year and, if applicable, the number of workdays of paid leave that can be carried forward each fiscal year.⁵²⁷

Additionally, state agencies and institutions of higher education must, upon the request of a state employee who is a member of the State’s military forces, a reserve branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, or a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team, provide to that employee a statement that contains:

- The number of workdays for which the employee claimed paid leave under Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(a), in that fiscal year,

⁵²³ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.100(a).

⁵²⁴ Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 825.127(e).

⁵²⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 661.904(a), (b), (c), and (d).

⁵²⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 661.904(f).

⁵²⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(e).

- The net balance of unused accumulated paid leave for that fiscal year that the employee is entitled to carry forward to the next fiscal year, and
- The net balance of all unused accumulated paid leave under Texas Government Code, Section 437.202, to which the employee is entitled.⁵²⁸

Notice of Military Leave

USERRA requires that service members provide advance written or verbal notice to their employers for all military duty unless giving notice is impossible, unreasonable, or precluded by military necessity.⁵²⁹

Military Pay Differentials

The executive officer of a state agency or institution of higher education must grant sufficient emergency leave to provide a pay differential if an employee's military pay is less than the employee's state gross pay. The combination of military pay and emergency leave may not exceed the employee's actual state gross pay. Pay received for service in a combat zone (also known as hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay), hardship duty pay, and family separation pay is excluded when computing military differential pay.⁵³⁰

Military Pay Differential Guidelines

The State Auditor's Office is required, in accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 661.9041(c), to establish uniform guidelines for state agencies and institutions of higher education in determining the amount of emergency leave to grant to deployed military members for the purpose of providing differential pay. These guidelines are available at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Resources/Guides/>.

The state agency or institution of higher education should inform activated state employees of the agency's or institution's intent to use emergency leave to supplement their military pay to raise it to a rate comparable to the state pay received prior to activation.

Only state employees who are called to active duty in support of a national emergency (under United States Code, Title 10 or Title 32) and whose military pay is less than their gross state pay are eligible for differential pay. Service members involved in routine military training or who are attending military schools are not entitled to this differential pay.⁵³¹

If emergency leave is granted to a state employee activated for military duty, that employee will accrue sick leave and vacation leave each month that he or she receives pay from a state agency or institution of higher education. The sick and vacation leave will be accrued but not posted until the employee returns to full employment with the state agency or institution of higher education.⁵³²

⁵²⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(f).

⁵²⁹ *VETS USERRA Fact Sheet 3*, U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service website at https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/userra/userra_fs.

⁵³⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.9041.

⁵³¹ *Military Pay Differential Guide*, State Auditor's Office's website at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Resources/Guides/>.

⁵³² Texas Government Code, Sections 661.152(j) and 661.202(k).

Determining Eligibility

To determine eligibility, state agencies and institutions of higher education should request a copy of the employees' Military Leave and Earnings Statement each month that emergency leave is going to be granted to view the total entitlement of military pay received by the service members. The service members' pay may change during the period of active duty because of a promotion or change in entitlements; any increase in pay may reduce or cease the need for state military differential pay.⁵³³

Returning Service Members

A state employee who (1) is a member of the State's military forces, a reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces, or a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team and (2) is ordered to duty by the proper authority is entitled, when relieved from duty, to be restored to the position that the employee held when ordered to duty or to a position of similar seniority, status, and pay.⁵³⁴

USERRA also requires that reasonable efforts (such as training or retraining) be made to enable returning service members to refresh or upgrade their skills to help them qualify for reemployment.⁵³⁵

Under state and federal law, to be eligible for reemployment, the employee must be discharged, separated, or released from active military service under honorable conditions no later than five years after induction, enlistment, or call to duty. In addition, under state law, the employee must be physically and mentally qualified to perform the duties of the job.⁵³⁶ If an employee is unable to perform the duties of the previous job due to a service-related disability, the veteran is entitled to be restored to a position that he or she can perform with similar or the nearest possible seniority, status, and pay.⁵³⁷

Employees who are reemployed under Texas Government Code, Chapter 613, may not be discharged from their position without cause within one year of their reemployment.⁵³⁸

Applications for Reemployment

Under state law, eligible veterans must apply for reinstatement within 90 days after discharge or release from service. The application must be made in writing to the head of the state agency or institution of higher education and must include evidence of discharge under honorable conditions.⁵³⁹

⁵³³ *Military Pay Differential Guide*, State Auditor's Office's website at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Resources/Guides/>.

⁵³⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 437.202(d); and Texas Government Code, Section 613.002.

⁵³⁵ *VETS USERRA Fact Sheet 3*, U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service website at https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/userra/userra_fs.

⁵³⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 613.002(b).

⁵³⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 613.003.

⁵³⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 613.005.

⁵³⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 613.004.

Entitlement to Retirement or Other Benefits

An individual reemployed is considered to have been on furlough or leave of absence during the time that the individual was in military service. As such, the employee may participate in retirement or other benefits to which a public employee is or may be entitled.⁵⁴⁰

Veteran's Employment Preference

The following individuals qualify for a veteran's employment preference:

- A veteran, including a veteran with a disability.
- A veteran's surviving spouse who has not remarried.
- An orphan of a veteran if the veteran was killed while on active duty.⁵⁴¹

A veteran is defined as an individual who has served in (and has been honorably discharged from) the following branches of service:

- The U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard; or the U.S. Public Health Service under Title 42, United States Code, Section 201.
- The Texas Military Forces as defined by Texas Government Code, Section 437.001.
- An auxiliary service of one of the branches of the U.S. Armed Forces.⁵⁴²

A veteran with a disability is defined as a veteran (1) who is classified as disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the branch of the service in which the veteran served and (2) whose disability is service-connected.⁵⁴³

An individual who qualifies for a veteran's employment preference is entitled to a preference in employment with or appointment to a state agency or institution of higher education over other applicants for the same position who do not have a greater qualification.⁵⁴⁴

A state agency or institution of higher education must provide employment preference to individuals who qualify for a veteran's employment preference in the following order of priority:

- A veteran with a disability.
- A veteran.
- A veteran's surviving spouse who has not remarried.

⁵⁴⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 613.006.

⁵⁴¹ Texas Government Code, Section 657.002.

⁵⁴² Texas Government Code, Section 657.001(2); and Texas Government Code, Section 2308.251.

⁵⁴³ Texas Government Code, Section 657.001(3).

⁵⁴⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 657.003(a).

- An orphan of a veteran if the veteran was killed while on active duty.⁵⁴⁵

Individuals entitled to a veteran's employment preference are not disqualified from holding a position with a state agency or institution of higher education because of age or an established service-connected disability if the age or disability does not make the individual unable to perform the duties of the position.⁵⁴⁶

State agencies and institutions of higher education must provide to the Texas Workforce Commission information regarding an open position that is subject to the hiring or appointment preference required by Texas Government Code, Chapter 657.⁵⁴⁷

Veteran Employment Goal for State Agencies

Each state agency and institution of higher education must establish a goal of hiring, in full-time positions at the agency or institution of higher education, a number of veterans equal to at least 20 percent of the state agency's or institution of higher education's total number of employees. A state agency or institution of higher education may establish a veteran employment goal that is greater than the percentage required under Texas Government Code, Section 657.004(a).⁵⁴⁸

Designation of Open Positions for, and Immediate Hiring of, Individuals Entitled to a Veteran's Employment Preference

A state agency or institution of higher education may designate an open position as a veteran's position and only accept applications for that position from individuals who are entitled to a veteran's employment preference.

A state agency or institution of higher education may hire or appoint for an open position an individual entitled to a veteran's employment preference without announcing or advertising the position, if the state agency or institution of higher education:

- Uses the Texas Workforce Commission's website, <https://www.WorkInTexas.com>, to identify an individual who qualifies for a veteran's employment preference; and
- Determines the individual meets the qualifications required for the position.⁵⁴⁹

Interviews

For each announced open position:

- If the total number of individuals interviewed for the position is 6 or fewer, the state agency or institution of higher education must interview at least 1 individual qualified for a veteran's employment preference.

⁵⁴⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 657.003(b).

⁵⁴⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 657.003(d).

⁵⁴⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 657.009(a).

⁵⁴⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 657.004.

⁵⁴⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 657.0045.

- If the total number of individuals interviewed for the position is more than 6, at least 20 percent of the total number of individuals that the state agency or institution of higher education interviews must be individuals qualified for a veteran's employment preference.⁵⁵⁰

A state agency or institution of higher education that does not receive any applications from individuals who qualify for a veteran's employment preference is not required to comply with the interviewing requirements of Texas Government Code, Section 657.0047(a).⁵⁵¹

State Employment Forms

All state agency and institution of higher education employment forms prescribed by the Texas Workforce Commission must include a statement regarding the veteran's employment preference until the agency's or institution's workforce is composed of at least 40 percent veterans.⁵⁵²

Employment Investigation

Prior to hiring an individual who qualifies for a veteran's employment preference, a state agency or institution of higher education must investigate the qualifications of the applicant for the position. An applicant who is a veteran with a disability must furnish the official records to the individual whose duty is to fill the position.⁵⁵³

Competitive Examinations

If a state agency or institution of higher education requires a competitive examination under a civil service plan or merit system for selecting or promoting an employee, an individual entitled to a veteran's employment preference who is qualified for that position and has received at least the minimum required score for the test is entitled to have a service credit of 10 points added to the test score. A veteran with a disability is entitled to have a service credit of 5 additional points added to the test score.⁵⁵⁴

Reductions in Force

An individual who is entitled to a veteran's employment hiring or appointment preference is also entitled to a preference in retaining employment if the state agency or institution of higher education that employs or appoints the individual reduces its workforce. This applies only to the extent that workforce reductions by the state agency or institution of higher education involve other employees of a similar type or classification.⁵⁵⁵

Appealing Employment Decisions Under Veteran's Preference

An individual entitled to a veteran's employment preference who is aggrieved by a decision of a state agency or institution of higher education relating to the hiring or appointing of the individual,

⁵⁵⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 657.0047(a).

⁵⁵¹ Texas Government Code, Section 657.0047(b).

⁵⁵² Texas Government Code, Section 656.027.

⁵⁵³ Texas Government Code, Section 657.005.

⁵⁵⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 657.003(c).

⁵⁵⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 657.007.

or relating to the retaining of the individual if the state agency or institution of higher education reduces its workforce, may appeal the decision by filing a written complaint with the state agency's or institution of higher education's executive officer.⁵⁵⁶

The executive officer of a state agency or institution of higher education that receives a written complaint is required to respond to the complaint no later than the 15th business day after the date that the executive officer receives the complaint. The executive officer may render a different hiring or appointment decision than the decision that is the subject of the complaint if the executive officer determines that the veteran's preference was not applied.⁵⁵⁷

Veteran's Preference Reporting Requirements

State agencies and institutions of higher education must file quarterly reports with the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts that state:

- The percentage of the total number of employees hired or appointed by the state agency or institution of higher education during the reporting period who are entitled to a preference.
- The percentage of the total number of employees of the state agency or institution of higher education who are entitled to a veteran's preference.
- The number of complaints filed with the executive officer of the state agency or institution of higher education during that quarter and the number of complaints resolved by the executive officer.⁵⁵⁸

The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts must make each quarterly report available to the public on its website. Additionally, no later than December 1 of each year, the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts must file a report with the Legislature that compiles and analyzes the information that the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts received from the quarterly reports filed by the state agencies and institutions of higher education.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 657.010(a).

⁵⁵⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 657.010(b).

⁵⁵⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 657.008(a).

⁵⁵⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 657.008(b) and (c).

Chapter 15 Insurance Programs

Insurance Overview

The State of Texas provides a comprehensive benefits program for employees in state agencies and institutions of higher education. Health insurance for most employees is available through the Employees Retirement System (ERS). Exceptions include employees of The University of Texas and Texas A&M University systems, which provide their own insurance programs for employees.⁵⁶⁰

In addition to health insurance, state employees have access to other types of benefits such as dental, vision, life, supplemental life, dependent life, short- and long-term disability, accidental death and dismemberment, and health care, limited-purpose, and dependent care flexible spending accounts.

State employees who have other health insurance comparable to what the State provides may drop the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program health insurance and receive a Health Insurance Opt-Out Credit. Full-time employees may receive up to a \$60 credit per month and part-time employees may receive up to a \$30 credit per month to be used towards the cost of certain optional coverage.⁵⁶¹ The TRICARE Military Health System supplemental plan is available to an employee or annuitant who waives coverage under the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program and is eligible for benefits under the TRICARE Military Health System.⁵⁶²

Detailed information on state insurance programs is available through the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov>.

Employee Insurance Benefits

The Texas Employees Group Benefits Program is intended to provide health, life, and accident insurance benefits to all employees of the State and their eligible dependents.⁵⁶³ Except for the conditions discussed in the Texas Insurance Code, no employee of a state agency or institution of higher education may be denied coverage unless the employee waives this coverage.⁵⁶⁴

There are currently three types of medical plans in the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program: HealthSelect, Consumer Directed HealthSelect with a Health Savings Account, and HealthSelect Out-of-State. When full-time employees enroll in any of these plans, they automatically receive a basic group term life insurance policy paid for by the State. When part-time employees enroll in any of these plans, they automatically receive a basic group term life insurance policy but are responsible for half of the premium, with the State paying the other half.

⁵⁶⁰ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.006(b).

⁵⁶¹ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article I, Employees Retirement System, Rider 7; and Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/Active-Employees/Health-Benefits/Opt-Out-Credit/>.

⁵⁶² Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.227.

⁵⁶³ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.002(1).

⁵⁶⁴ Texas Insurance Code, Sections 1551.104 and 1551.1045.

Waiting Period for Health Insurance Coverage

New employees' eligibility for health insurance begins not later than the 90th day after the date the employee performs services for a state agency or is qualified for and begins to hold elected or appointed office.⁵⁶⁵ Certain state employees who are re-employed after military service will be eligible for health insurance on the first date of re-employment on which the employee performs services for a state agency or institution of higher education.⁵⁶⁶

Dependent Coverage

An employee can secure for his or her eligible dependents any uniform coverage provided for employees by the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program. For information on eligible dependents, see the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program (GBP) Dependent Eligibility Chart at <https://ers.texas.gov/Benefits-at-a-Glance/Dependent-eligibility-chart.pdf>.

State Contributions for Health Insurance

For the purpose of determining state contributions for health insurance, an employee is considered full-time if he or she is designated to work 30 or more hours in a workweek. A part-time employee is defined as a person designated to work less than 30 hours in a workweek.⁵⁶⁷

The State pays all of the health insurance and basic life premiums for full-time employees and half of the health insurance and basic life premiums for part-time employees.⁵⁶⁸ The ERS Board of Trustees, in coordination with the Legislative Budget Board, establishes the amount of the State's contribution no later than November 1 preceding each regular session of the Legislature.⁵⁶⁹ State contributions to group insurance costs are available on the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov>.

Each state agency and institution of higher education (not including components of The University of Texas and Texas A&M University systems) is required to contribute an amount equal to 1.0 percent of the total base wages and salaries for each benefits-eligible employee to the ERS Group Benefits Program.⁵⁷⁰ Agencies and institutions of higher education should refer to the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts for more information regarding the additional payroll contribution for group health insurance.

⁵⁶⁵ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.1055(a). According to the Employees Retirement System, health insurance coverage begins effective the first day of the month following the 60th day of employment to ensure coverage will not begin later than the 90th day after the date of employment.

⁵⁶⁶ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.1055(e); and Texas Insurance Code, Section 1601.1045(e).

⁵⁶⁷ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.003(9) and (11).

⁵⁶⁸ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.319(a) and (b).

⁵⁶⁹ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.311.

⁵⁷⁰ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 17.03; and Fiscal Policies and Procedures, *Payroll Contribution for Group Health Insurance*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/payper/contribution>.

Dental Insurance

All individuals who are eligible for state insurance plans have access to optional dental insurance. Two dental insurance plans are available to employees, with different costs, benefits, service areas, and participating dentists. Neither of the plans require evidence of insurability.⁵⁷¹

Vision Insurance

All individuals who are eligible for state insurance plans also have access to an optional vision insurance plan. This plan does not require evidence of insurability.⁵⁷²

Tobacco User Premium

Each employee enrolled in a health benefit plan provided under the group benefits program must certify his or her status as a tobacco user or non-user and certify the status of any dependents enrolled in a health benefit plan. Adult participants who do not certify their tobacco-use status will be charged a tobacco user premium, even if they do not use tobacco. A tobacco user is a person who has used any tobacco product five or more times within the past three consecutive months. Employees are responsible for paying the tobacco user premium.⁵⁷³

Information on cessation programs and monthly premiums is available on the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/About-ERS/Policies/Tobacco-Policy-and-Certification>.

Employee Life and Disability Insurance

State employees have the option of enrolling in various life and disability insurance plans. New employees (within the first 31 days on the job) may sign up for most of these benefits without evidence of insurability. Current employees may have to provide additional information prior to participating in these plans.

The State provides basic group term life coverage of \$5,000 for current employees at no cost. Optional group and dependent term life programs may be purchased to supplement this plan. Accidental death and dismemberment and short- and long-term disability insurance are also available.⁵⁷⁴

Accelerated Payment of Life Insurance Benefits

The board of trustees of the Employees Retirement System may adopt rules to pay accelerated life insurance benefits to terminally ill, terminally injured, or permanently disabled participants, including an annuitant participating in optional term life insurance, in amounts that benefit the

⁵⁷¹ Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/Active-Employees/Optional-Add-on-Benefits>.

⁵⁷² Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/Active-Employees/Optional-Add-on-Benefits>.

⁵⁷³ Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/About-ERS/Policies/Tobacco-Policy-and-Certification>.

⁵⁷⁴ Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/Active-Employees/Optional-Add-on-Benefits>.

participant without increasing the cost of providing the benefits. The amount of any payment will be deducted from the amount of the death benefit.⁵⁷⁵

Flexible Spending Accounts

Employees who are eligible for state insurance plans have access to optional health care, limited-purpose, and dependent care flexible spending accounts. Employees enrolled in HealthSelect or HealthSelect Out-of-State plans are eligible for the health care flexible spending account. Individuals enrolled in Consumer Directed HealthSelect with a Health Savings Account are eligible for the limited-purpose flexible spending account. None of these plans require evidence of insurability.⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁵ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1551.254.

⁵⁷⁶ Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/Active-Employees/Optional-Add-on-Benefits/TexFlex-FSA>.

Chapter 16 Retirement

Retirement Overview

The State offers a defined benefit retirement plan as well as defined contribution retirement plans to employees. Employees are covered under a defined benefit plan (or traditional pension plan) through the Employees Retirement System (ERS), the Teacher Retirement System (TRS), or the Judicial Retirement System of Texas. In some cases, eligible employees of institutions of higher education may elect to participate in the Optional Retirement Program (ORP) governed by the Higher Education Coordinating Board. An ORP is an individualized defined contribution plan in which each participant selects from a variety of investments offered by several companies through annuity contracts or mutual fund investments.⁵⁷⁷

Most state agency employees are covered through ERS. These employees also have the opportunity to contribute to deferred compensation plans such as 401(k) or 457 accounts. These accounts can supplement the current state retirement plan and offer employees the option of choosing how they will invest their money.

Retirement benefits for most higher education employees are processed through TRS. Employees who are covered by TRS, by the Judicial Retirement System of Texas, or who are independent contractors or employees of such contractors are not eligible to participate in the ERS retirement program.⁵⁷⁸

The information below primarily focuses on ERS policies, rules, procedures, and governing laws. These requirements and options may apply in some cases to employees covered by TRS or the Judicial Retirement System of Texas. Due to the complex nature of retirement benefits, employers and employees should refer to ERS and TRS for complete information.

Employees Retirement System (ERS)

The ERS retirement program is a defined benefit plan, qualified under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.⁵⁷⁹ This plan provides a lifetime level of retirement income based on a formula authorized by the State Legislature. The types of benefits payable by the retirement system are:

- Service retirement benefits.
- Disability retirement benefits (occupational or non-occupational disability).
- Death benefits.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁷ *Optional Retirement Program (ORP)*, Higher Education Coordinating Board; and *An Overview of TRS and ORP for Employees Who Are Eligible to Elect ORP*, Higher Education Coordinating Board, July 2021, at <https://www.highered.texas.gov/>.

⁵⁷⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 812.003(a) and (b).

⁵⁷⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 815.507.

⁵⁸⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 814.001.

A state agency employee becomes a member of the ERS program starting on his or her first day of employment.⁵⁸¹ Each employee who is a member of ERS is required to pay an annual membership fee.⁵⁸² However, the Legislature has continued a long-standing tradition of appropriating funds to pay the membership fee.⁵⁸³

Disability retirement benefits and death benefits are not covered within this chapter. Information regarding disability retirement benefits and death benefits is available on the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov>.

Effective September 1, 2014, the State implemented a tiered insurance contribution for retirees. Due to the complex nature of this change, employers and employees should consult the ERS for additional information, including information on the new cash balance defined benefit retirement plan.

New Cash Balance Defined Benefit
In accordance with Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session) and effective September 1, 2022, the State of Texas will implement a different type of defined benefit retirement plan known as the cash balance defined benefit. A member of the employee or elected class who is hired or takes office on or after September 1, 2022, and who is not an ERS member on the date they are hired or take office, will be enrolled in the new cash balance defined benefit.
Members of the Law Enforcement and Custodial Officers Supplemental (LECOS) plan will continue to have access to an enhanced retirement benefit under the new cash balance defined benefit retirement plan.
Additional information on the new cash balance defined benefit is available on the ERS website at https://www.ers.texas.gov . ⁵⁸⁴

Retirement Contributions

The Legislature establishes the State and employee retirement contribution rates biennially for various retirement systems and funds; these rates are set in the General Appropriations Act.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸¹ Texas Government Code, Section 812.003(d).

⁵⁸² Texas Government Code, Section 815.401(a).

⁵⁸³ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article I, Employees Retirement System, Rider 4; and Texas Government Code, Section 815.401(c).

⁵⁸⁴ Texas Government Code, Chapter 820, as added by Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session); and *87th Texas Legislature Sets Retirement Plan On Path to Solvency*, Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/About-ERS/ers-organization/legislative-activity-related-to-ers/87th-legislative-handout-final>.

⁵⁸⁵ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article I, Employees Retirement System, Rider 4.

An employee's portion of the retirement contribution is deducted each month from the employee's pay and deposited into an employee savings account.⁵⁸⁶ The State deposits its portion of the retirement contribution into a State Accumulation Account.⁵⁸⁷

The employing agency is responsible for deducting the amount of the employee's contribution from the employee's pay.⁵⁸⁸ The deduction process requires no employee consent because the employee consents to the automatic deduction when he or she becomes a member of the ERS program.⁵⁸⁹

State agencies that employ a law enforcement officer or custodial officer are required to deduct an additional contribution from that employee's compensation that must be deposited into the Law Enforcement and Custodial Officer Supplemental Retirement Fund (Fund).⁵⁹⁰ Deposits into the Fund also include the State's contributions, other appropriations made by the Legislature, and proceeds from investment of the Fund.⁵⁹¹

In addition, during the 2022-2023 biennium, each state agency is required to contribute an amount equal to 0.5 percent of the total base wages and salaries for each benefits-eligible employee of a state agency to the Employees Retirement System's Retirement Program.⁵⁹² Agencies should refer to the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts for more information regarding the additional payroll retirement contribution.

Withdrawal of Contributions

Upon termination of employment, an individual who is a member of the Certified Peace Officer/Custodial Officer (CPO/CO) or regular employee class may withdraw his or her contributions made to the retirement plan. Withdrawal of contributions cancels membership in the retirement plan, service credit, and all rights to benefits.⁵⁹³ This means if you return to state employment you will be subject to the benefit rules for new employees. A member wanting to withdraw his or her contributions should consult with ERS.

Classes of Membership

Employees of state agencies or elected officials become a member in one of the following classes of membership:⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁸⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 815.402(a), as amended by Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session); Section 815.311(a), as amended by Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session); and Section 820.101, as added by Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁵⁸⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 815.312(a).

⁵⁸⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 815.402(d).

⁵⁸⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 815.402(g).

⁵⁹⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 815.402(h); and Section 820.101(b), as added by Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁵⁹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 815.317(a).

⁵⁹² Texas Government Code, Section 815.4035; and General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 17.06.

⁵⁹³ Texas Government Code, Sections 812.101(a) and 812.103.

⁵⁹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 812.001.

Elected Class: Membership in the elected class is limited to:

- Persons who hold state offices normally filled by a statewide election and not included for coverage under the Judicial Retirement System of Texas.
- Members of the Legislature.
- District and criminal district attorneys (to the extent that they receive salaries from the state general revenue fund).⁵⁹⁵

Employee Class: Membership in the employee class includes employees and appointed officers of state agencies and can be broken into the following two groups:

CPO/CO Class: employee class service rendered while a law enforcement officer, custodial officer, or parole officer or caseworker.

Regular Employee Class: employee class service rendered that is not considered CPO/CO service.⁵⁹⁶

Within this chapter of the Inventory, we will refer mainly to the CPO/CO and regular employee class membership.

Retirement Eligibility

A regular employee class member's age and years of service credit determine his/her eligibility to retire.⁵⁹⁷ An employee included in the CPO/CO membership class may have different retirement eligibility requirements. However, similar to a regular employee class member, a CPO's/CO's age and established years of service credit determine the CPO's/CO's eligibility to retire.⁵⁹⁸

Refer to the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov> for information on retirement eligibility for all service classes, including the Judicial Retirement System of Texas.

Establishing Service Credit

Membership in ERS's regular employee or CPO/CO class begins on the first day a person is employed or holds office.⁵⁹⁹ Employees receive a full month's retirement credit when a retirement contribution is deducted from a paycheck and deposited into ERS. However, service credit for retirement may be established in other ways. If the employee is eligible, these may be:

- Vacation and sick leave.

⁵⁹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 812.002(a).

⁵⁹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 812.003.

⁵⁹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 814.104(a) and (d); and Section 820.052(1), as added by Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁵⁹⁸ Texas Government Code, Sections 814.104(b) and 814.107(a); and Section 820.052(2), as added by Senate Bill 321 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁵⁹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 812.003(d).

- Transfer of service credit.
- Purchase of withdrawn service.
- Purchase of unestablished service.
- Purchase of waiting period service.
- Purchase of military service.
- Purchase of additional service.⁶⁰⁰

Additional information regarding service credit is available on the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov>.

Determining the Standard Service Retirement Annuity

An employee who is a CPO/CO or regular employee class member and who retires from the State of Texas receives a monthly payment based on his or her highest average salary and years of creditable service. This amount is called an annuity and does not depend on the amount of money in the retiree's account. An employee's hire date affects the annuity computation.⁶⁰¹ In addition, an employee's annuity may be reduced if he or she retires before the regular retirement age.⁶⁰²

Consult the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov> for the different annuity formulas and age requirements for all service classes, including the Judicial Retirement System of Texas.

Proportionate Retirement Program

The State provides proportionate retirement benefits to qualified members who have service credit in more than one retirement system. These participating retirement systems are the ERS, the TRS, and the Judicial Retirement System of Texas. Certain municipal employees may also elect to join this program.⁶⁰³

Each retirement system will pay benefits based upon only the service and salaries established in that system.⁶⁰⁴

For the purpose of determining whether a person meets a system's length-of-service requirements for retirement benefits, the person's combined service credit must be considered as if it were all credited in each system.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰⁰ *Service Credit for State of Texas Retirement for Active Employees*, Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/Active-Employees/Retirement/Service-Credit-for-State-of-Texas-Retirement>.

⁶⁰¹ Texas Government Code, Sections 814.105 and 814.107; and *Standard Annuity for Active Employees*, Employees Retirement System's website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov/Active-Employees/Retirement/Standard-Annuity>.

⁶⁰² Texas Government Code, Sections 814.105(d) and 814.107(c).

⁶⁰³ Texas Government Code, Sections 803.0021, 803.101, and 803.102.

⁶⁰⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 803.302(b).

⁶⁰⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 803.201(a).

Additional information on eligibility for proportionate retirement benefits is available on the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov>.

Resumption of State Service by a Retiree

An employee who retired on or after May 31, 2009, may not return to work in a position in the employee class of membership before the 90th day after the original retirement date.⁶⁰⁶ In addition, state agencies are required to pay into the retirement system an amount equal to the amount of the state contribution for active members for a person who retired on or after September 1, 2009, from the employee class and then was rehired as a retiree in a position that would otherwise include membership in the employee class.⁶⁰⁷

A retiree from another system, such as TRS, who returns to work for a state agency under ERS contributes the employee portion of his or her monthly pay to an ERS retirement account.⁶⁰⁸

An employee who retires from another statewide retirement system should refer to that system to find out if returning to state employment will affect his or her annuity.

A retiree must notify the employing agency that he or she is a retiree and is no longer eligible to be an active member of ERS. Both the retiree and his or her employer must notify ERS of the date that the retiree returns to work. An employee taking a position in another class of membership or serving as an independent contractor may continue to receive retirement benefits.⁶⁰⁹

Retirement must be canceled and membership in a retirement system reinstated if the member holds a position in the class from which he or she retired during the calendar month following retirement. If a person establishes that service credit received after retirement was the result of an oversight or an error on the part of the employee's department, the member may petition the executive director for relief.⁶¹⁰

Additional information on return-to-work retirees is available on the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov>.

Deferred Compensation

In addition to a state employee's established ERS pension plan, an employee has the opportunity to save a portion of his or her income by making traditional pre-tax or Roth after-tax contributions to a deferred compensation plan.⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 812.205.

⁶⁰⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 812.206.

⁶⁰⁸ *Retirees Who Return to Work*, Employees Retirement System.

⁶⁰⁹ Texas Government Code, Sections 812.202 and 812.204.

⁶¹⁰ Texas Administrative Code, Title 34, Section 73.7.

⁶¹¹ Texas Government Code, Section 609.005; and *Planning Your Retirement*, Employees Retirement System, Summer 2019.

Under the Texa\$aver Program, state agency employees can enroll in two types of deferred compensation plans available: a 401(k) and a 457.⁶¹² The deferred compensation plans also have “catch-up” provisions that allow employees who meet the eligibility requirements to make up for lost time.

An institution of higher education may create and administer a 457 plan or it may contract with other institutions of higher education to create a single plan for its employees.⁶¹³

401(k) Plan Automatic Enrollment

An employee who begins state employment on or after January 1, 2008, automatically participates in a 401(k) plan unless the employee elects not to participate in the plan. The contribution is made by automatic payroll deduction and represents 1.0 percent of an employee’s pay. Unless otherwise directed by the employee, this contribution is placed in a default investment product selected by the ERS Board of Trustees.⁶¹⁴

An employee participating in a 401(k) plan under this legislation may elect to end participation in the 401(k) plan, to contribute to a different investment product, or to contribute a different amount to the plan.⁶¹⁵

A state agency participating in a 401(k) plan is required to inform new hires of their automatic enrollment in a 401(k) account and their right to opt-out of enrollment. This information should be provided as part of orientation for new employees. State agencies participating in a 401(k) plan must maintain a record of a new hire's acknowledgement of receipt of information regarding the ability to opt-out of enrollment in a 401(k) plan.⁶¹⁶

Additional information about Texa\$aver and the 401(k) and 457 plans is available on the ERS website at <https://www.ers.texas.gov>.

⁶¹² *Planning Your Retirement*, Employees Retirement System, Summer 2019.

⁶¹³ Texas Government Code, Section 609.702.

⁶¹⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 609.5025(b) and (c).

⁶¹⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 609.5025(d).

⁶¹⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 609.5025(h).

Chapter 17 Additional Benefits

Awards and Gifts

State agencies and institutions of higher education are authorized to use appropriated funds to purchase and present awards to employees for professional achievement or outstanding service. The cost of each award must not exceed \$100.⁶¹⁷

State agencies and institutions of higher education that have established a volunteer program may use appropriated funds to purchase awards for special achievements or outstanding service to be presented to a volunteer. Such awards must not exceed a value of \$50 and are limited to certificates, plaques, pins, or other similar awards.⁶¹⁸

Additional Information

The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website provides additional guidance on policy and documentation requirements and sources for several of the additional benefits discussed in this chapter. See <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/purchase/index.php/>.

Employee Health and Wellness Programs

Health Fitness and Education Programs

A state agency or institution of higher education may use available public funds for health fitness education and activities and other costs related to health fitness. In addition, available facilities may be used for health fitness programs.⁶¹⁹

Such programs are designed to encourage and create a condition of health fitness in state employees and serve important purposes including:

- An understanding and reduction of the risk factors associated with society's most debilitating diseases.
- The development of greater work productivity and capacity.
- A reduction in absenteeism.
- A reduction of health insurance costs.
- An increase in the general level of fitness.⁶²⁰

State agencies and institutions of higher education are encouraged to enter into agreements with other state, local, or federal agencies, including state-supported institutions of higher education, to

⁶¹⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.201.

⁶¹⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.202.

⁶¹⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 664.004.

⁶²⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 664.002.

present, join in presenting, or participate jointly in health fitness education or activity programs for state employees.⁶²¹

Wellness Programs

A state agency or institution of higher education may develop a wellness program designed to increase work productivity and capacity and to reduce health insurance costs, or it can implement a wellness program based on the model program or components of the model program.⁶²²

The Department of State Health Services must designate a statewide wellness coordinator to create and develop a model statewide wellness program to improve the health and wellness of state employees.⁶²³ In addition, state agencies and institutions of higher education must designate an employee to serve as the wellness liaison between the agency or institution of higher education and the statewide wellness coordinator.⁶²⁴

As part of a state agency or institution of higher education wellness program, a state agency or institution of higher education may develop policies that:

- Allow each employee 30 minutes during normal working hours to exercise three times a week.
- Allow all employees to attend on-site wellness seminars when offered.
- Provide eight hours of additional leave time each year to an employee who receives a physical examination and completes either an online health risk assessment tool or a similar health risk assessment conducted in person by a worksite wellness coordinator.
- Provide financial incentives, notwithstanding Texas Government Code, Section 2113.201, for participation in a wellness program developed by the agency or institution of higher education under Texas Government Code, Section 664.053(e), after it has established a written policy with objective criteria for providing the incentives.
- Offer on-site clinic or pharmacy services.

In addition, a state agency or institution of higher education may adopt additional wellness policies as determined by the agency or higher education institution.⁶²⁵

⁶²¹ Texas Government Code, Section 664.005.

⁶²² Texas Government Code, Section 664.053(e).

⁶²³ Texas Government Code, Section 664.053(a).

⁶²⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 664.053(d).

⁶²⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 664.061(a).

Wellness Council

A state agency or institution of higher education may develop a wellness council composed of employees and managers to promote worksite wellness. The wellness council may undertake the following:

- Increasing employee interest in worksite wellness.
- Developing and implementing policies to improve agency or institution of higher education infrastructure to allow for increased worksite wellness.
- Involving employees in worksite wellness programs.⁶²⁶

A state agency or institution of higher education may allow its employees to participate in wellness council activities for two or more hours each month.⁶²⁷

Employee Assistance Programs

A state agency or institution of higher education may provide an employee assistance program (EAP) to offer employees help with personal concerns that may adversely affect job performance. An EAP is not required to be provided by a state agency or institution of higher education. The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website provides guidance and information on employee assistance programs at eXpendit, State Employees - Employee Assistance Programs.⁶²⁸

Child Care Expenses

The State may enter into an agreement with a state employee to reduce the employee's salary by an amount to be paid for child care expenses. A state employee may request the salary reduction agreement and select the recipient for child care payments by filing a written request with the state agency or institution of higher education with which the employee is employed.⁶²⁹

Memberships In and Dues for Professional Organizations

With the exception of a state library, a state agency or institution of higher education may not use appropriated money to pay for membership in or dues for a professional organization unless the administrative head or designee reviews and approves the expenditure.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 664.060(a) and (b).

⁶²⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 664.060(d).

⁶²⁸ *Employee Assistance Programs*, Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' website at <https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/purchase/index.php>.

⁶²⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 610.011.

⁶³⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.104.

Moving and Storage Expenses

A state agency or institution of higher education may use appropriated funds to pay the reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in moving the household property of state employees who are:

- Reassigned from one headquarters to another if the state agency or institution of higher education determines that the best interests of the State will be served and the distance between headquarters is at least 25 miles; or
- Employed at a facility that is being closed or is undergoing a reduction in force if the employee accepts a position with the agency or institution of higher education at another headquarters that is at least 25 miles from the facility that is being closed or undergoing a reduction in force.⁶³¹

A state agency or institution of higher education must use State-owned equipment to move an employee if it is available. If not, the agency or institution of higher education may pay for the services of a transportation company or self-service vehicles to be used in the move.⁶³²

A state employee is entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in traveling by a personally owned or a leased motor vehicle for a move described above at the rate provided by the General Appropriations Act for business-related travel by the employee.⁶³³

A state agency or institution of higher education may also pay for or reimburse a state employee for storage expenses incurred if the employee is required to live in State-owned housing and the housing is not available when the move is made.⁶³⁴

State-Owned Housing

There are certain situations in which the State provides housing for employees. This housing may be at a reduced cost or at no cost to employees based upon provisions in the General Appropriations Act.

Each state agency that provides employee housing must report annually to the Legislative Budget Board:

- The estimated fair market rental value of housing supplied by the agency, and
- The amount of revenue (if any) recovered.⁶³⁵

⁶³¹ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.204(a).

⁶³² Texas Government Code, Section 2113.204(b).

⁶³³ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.204(c).

⁶³⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.204(d).

⁶³⁵ General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature), Article IX, Section 11.02(a).

Chapter 18 Training

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Compliance Training

State agencies and institutions of higher education that receive three or more discrimination complaints with merit in a fiscal year must provide comprehensive equal employment opportunity training to managers and supervisors. The training may be provided by the Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) or by a person or entity approved by the Commission, including a state agency. An agency or institution of higher education required to participate in the training must pay the cost of attending the training or reimburse the Commission or state agency providing the training through an interagency contract. If the training is not provided by the Commission, documentation verifying this training must be provided to the Commission. The documentation must include the dates that the training was provided, the names of the persons attending the training, an agenda for the training program, and the name of the entity or person providing the training. The Commission determines the minimum standards for the training.⁶³⁶

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Standards Training

Each state agency and institution of higher education must provide employment discrimination and sexual harassment training to its employees. New employees must receive the training no later than 30 days after their date of hire. Employees who complete the training are required to sign a statement verifying their completion of the training program. Agencies and institutions of higher education must save the statements in the employees' personnel files.⁶³⁷

Additional employment discrimination and sexual harassment training is required for each employee every two years. The minimum standards for the training are determined by the Commission.⁶³⁸

Coordinated Technology Training

Each calendar quarter, a state agency or institution of higher education must coordinate its training for the use of information resources technology with training offered or coordinated by the Department of Information Resources. The agency or institution of higher education must use training offered or coordinated by the Department of Information Resources if the training meets agency or institution of higher education requirements and is cost-competitive.⁶³⁹

⁶³⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.556.

⁶³⁷ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.010; and Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Section 819.24.

⁶³⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 21.010(c) and (d); and Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Section 819.24.

⁶³⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.122.

Cybersecurity Training

Cybersecurity Awareness Training and Data Use Agreements

To the extent possible, state agencies and institutions of higher education must provide employees who handle sensitive information, including financial, medical, personnel, or student data, with cybersecurity awareness training that coincides with the distribution of data use agreements required by Texas Government Code, Section 2054.135, and each biennial update of those agreements.⁶⁴⁰

Cybersecurity Training for State Agency Employees

State agencies and institutions of higher education must identify employees who use a computer to complete at least 25 percent of their required duties, and at least once each year, those employees and each elected or appointed officer of the agency or institution of higher education must complete a cybersecurity program certified by the Department of Information Resources (Department).⁶⁴¹ The Department must annually publish on its website the list of cybersecurity training programs that it has certified.⁶⁴² A state agency or institution of higher education may select for its employees the most appropriate cybersecurity training program certified by the Department.⁶⁴³

The executive head of a state agency or institution of higher education must verify completion of a cybersecurity training program by its employees in a manner specified by the Department. In addition, the executive head must periodically require an internal review of the agency's or institution's compliance with this requirement.⁶⁴⁴

Cybersecurity Training for Agency Contractors

State agencies and institutions of higher education must require any contractor who has access to a state computer system or database to complete a cybersecurity training program certified by the Department and selected by the agency or institution. A contractor includes a subcontractor, officer, or employee of the contractor.⁶⁴⁵

The cybersecurity training program must be completed by the contractor during the term of the contract and during any renewal period, and the requirement for completing the cybersecurity training program must be included in the terms of the contract awarded by the state agency or institution.⁶⁴⁶

A contractor required to complete the cybersecurity training program must verify completion of the program to the contracting state agency or institution of higher education. In addition, the person

⁶⁴⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.135.

⁶⁴¹ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.5191(a).

⁶⁴² Texas Government Code, Section 2054.519(e).

⁶⁴³ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.5191(c).

⁶⁴⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.5191(c) and (d).

⁶⁴⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.5192(a) and (b).

⁶⁴⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.5192(c) and (d).

who oversees contract management for the agency or institution of higher education must report the contractor's completion of the training program to the Department no later than August 31 of each year and must periodically review the agency's or institution's contracts to ensure compliance with this requirement.⁶⁴⁷

New Requirement
The 87th Legislature enacted legislation requiring state agencies and institutions of higher education to report contractors' completion of the required cybersecurity training program to the Department of Information Resources no later than August 31 of each year.

Training and Education Programs

A state agency or institution of higher education may require an employee to attend a training or education program if the training and education is related to the employee's duties or prospective duties.⁶⁴⁸ For example, certain state agencies and institutions of higher education may have specific training requirements authorized by statute or the General Appropriations Act.

A state agency or institution of higher education may spend appropriated funds to pay the salary, tuition and other fees, travel and living expenses, training expenses, expense of training materials, and other necessary expenses of an instructor, student, or other participant in a training or education program, or to reimburse an employee or administrator who serves in an information technology, cybersecurity, or other cyber-related position for fees associated with industry-recognized certification examinations.⁶⁴⁹ Additionally, if an employee of a state agency or institution of higher education seeks reimbursement for a training or education program offered by an institution of higher education (as defined by Section 61.003 of the Texas Education Code), the agency or institution of higher education may pay the tuition expenses for a program course successfully completed by the employee only at an accredited institution of higher education.⁶⁵⁰

⁶⁴⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.5192(e), as amended by Senate Bill 800 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁶⁴⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 656.045.

⁶⁴⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 656.047(a); and Texas Government Code, Section 654.047(a-1).

⁶⁵⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 656.047(b).

A state agency or institution of higher education that spends more than \$5,000 in a fiscal year for a training or education program for any one employee must submit a report to the Legislative Budget Board no later than August 31 of each fiscal year that includes:

- The name of each employee for which the agency spent more than \$5,000 in that fiscal year for a training or education program.
- The amount spent on each employee.
- The certification earned by each employee through the training or education program.⁶⁵¹

A state agency or institution of higher education must adopt rules relating to the eligibility of employees for training and education supported by the agency or institution of higher education, as well as rules relating to the obligations assumed by the employees receiving the training and education. Additionally, a state agency or institution of higher education must adopt rules that require the executive head of the agency or institution of higher education to authorize the tuition reimbursement payments before an employee is reimbursed for successfully completing a training or education program in accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 656.047(b).⁶⁵²

A state agency or institution of higher education may contract with another state, local, or federal department, agency, or institution of higher education to train or educate its employees, or it may join in presenting a training or educational program.⁶⁵³

Training Policy Requirements

The State Employees Training Act authorizes a state agency or an institution of higher education to use public funds to provide training and education to its employees. Such training or education must be related to the current or prospective duties of the employee.⁶⁵⁴

A state agency or institution of higher education may use money appropriated for a particular fiscal year to pay expenses for training that will occur during that fiscal year. To the extent that it is cost-effective, a state agency or institution of higher education may use money appropriated for a particular fiscal year to pay expenses for training that will occur partly or entirely during a different fiscal year.⁶⁵⁵

A state agency's or institution of higher education's training and educational program may include the following:

- Preparing for technological and legal developments.
- Increasing work capabilities.

⁶⁵¹ Texas Government Code, Section 656.047(c).

⁶⁵² Texas Government Code, Section 656.048.

⁶⁵³ Texas Government Code, Section 656.049.

⁶⁵⁴ Texas Government Code, Sections 656.041 and 656.044.

⁶⁵⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 2113.205(a).

- Increasing the number of qualified employees in areas designated by institutions of higher education as having an acute faculty shortage.
- Increasing the competence of state employees.⁶⁵⁶

Before funds for training may be expended, state agencies and institutions of higher education must adopt a policy governing the training of employees that requires training to specifically relate to an employee's duties following the training. The policy must:

- Provide guidelines to govern tuition reimbursements for employees enrolled in training for which the employee seeks reimbursement from the State, and
- Address tuition reimbursement for nontraditional training, including online courses or courses not credited toward a degree.

A state agency or institution of higher education must post the policy on its website.⁶⁵⁷

If a state employee receives training that is paid for by a state agency or institution of higher education, and during the training period the employee does not perform his or her regular duties for three or more months as a result of the training, the agency or institution of higher education must require the employee to agree to certain conditions in writing before the training begins. For an employee, the conditions state that they must:

- Work for the agency or institution of higher education for at least one month following the training, for each month of the training period, or
- Reimburse the agency or institution of higher education for all costs associated with the training that were paid during the training period, including salary for hours that were paid and that were not accounted for as paid vacation leave or compensatory leave.⁶⁵⁸

If a state employee does not provide the required services, provides those services for less than the required term, or fails to make the required reimbursements, the employee is liable to the state agency or institution of higher education for all costs associated with the training and for the agency's or institution's reasonable expenses incurred in obtaining payment, including attorney fees.⁶⁵⁹

By an order adopted in a public meeting, the agency or institution of higher education may waive these requirements if it is in the best interest of the agency or institution of higher education or is warranted because of personal hardship suffered by the employee.⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 656.046.

⁶⁵⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 656.102.

⁶⁵⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 656.103(a) and (b).

⁶⁵⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 656.104.

⁶⁶⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 656.103(c).

Contract Management and Purchasing Training

The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts (Comptroller's Office) is responsible for developing and administering training programs for state agency employees who are responsible for contract management and/or purchasing.⁶⁶¹ State agencies must ensure that agency employees who are responsible for contract management and/or purchasing receive the required training provided by the Comptroller's Office.⁶⁶²

However, state agencies, in consultation with the Comptroller's Office, may develop agency-specific purchasing and contract management training programs to be administered by the agency to its employees instead of, or as a supplement to, the training programs developed by the Comptroller's Office.⁶⁶³ An employee who participates in an agency-specific training program remains subject to any other applicable certification requirements established for training programs administered by the Comptroller's Office.⁶⁶⁴

See the Comptroller's Office's website at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/training/> for additional information on training requirements for state agency employees who are responsible for contract management and/or purchasing.

Reporting of Contract Management and Procurement Staff

Each year, state agencies must estimate the number of their employees requiring purchasing or contract management training and report their anticipated purchasing and contract management training needs to the Comptroller's Office.⁶⁶⁵

Training in Contract Negotiation for Purchase of Information Resources Technologies

Employees of state agencies and institutions of higher education directly involved in contract negotiations for the purchase of information resources technologies must complete the contract negotiation training for the purchase of information resources technologies developed by the Department of Information Resources.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶¹ Texas Government Code, Sections 656.051(a), 656.052(a-1) and (d), and 656.054(a).

⁶⁶² Texas Government Code, Sections 656.051(c) and 656.052(c).

⁶⁶³ Texas Government Code, Section 656.055(a).

⁶⁶⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 656.055(b).

⁶⁶⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 656.054(b).

⁶⁶⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 656.050.

Chapter 19

Unemployment Insurance Compensation

Overview

Unemployment insurance (UI) is an insurance program paid for by employers that provides benefits to qualified individuals (referred to as claimants within this chapter) who are unemployed through no fault of their own. This program provides temporary, partial income replacement to eligible individuals while they are seeking other employment.⁶⁶⁷ With few exceptions, state employees are covered by unemployment insurance.⁶⁶⁸

UI benefits are financed through a state unemployment tax and paid from the State's Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund (Fund). Most employers are subject to paying unemployment tax. Under Texas law, state agencies and institutions of higher education must pay *reimbursements* for benefits instead of the tax.⁶⁶⁹ As reimbursing employers, they pay to the Fund, in lieu of taxes, an amount equal to the amount of benefits that were paid to their former employees and attributable to service with the agency or institution.⁶⁷⁰

The Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) is the agency responsible for administering the State's Unemployment Insurance Compensation programs.⁶⁷¹ Agencies and institutions of higher education should refer to the Commission for additional information regarding unemployment insurance compensation.

The Commission supplies employers, without cost, printed notices that provide general information about filing a claim for unemployment benefits. A state agency or institution of higher education must post and maintain the notices in places accessible to all employees.⁶⁷²

Filing an Initial Claim for Unemployment Benefits and Notice of Initial Claim

Individuals may file for UI benefits in two ways: online at the Commission's "Apply for Benefits" Internet application or by calling one of the Commission's Tele-Centers. Information about how to file a claim is also available on the Commission's website at <https://twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/unemployment-benefits-services>.

Once a claim for unemployment benefits is filed, a notice of the initial claim is mailed to the most recent employer named on the claim. The most recent employer refers to the last person for whom the claimant actually worked, if the claimant worked for that person for at least 30 hours during a week; or that entity is an employer as defined by Texas Labor Code, Chapter 201, or as defined by

⁶⁶⁷ Texas Workforce Commission's website at <https://www.twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/basics-unemployment-benefits>.

⁶⁶⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 201.063.

⁶⁶⁹ Texas Labor Code, Section 205.041.

⁶⁷⁰ Texas Labor Code, Section 205.013.

⁶⁷¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 301.001(a).

⁶⁷² Texas Labor Code, Section 208.001(b).

the unemployment law of any other state.⁶⁷³ An employer or their agent to whom a notice is mailed must promptly notify the Commission of all facts known that may adversely affect the claimant's right to benefits or affect a charge to the employer's account. The notification provided to the Commission must include sufficient factual information to allow the Commission to make a determination regarding the claimant's entitlement to benefits. A notification is not adequate if the notification merely alleges that a claimant is not entitled to benefits without providing sufficient factual information.⁶⁷⁴

The Texas Labor Code gives employers 14 days to respond to the notice of initial claim. If an employer fails to respond to the claim in a timely manner, the employer will not be a party of interest to the claim. This includes the loss of the employer's appeal rights in connection with the claim.⁶⁷⁵ The employer's response can be submitted online at <https://twc.texas.gov/businesses/employer-response-notice-application-unemployment-benefits>.

Appeals Process

An employer who timely and adequately protests the initial claim has the right to submit a written appeal disagreeing with the Commission's decision to pay the claimant unemployment benefits. Conversely, a claimant may also appeal a Commission decision not to award benefits.⁶⁷⁶ During the appeals process, the Commission will hold a hearing during which the claimant and the employer can present their cases.

Additional information about the unemployment appeals process is available on the Commission's website at <https://twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/introduction-unemployment-benefits-appeal-process> and <https://twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/how-appeal-decision>.

Reimbursements to the Unemployment Compensation Fund

If a claim is approved for payment, a state agency or institution of higher education will be billed on a quarterly basis for all benefits based on wages it reported during the base period of the claim.⁶⁷⁷ State agencies and institutions of higher education may appeal charges for UI benefits paid to a former employee if the employee was discharged for misconduct or voluntarily quit without good cause connected with the work.⁶⁷⁸

If a state agency or institution of higher education pays a reimbursement to the Commission for benefits paid to a claimant that are not in accordance with the final determination or decision, the state agency or institution of higher education is not entitled to a refund or credit for the amount paid to the Commission, if the agency or institution of higher education did not comply with the

⁶⁷³ Texas Labor Code, Section 208.002.

⁶⁷⁴ Texas Labor Code, Section 208.004(a), (a-1), (c), and (d).

⁶⁷⁵ Texas Labor Code, Section 208.004(a) and (b).

⁶⁷⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 212.053(1).

⁶⁷⁷ Texas Labor Code, Section 205.013.

⁶⁷⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 205.0125.

notification requirements according to Texas Labor Code, Section 208.004, regarding a claimant's entitlement eligibility.⁶⁷⁹

Coverage for State Employees Working Outside the State

The Commission may enter into agreements with agencies of other states or federal agencies to cover an employee who performs his or her duties outside of Texas.⁶⁸⁰ If the Commission is unable to execute a reciprocal agreement with another state, the employing Texas state agency shall become a reimbursing employer if permitted by the laws of the state in which the employee works. If the agency is not permitted to be a reimbursing employer, it may pay the required contributions for that employee from funds available for that purpose.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁹ Texas Labor Code, Section 205.013(d).

⁶⁸⁰ Texas Labor Code, Sections 211.001 and 211.002.

⁶⁸¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 205.042.

Chapter 20 Workers' Compensation

Overview of Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation is a form of insurance that provides income benefits, medical treatment, and other benefits to workers who are injured on the job or acquire an occupational disease on the job.⁶⁸²

The Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (Division) oversees the State's workers' compensation program.⁶⁸³ The Office of Injured Employee Counsel was established by the Legislature to represent the interests of workers' compensation claimants in Texas.⁶⁸⁴

Coverage for State Employees

For most state agencies and institutions of higher education, the State Office of Risk Management (SORM) is responsible for administering state risk management programs and insurance services obtained by state agencies, including the state employees' workers' compensation insurance program and the state risk management programs.⁶⁸⁵

Individuals excluded from workers' compensation coverage provided by SORM include:

- A person performing personal services for the State as an independent contractor or volunteer.
- A person who at the time of injury was performing services for the federal government and who is covered by some form of federal workers' compensation insurance.
- A prisoner or inmate of a correctional institution other than a work program participant in a Texas Correctional Industries contract.
- A client or patient of a state agency.

State Office of Risk Management

The State Office of Risk Management (SORM) is responsible for operating a self-insured workers' compensation program for the State. Duties of SORM include receiving and investigating reports of an injury filed by or on behalf of state employees; determining whether a claim is compensable; paying income and medical benefits in accordance with the Workers' Compensation Act; and reviewing medical bills to determine reasonableness, necessity, and compliance with the Division of Workers' Compensation's (Division) fee guidelines. In addition, SORM may appear as an adversary before the Division and the courts, presenting the position and legal defenses of the State's workers' compensation program, as well as preparing reports for the Legislature and providing workers' compensation training for state agencies.

Sources: Texas Labor Code, Sections 412.011 and 412.0122; and the State Office of Risk Management, at <https://www.sorm.state.tx.us/claims-operations/the-texas-state-employees-workers-compensation-system/>.

⁶⁸² *Workers' Compensation/Injured Employee Resources*, Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation's website at <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/employee/index.html>.

⁶⁸³ Texas Labor Code, Section 402.001.

⁶⁸⁴ Texas Labor Code, Section 404.002(a).

⁶⁸⁵ Texas Labor Code, Section 412.011.

- A person employed by the Department of Transportation, The University of Texas System, or the Texas A&M University System.⁶⁸⁶

Recovery of workers' compensation benefits is the exclusive remedy of an employee covered by workers' compensation insurance coverage. For the death of an employee as a result of a work-related injury, the employee's surviving legal beneficiary may be eligible for these remedies.⁶⁸⁷ However, the Texas Labor Code does not authorize a cause of action or damages against the State, a state agency, or an employee of the State beyond the actions and damages authorized by Chapter 101 of the Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code.⁶⁸⁸

Workers' Compensation Health Care Networks

Workers' compensation health care networks were established to provide health care services to injured employees through networks certified by the Department of Insurance.⁶⁸⁹

For additional information on workers' compensation health care networks, please refer to the Department of Insurance's website at <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/pubs/consumer/cb084.html>.

Out of State Assignments or Positions

A state employee who performs services outside of Texas is entitled to workers' compensation benefits from the State of Texas, even if the person:

- Is hired or not hired in Texas;
- Does not work in Texas;
- Works both in Texas and out of Texas;
- Is injured outside of Texas; or
- Has been outside of Texas for more than one year.⁶⁹⁰

According to SORM, in situations in which an employee works outside of Texas, some states may require state agencies to purchase separate workers' compensation insurance. However, employees temporarily working outside of Texas continue to be covered under the State's workers' compensation insurance program. If an employee elects to pursue remedies provided by the state in which the injury occurred, the employee is not entitled to workers' compensation benefits through SORM.⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.024.

⁶⁸⁷ Texas Labor Code, Section 408.001(a).

⁶⁸⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.002(d).

⁶⁸⁹ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1305.002.

⁶⁹⁰ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.025(a).

⁶⁹¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.025(b).

Coverage for Services Provided by Volunteers

While volunteers generally are not covered, a person who performs volunteer services for the State in a disaster or in scheduled emergency response training under the direction of an officer or employee of the State is entitled to medical benefits for an injury sustained in the course of providing those services. A disaster in this situation means an event for which the Governor has issued a declaration of a state of disaster or another occurrence that initiates the state emergency management plan.⁶⁹²

To qualify for benefits, the volunteer must seek medical attention from a doctor for the injury not later than 48 hours after the occurrence of the injury or after the date the person knew or should have known an injury occurred. The person must comply with the notification requirements by providing notice of the injury to the Division, or the state agency with which the officer or employee is associated.⁶⁹³

SORM has developed a Statewide Volunteer Insurance Program to provide excess personal liability, excess automobile liability, and accident medical expense coverage for designated or registered volunteers of state agencies and institutions of higher education.⁶⁹⁴

Workers' Compensation Benefits

State employees with compensable injuries (injuries arising out of and in the course and scope of employment for which compensation is payable) are entitled to compensation by SORM.⁶⁹⁵ However, the Division adjudicates income and medical benefit disputes for the State.⁶⁹⁶ Upon receipt of a report of injury, the Division contacts the affected employee to provide information on the benefit process and the compensation procedures established by state law.⁶⁹⁷

There are four types of workers' compensation benefits: income benefits, medical benefits, burial benefits, and death benefits.⁶⁹⁸ Information about those benefits is available from SORM and the Division.

Employer Responsibilities

A state agency or institution of higher education covered under Texas Labor Code, Chapter 501, must report to SORM an injury that results in medical expenses or the absence of an employee of

⁶⁹² Texas Labor Code, Section 501.026(a) and (b).

⁶⁹³ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.026(d).

⁶⁹⁴ *Volunteer Program*, State Office of Risk Management's website at <https://www.sorm.state.tx.us/insurance-services/volunteer-program/>.

⁶⁹⁵ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.021.

⁶⁹⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 402.001; and Texas Labor Code, Section 410.002.

⁶⁹⁷ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.013(b).

⁶⁹⁸ *Workers' Compensation Income and Medical Benefits*, Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation's website at <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/employee/benefits.html>.

the state agency or institution of higher education for as much as one day.⁶⁹⁹ In addition, a state agency or institution of higher education must notify SORM of an occupational disease reported by an employee.⁷⁰⁰ The initial report of injury must be made not later than the eighth day after the employee's absence from work for more than one day due to an injury; or the day on which the employer receives notice that the employee has contracted an occupational disease.⁷⁰¹

The following list is a summary of responsibilities for state agencies and institutions of higher education that are covered by these provisions.⁷⁰²

- **Sending timely notices, reports, and information** - Most state agencies and institutions of higher education are required to give notices, make reports, and otherwise transmit information to SORM and to the Division concerning on-the-job injuries and occupational diseases or illnesses in a timely manner.
- **Designating a claims coordinator** - Most state agencies and institutions of higher education must designate one or more claims coordinators, and must report to SORM any change in this designation.
- **Complying with rules** - Most state agencies and institutions of higher education must comply with all rules enacted by SORM, as well as those of the Division. State agency and institution of higher education policies, guidelines, or instructions must not vary from Division rules, SORM rules, or with the Texas Workers' Compensation Act (Act). As the employer of record, state agencies and institutions of higher education are subject to administrative penalties for violations of the Act that may be assessed against the employer by the Division's Compliance and Practices Division.
- **Keeping adequate records** - Most state agencies and institutions of higher education must make a record of all injuries sustained by employees in the course of employment.
- **Immediately notifying SORM if an injury is severe or fatal** – State agencies and institutions of higher education must immediately notify SORM by telephone if an injury is severe or results in death, in addition to filing the required first report of injury.
- **Posting required notices** – State agencies and institutions of higher education must post notices for workers' compensation insurance coverage in the workplace. State agencies employing law enforcement officers and correctional officers must post a notice regarding certain work-related communicable diseases and eligibility for workers' compensation benefits.⁷⁰³ State agencies and institutions of higher education must post a notice in the workplace to inform employees about

⁶⁹⁹ Title 28, Texas Administrative Code, Section 251.207; Texas Labor Code, Section 409.005(a)(1); and Texas Labor Code, Section 501.001(6).

⁷⁰⁰ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.005(a)(2).

⁷⁰¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.005(b).

⁷⁰² *Employer Responsibilities*, State Office of Risk Management's *Claims Coordinator Handbook for Texas State Agencies* at <https://www.sorm.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Claims-Coordinator-Handbook.pdf>.

⁷⁰³ Title 28, Texas Administrative Code, Section 110.108(a).

requirements that may affect qualifying for workers' compensation benefits following a work-related exposure to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).⁷⁰⁴

- **Notifying employees about the State's ombudsman program** – State agencies and institutions of higher education are required to inform employees of the Office of Injured Employee Counsel's ombudsman program. Failure to inform employees of this program is an administrative violation.⁷⁰⁵
- **Developing health and safety programs and return-to-work programs** – State agencies and institutions of higher education must have programs in place to promote the health and safety of their employees and to assist injured employees with returning to work. Those programs must comply with SORM's guidelines. Return-to-work programs must be a coordinated effort involving the Division, state agencies and institutions of higher education, employees, and health care providers.⁷⁰⁶
- **Notifying employees of health care network requirements** – State agencies and institutions of higher education must provide employees with a notice of health care network requirements; obtain a signed acknowledgment from each employee; post a notice of the healthcare network requirements; and notify injured employees of the network requirements at the time of injury.⁷⁰⁷

For additional information on return-to-work programs, see the *Facilitating an Injured Employee's Return to Work* section in this chapter.

Workers' Compensation and State Leave Provisions

An employee may elect to use accrued sick leave prior to receiving workers' compensation income benefits. If the employee makes the election to use accrued sick leave, the employee must exhaust all accrued sick leave before the employee is entitled to use income benefits.⁷⁰⁸

After exhausting sick leave, the employee may also use accrued vacation leave. If making this choice, the employee may elect to use all or any number of weeks of vacation leave. The amount of vacation leave the employee elects to use must be exhausted before the employee is entitled to receive income benefits.⁷⁰⁹

Employers may not require employees to exhaust state or Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) compensatory time balances before receiving income benefits. In addition, employers may not

⁷⁰⁴ Title 28, Texas Administrative Code, Section 110.108(b).

⁷⁰⁵ Texas Labor Code, Section 404.153.

⁷⁰⁶ Texas Labor Code, Sections 412.051(a) and 412.0125; and the Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation's websites at <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/rtw/index.html> and <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/index.html>.

⁷⁰⁷ Texas Insurance Code, Section 1305.005(d) and (g); and *Workers' Compensation Health Care Networks*, Department of Insurance's website at <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/pubs/consumer/cb084.html>.

⁷⁰⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.044(a).

⁷⁰⁹ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.044(b).

prohibit employees from using state or FLSA compensatory time while they are receiving income benefits.⁷¹⁰

Workers' Compensation and Emergency Leave

The administrative head of a state agency or institution of higher education may authorize emergency leave with pay to an employee receiving workers' compensation benefits. The emergency leave payment may not exceed an amount equal to the difference between the basic monthly wage of the employee and the amount of income benefits that the employee received for the month. Emergency leave payments may not extend beyond six months. If emergency leave is authorized, the state agency or institution of higher education must attach a statement of the reasons for the authorization to its payroll voucher for the first payroll period affected by the leave.⁷¹¹ See *Emergency Leave* in Chapter 12 (Miscellaneous Leave Provisions) for more information on the requirements concerning the granting and reporting of emergency leave.

Employer's Rights

As the employer of record, state agencies and institutions of higher education are entitled to certain rights under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act. These rights include:

- The right to be present at all administrative proceedings relating to an employee's claim.
- The right to present relevant evidence relating to an employee's claim at any proceeding.
- The right to report suspected fraud.
- The right to contest the compensability of an injury if the insurance carrier⁷¹² accepts liability for the payment of benefits.
- The right to receive notice, after making a written request to the insurance carrier, of:
 - ♦ A proposal to settle a claim; **or**
 - ♦ An administrative or a judicial proceeding relating to the resolution of a claim.
- The right to contest the failure of the insurance carrier to provide accident prevention services.⁷¹³

⁷¹⁰ Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion JC-0188 (2000).

⁷¹¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.045.

⁷¹² A self-insured governmental entity pays workers compensation claims as if it were an insurance carrier. Insurance carrier is defined in Texas Labor Code, Section 401.011(27), and includes "a governmental entity that self-insures, either individually or collectively."

⁷¹³ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.011(b); and *Employer Responsibilities*, State Office of Risk Management's *Claims Coordinator Handbook for Texas State Agencies* at <https://www.sorm.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Claims-Coordinator-Handbook.pdf>.

Employee's Responsibilities

An employee or person representing the employee should notify the employer as soon as possible but not later than 30 days after an injury occurred, or if the injury is an occupational disease, the employee should notify the employer as soon as the employee knows that the injury or injurious exposure might be related to the employment.⁷¹⁴ Failure to notify the employer may relieve that employer of any liability in the matter unless the employer has actual knowledge of the injury, the Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (Division) determines that good cause exists for failure to provide notice in a timely manner, or the employer or its insurance carrier does not contest the claim.⁷¹⁵

Claims for compensation must be filed within one year from the date of injury, or if the injury is an occupational disease, a claim must be filed within one year from the date the employee knew or should have known that the disease was related to the employee's employment.⁷¹⁶ Failure to file a claim for compensation with the Division as required by statute relieves the employer and the employer's insurance carrier of liability unless good cause exists for failure to file a claim in a timely manner or the employer or the employer's insurance carrier does not contest the claim.⁷¹⁷

Claims for death benefits must be filed within one year of the employee's death. Failure to file within the required time period bars the claim unless the person is a minor or incompetent, or if good cause exists for the failure to file. Separate claims must be filed for each beneficiary unless the claim expressly includes other parties.⁷¹⁸

Additional Injury Reporting Requirements

A state agency is required to submit in the administrative statement of its biennial budget request a summary containing:

- The number of first reports of injury filed by the state agency during the preceding biennium.
- The amount of workers' compensation indemnity and medical benefits paid to or for employees during the preceding biennium.
- The number of on-the-job injuries per 100 of its employees during each year of the preceding biennium.
- A description of the efforts made by the state agency to increase job safety and to reduce job injuries, including the participation of the head of the state agency and the executive staff of the state agency in training programs offered by the Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation, and others.⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁴ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.001.

⁷¹⁵ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.002.

⁷¹⁶ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.003.

⁷¹⁷ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.004.

⁷¹⁸ Texas Labor Code, Section 409.007.

⁷¹⁹ Texas Labor Code, Section 501.048.

Facilitating an Injured Employee's Return to Work

State agencies are required to develop, implement, and maintain a program designed to assist employees in returning to work after the employees have sustained a compensable injury. Such a program should include appropriate, detailed procedures that identify specific responsibilities and actions that should be taken by designated return-to-work coordinators, supervisors, and employees.⁷²⁰

To facilitate an injured employee's return to employment as soon as it is considered safe and appropriate by the injured employee's treating doctor, the treating doctor may request that the employer provide the doctor specific information about the functions and physical responsibilities related to the injured employee's job. The employer should do this using the form developed and adopted by the Commissioner of Workers' Compensation. Information provided to a treating doctor does not constitute:

- A request by the employer that the injured employee return to his or her job.
- An offer of employment by the employer for the injured employee to return to his or her job.
- An admission of the compensability of the employee's injury.⁷²¹

Additional information about the Return-to-Work Program is available on SORM's website at <https://www.sorm.state.tx.us/claims-operations/return-to-work-program/>.

In addition, a *Return-to-Work Guide* published by the Department of Insurance's Division of Workers' Compensation is available at <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/rtw/index.html>.

⁷²⁰ Texas Labor Code, Section 412.051(a)(1); and *Return-to-Work Program*, State Office of Risk Management's website at <https://www.sorm.state.tx.us/claims-operations/return-to-work-program/>.

⁷²¹ Texas Labor Code, Section 408.0221(b), (c), and (d).

Chapter 21 Miscellaneous Provisions

Employee Exit Surveys

Each state agency must provide employees who are terminating their employment voluntarily access to the State Auditor’s Office online exit survey.⁷²² This comprises all employee types, including classified full-time, classified part-time, non-classified full-time, and non-classified part-time. The objective of this online system is to offer a direct means through which employees can provide information about why they decided to leave employment with their agency. Institutions of higher education are exempt from this requirement.⁷²³

The State Auditor’s Office considers the following reason codes used by the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts’ Human Resource Information System (HRIS), the Uniform Statewide Payroll/Personnel System (USPS), and the Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System (SPRS) as voluntary terminations:

- Voluntary separation from agency.
- Transfer to a different state agency or institution of higher education with no break in service.
- Retirement.

The exit survey instrument can be accessed at: <https://sao.texas.gov/apps/exit>.

Exit Survey Employee Access

The agency must provide each exiting employee who voluntarily leaves employment with their agency a unique ID, a computer with Internet access (although employees may complete the survey at another location if they wish), and the web address for the survey.

Several methods can be used to distribute the unique ID. These include printing out the unique ID to give to the employee, copying and pasting the unique ID into an email to send to the exiting employee with the link to the survey website, or mailing the unique ID along with an employee acknowledgment form. Once employees enter the exit survey system, they can indicate whether they want to share their responses with the Office of the Governor and/or their agency’s executive director.⁷²⁴

⁷²² Texas Government Code, Section 651.007(b).

⁷²³ Texas Government Code, Section 651.007(a).

⁷²⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 651.007(b).

Exit Survey Reporting and Disclosure Requirements

Summary reports are available to agency human resources directors following the end of each fiscal year quarter. These reports summarize the results of the exit surveys submitted by former employees of the agency during the preceding quarter.⁷²⁵ In addition, agency executive directors can view the exit surveys submitted by former employees of the agency who elected to share their exit survey responses with their agency's executive director.⁷²⁶

The State Auditor's Office is required to provide a report summarizing exit survey findings to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and members of the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Committee on Appropriations by December 15 of each year before a regular legislative session.⁷²⁷

Individual exit survey responses are confidential and are not subject to disclosure under Texas Government Code, Chapter 552. The responses may be disclosed only to a law enforcement agency for a criminal investigation or by court order.⁷²⁸

Human Resources Staffing

State agencies with 500 or more full-time equivalent employees are required to have a human resources employee-to-staff ratio of not more than one human resources employee for every 85 staff members.⁷²⁹ The phrase "human resources employee" does not include an employee whose primary job function is enforcement of Title VI or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The phrase "state agency" means a department, commission, board, office, authority, council, or other governmental entity in the executive branch of government. The term does not include a university system or institution of higher education.⁷³⁰

Place of Work and Working Hours

Employees must, during normal working hours, conduct agency business only at their regular place of business or assigned duty point unless they are on travel status or have received prior written authorization from the administrator of the employing state agency or institution of higher education. An employee's home may not be considered his or her regular place of business without the written approval of the administrative head of the state agency or institution of higher education.⁷³¹ Office hours for state agencies are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. These are considered the regular working hours for a full-time state employee.⁷³² A full-time salaried

⁷²⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 651.007(e).

⁷²⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 651.007(b).

⁷²⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 651.007(i).

⁷²⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 651.007(g).

⁷²⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 670.002.

⁷³⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 670.001.

⁷³¹ Texas Government Code, Section 658.010.

⁷³² Texas Government Code, Section 658.005(a).

employee in a state agency or institution of higher education may not be employed in a position for less than 40 hours in a workweek.⁷³³

All state agencies are required to remain open with at least one person on duty during the noon hour each work day to accept calls, receive visitors, and conduct business.⁷³⁴ The chief administrator of a state agency or institution of higher education that must maintain certain services 24 hours a day may require essential employees who perform those services to be on duty for a workweek that exceeds 40 hours in necessary or emergency situations.⁷³⁵

The chief administrator also has the authority to:

- Keep the agency open during other hours and on other days, with the time worked counting toward the 40 hours a week that are required for full-time employees.
- Make exceptions to the minimum length of the workweek to take care of any emergency or public necessity that the chief administrator finds to exist.⁷³⁶

The governing board of an institution of higher education or a university system may make exceptions to the minimum length of the workweek and the maximum length of a workday to achieve and maintain operational efficiency at the institution of higher education, university system, or an office, department, or division of either.⁷³⁷

State agencies and institutions of higher education may consider the use of alternative work schedules such as compressed work weeks, flexible work schedules, and staggered work hours.⁷³⁸

Eight-Hour Work Day for Certain Public Works Employees

Eight hours of work in a calendar day constitute a day's work for a laborer, worker, or mechanic employed by or on behalf of the State or a political subdivision of the State for the construction, repair, or improvement of a building, bridge, road, highway, stream, or levee or for other similar work.⁷³⁹

Voluntary Work Reduction Program

To increase state efficiency while reducing the cost of state government, a state agency or institution of higher education may create a work reduction program in which a full-time state employee of the state agency or institution of higher education agrees to accept reduced wages and benefits for a proportionate reduction in work hours. State agencies and institutions of higher education that have this program shall place a notice of the program's availability in common areas of the state agency or institution of higher education. Participation by the employee is strictly

⁷³³ Texas Government Code, Section 658.002(a).

⁷³⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 658.005(a).

⁷³⁵ Texas Government Code, Section 658.002(b).

⁷³⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 658.005(b) and (c).

⁷³⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 658.007(a).

⁷³⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 658.006; and Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion M-1058 (1972).

⁷³⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 605.001.

voluntary and must be for a period of no less than six months. In addition, the agreement must be in writing and signed by the employee. Temporary and exempt employees are not permitted to participate in this program.⁷⁴⁰

Workforce Planning

As part of their strategic plans, state agencies are required to conduct staffing analyses and develop workforce plans.⁷⁴¹

Workforce planning is an organized process for identifying, analyzing, and forecasting the number of employees and the types of employee skill sets required to meet agency goals and strategic objectives. Therefore, workforce planning may help agencies ensure better development of existing talent, provide realistic staffing projections for budgets, and maintain or improve workforce diversity.

Institutions of higher education, university systems, the Office of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor's Office, and agencies within the judicial and legislative branches are excluded from this requirement, but they are encouraged to conduct such planning.⁷⁴²

The State Auditor's Office has published a workforce planning guide to assist agencies with developing their workforce plans. This guide is available at <https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Resources/Guides/>.

Designated Information Security Officer

State agencies and institutions of higher education must designate an information security officer who:

- Reports to the agency's or institution's executive-level management,
- Has authority over information security for the entire agency or institution,
- Possesses the training and experience required to perform the duties required by Department of Information Resources' rules, and
- To the extent feasible, has information security duties as the officer's primary duties.⁷⁴³

Designated Data Management Officer

State agencies and institutions of higher education with more than 150 full-time employees must designate a full-time employee to serve as a data management officer.⁷⁴⁴ State agencies and

⁷⁴⁰ Texas Government Code, Sections 658.003 and 658.004(a).

⁷⁴¹ Texas Government Code, Section 2056.0021.

⁷⁴² Texas Government Code, Sections 2056.001 and 2056.0021.

⁷⁴³ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.136.

⁷⁴⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 2054.137(a), as added by Senate Bill 475 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

institutions of higher education should refer to Senate Bill 475 (87th Legislature, Regular Session) for details concerning the responsibilities of the data management officer required by the legislation.

New Requirement

The 87th Legislature enacted legislation requiring state agencies and institutions of higher education with more than 150 full-time employees to designate a full-time employee to serve as a data management officer. The legislation also lists the responsibilities that the data management officer must perform.

Restrictions on State Agency Use of Certain Individual-Identifying Information

State agencies, including institutions of higher education as defined by the Texas Education Code, Section 61.003, may not use global positioning system technology, individual contact tracing, or technology designed to obtain biometric identifiers to acquire information that alone or in conjunction with other information identifies an individual or the individual's location without the individual's written or electronic consent. "Biometric identifier" has the meaning assigned by the Texas Government Code, Section 560.001.⁷⁴⁵ In addition, state agencies and institutions of higher education may not (1) retain such information with respect to an individual without the individual's written or electronic consent or (2) disseminate to a person such information with respect to an individual unless the agency or institution first obtains the individual's written or electronic consent.⁷⁴⁶

State agencies and institutions of higher education may, however, acquire, retain, and disseminate the information described above with respect to an individual without the individual's written or electronic consent, if the acquisition, retention, or dissemination is (1) required or permitted by a federal statute or by a state statute other than Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code, or (2) made by or to a law enforcement agency for a law enforcement purpose.⁷⁴⁷

State agencies and institutions of higher education must retain the required written or electronic consent obtained from an individual in the agency's or institution's records until the contract or agreement under which that information was acquired, retained, or disseminated expires.⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁵ Texas Government Code, Sections 2062.001 and 2062.002(a)(1), as added by Senate Bill 475 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁷⁴⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 2062.002(a)(2) and (3), as added by Senate Bill 475 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁷⁴⁷ Texas Government Code, Section 2062.002(b), as added by Senate Bill 475 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

⁷⁴⁸ Texas Government Code, Section 2062.002(c), as added by Senate Bill 475 (87th Legislature, Regular Session).

New Requirement

The 87th Legislature enacted legislation that prohibits state agencies and institutions of higher education from (1) using global positioning system technology, individual contact tracing, or technology designed to obtain biometric identifiers to acquire information that alone or in conjunction with other information identifies an individual or the individual's location without the individual's written or electronic consent, (2) retaining such information with respect to an individual without the individual's written or electronic consent, or (3) disseminating to a person such information with respect to an individual without first obtaining the individual's written or electronic consent, except in very limited circumstances.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Objective

The objective of this Inventory was to summarize the State's human resources management statutes that apply to Texas state employees for the 2022-2023 biennium.

Methodology

Information collected and reviewed included the following:

- Office of the Attorney General of Texas opinions.
- Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Texas Payroll/Personnel Resource.
- General Appropriations Act (87th Legislature).
- Texas Administrative Code.
- Texas Education Code.
- Texas Family Code.
- Texas Government Code.
- Texas Human Resources Code.
- Texas Insurance Code.
- Texas Labor Code.
- Texas Occupations Code.
- Code of Federal Regulations.
- United States Code.
- United States Supreme Court cases.
- Various Texas and federal agencies' website resources.

Project Information

Fieldwork was conducted from April 2021 through September 2021. This project is a general reference guide on the State's human resources management statutes; therefore, the information in this Inventory was not subjected to all the tests and confirmations that would be performed in an audit. However, the information in this report was subject to certain quality control procedures to ensure accuracy.

The following members of the State Auditor's staff were involved in creating this Inventory:

- Juan R. Sanchez, MPA (Project Manager)
- Alexander Grunstein, CFE, CFCS
- Taylor Huff, CFE
- Judy Millar, CCP
- Kathy-Ann Moe, MBA
- Sharon K. Schneider, CCP, PHR, SHRM-CP
- Lara Foronda Tai, PHR, SHRM-CP
- Michelle Ann Duncan Feller, CPA, CIA (Quality Control Reviewer)
- Courtney Ambres-Wade, CFE, CGAP (Audit Manager)

State Agency Responsibilities

Table A lists subject areas and the corresponding responsible agencies for various human resources-related subjects. Agencies should contact the appropriate office with questions.

Table A

Agencies Responsible for Human Resources-related Subjects		
Topic	Office to Contact	Phone Numbers and Websites
Salary Administration	State Auditor's Office - State Classification Team	(512) 936-9500 https://sao.texas.gov/Contact/AgencyContactManagers and https://hr.sao.texas.gov
	Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts	(512) 463-4008 or (512) 463-2277 https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/index.php
Discrimination in Employment	Texas Workforce Commission	(512) 463-2642 (888) 452-4778 (toll free) https://www.twc.texas.gov/partners/civil-rights-discrimination
Vacation and Leave	State Auditor's Office - State Classification Team	(512) 936-9500 https://sao.texas.gov/Contact/AgencyContactManagers/ and https://hr.sao.texas.gov
Health Insurance	Employees Retirement System	(877) 275-4377 (toll free) https://ers.texas.gov
Holidays	Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts	(512) 463-4008 or (512) 463-2277 https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol
	State Auditor's Office - State Classification Team	(512) 936-9500 https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Holidays
Job Vacancy Posting	Texas Workforce Commission	(512) 463-2222 (800) 832-9394 (toll free) https://www.twc.texas.gov/businesses/recruiting-hiring-resources
Longevity	Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts	(512) 463-4008 or (512) 463-2277 https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/pubs/paypol/nonsalary_provisions/index.php
Payroll	Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts	(512) 463-4008 or (512) 463-2277 https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/payper/index.php
Retirement	Employees Retirement System	(877) 275-4377 (toll free) https://www.ers.texas.gov
	Teacher Retirement System	(800) 223-8778 (toll free) https://www.tr.s.texas.gov/Pages/about_contacts_us.aspx
Travel	Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts	(512) 463-3435 https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fm/travel/index.php
Unemployment Insurance	Texas Workforce Commission	(866) 274-1722 (toll free) https://www.twc.state.tx.us/businesses/unemployment-benefits-contact-information-employers

Agencies Responsible for Human Resources-related Subjects		
Topic	Office to Contact	Phone Numbers and Websites
Veterans' Benefits	Texas Veterans Commission	(512) 463-6564 (800) 252-8387 (toll free) https://www.tvc.texas.gov
Workers' Compensation	Division of Workers' Compensation at the Department of Insurance	(800) 252-7031 (toll free) https://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/dwcccontacts.html
	State Office of Risk Management	(512) 475-1440 (877) 445-0006 (toll free) https://www.sorm.state.tx.us/about-us/contact-us

Entitlements for State Agency Employees

Table B

Entitlements for State Agency Employees					
Employment Status ^a	Vacation Leave Accrual ⁷⁴⁹	Sick Leave Accrual ⁷⁵⁰	State Service Credit ⁷⁵¹	Longevity Pay ⁷⁵²	Holidays ⁷⁵³
Classified Full-time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Classified Part-time	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes	No	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.
Exempt Full-time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Exempt Part-time	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes	No	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.
Unclassified Full-time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Unclassified Part-time	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes	No	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.
Temporary Classified/Unclassified/Exempt (Full-time)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Temporary Classified/Unclassified/Exempt (Part-time)	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes	No	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.
Contract Employee	No	No	No	No	No

^a Classified positions are those that are subject to the State's Position Classification Plan. Exempt positions are excluded from the State's Position Classification Plan and are listed in the General Appropriations Act. Unclassified positions are not subject to the State's Position Classification Plan. Temporary positions are those limited in duration and established for a specific period of time. Temporary positions also include seasonal employees. Contract positions are filled by independent contractors, temporary workers supplied by staffing companies, contract company workers, and consultants.

⁷⁴⁹ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152.

⁷⁵⁰ Texas Government Code, Section 661.202.

⁷⁵¹ Texas Government Code, Section 659.046.

⁷⁵² Texas Government Code, Sections 659.041, 659.042, and 659.043.

⁷⁵³ Texas Government Code, Sections 662.001, 662.005, and 662.008.

Entitlements for Employees of Institutions of Higher Education

Table C

Entitlements for Employees of Institutions of Higher Education					
Employment Status ^a	Vacation Leave Accrual ⁷⁵⁴	Sick Leave Accrual ⁷⁵⁵	State Service Credit ⁷⁵⁶	Longevity Pay ⁷⁵⁷	Holidays ⁷⁵⁸
Regular Staff Employee (Full-time)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Regular Staff Employee (Part-time)	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes	No	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.
Faculty (Full-time or Part-time) 20 Hours or More	No, except those employed for 12 calendar months.	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.	Yes	No	Yes, proportionate to the number of hours scheduled to work.
Non-Faculty (Less than 20 hours and/or less than 4.5 month appointment)	No	No	Yes	No	No
Positions Requiring Student Status as a Condition of Employment	No	No	Yes ^b	No	No
<p>^a For institutions of higher education, a regular staff employee is defined as one who is employed to work at least 20 hours per week for a period of at least four-and-one-half months, excluding students employed in positions that require student status as a condition of employment. A faculty member employed for a period of less than 12 months is not eligible for vacation accrual in accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 661.152(a).</p> <p>^b Texas Office of the Attorney General, Opinion JM-407 (1985).</p>					

⁷⁵⁴ Texas Government Code, Section 661.152.

⁷⁵⁵ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.201(b) and 661.202(c).

⁷⁵⁶ Texas Government Code, Section 659.046(a).

⁷⁵⁷ Texas Government Code, Sections 659.041(2)(B), 659.042(6), and 659.043(a).

⁷⁵⁸ Texas Government Code, Sections 662.008 and 662.011(c).

Pay Entitlements Upon Separation from State Employment

An employee who separates from state employment may be entitled to additional pay besides his or her regular pay. Table D lists the various pay entitlements to which an employee may be entitled upon separating from state employment. See Chapter 9 (Employee Compensation) and Chapter 11 (General Leave Provisions) for additional information regarding pay and leave entitlements.

Table D

Pay Entitlements Upon Separation from State Employment			
Pay Entitlements	Type of Separation		
	Any Separation in Which the Employee Is Permitted to Remain on the Payroll to Expend Accrued Vacation	Any Separation in Which the Employee Is Not Permitted to Remain on the Payroll to Expend Accrued Vacation	Death (Payment to estate)
Lump-Sum Payment for Accrued Vacation Leave	No, since the employee is allowed to remain on the payroll to expend accrued vacation leave.	Yes. ^a	Yes.
Lump-Sum Payment for Accrued Sick Leave	No, also not eligible to use sick leave while remaining on the payroll to expend vacation.	No.	Yes, for ½ sick leave hours not to exceed 336 hours.
Further Accrual of Vacation Leave	No.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Further Accrual of Sick Leave	No.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Lump-Sum Payment for Accrued State Compensatory Time ^b	No. ^b	No. ^b	No. ^b
Lump-Sum Payment for Accrued FLSA Compensatory Time	Yes.	Yes.	Yes. ^c
Payment for Longevity or Hazardous Duty	Yes.	Not applicable.	No.
Holiday	Yes.	Yes. ^d	Yes. ^d
General Salary Increase	Yes.	No.	No.

^a Requires six months of continuous state service.

^b Texas Government Code, Section 659.015, provides exceptions to allow for the payment of state compensatory time to employees of certain agencies and institutions of higher education under certain circumstances.

^c Agencies should consult their legal counsel and the U.S. Department of Labor for more information regarding the payment of accrued FLSA compensatory time to the estate of a deceased employee.

^d Applicable for the period beginning on the day following the last day of employment and ending on the last working day through which the accrued leave would have extended.

Transfer and Rehire Leave Reinstatement Entitlements

Employees who separate from their current state agency or institution of higher education and then directly transfer to another state agency or institution without a break in service are entitled to have their remaining vacation and sick leave transferred to their new employer.⁷⁵⁹ In addition, employees who have separated from employment at a state agency and then are rehired by a state agency or institution of higher education may be entitled to have their vacation and sick leave reinstated, depending on the length of separation from the State. Employees who have separated from employment at an institution of higher education are entitled to be paid for their vacation leave upon separation.⁷⁶⁰ Table E lists these entitlements, including the transfer or reinstatement of state compensatory time and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime. See Chapter 11 (General Leave Provisions) for additional information regarding leave balances and leave transfers.

Table E

Transfer and Rehire Leave Reinstatement Entitlements				
Employment Status	Transfer or Reinstatement of Vacation Leave	Transfer or Reinstatement of Sick Leave	Transfer or Reinstatement of State Compensatory Time	Transfer or Reinstatement of FLSA Overtime
Employee Directly Transfers From One State Agency or Institution to Another State Agency or Institution Without a Break in Service.	Yes. All remaining vacation leave should be transferred to the new state employer. ^a	Yes. All remaining sick leave should be transferred to the new state employer. ^b	No.	No. FLSA overtime must be paid by employer from which the employee transferred. ^c
Employee Separates from Employment at a State Agency and then Returns to State Employment after a Break in Service.	Yes, as long as the employee did not donate that leave and returns to state employment within 30 days of such separation. ^{a d}	Yes, as long as the employee did not donate that leave and returns to state employment within 12 months after the end of the month following the employee's separation. ^{b d e}	No.	No. FLSA overtime must be paid by employer from which the employee separated. ^c
Employee Separates from Employment at an Institution and then Returns to State Employment after a Break in Service.	No. Employees who separate employment with the institution are entitled to be paid their vacation leave balance upon separation.	Yes, as long as the employee did not donate that leave and returns to state employment within 12 months after the end of the month following the employee's separation. ^{b d e}	No.	No. FLSA overtime must be paid by employer from which the employee separated. ^c
Employee Transfers to Another State Agency as a Result of a Legislative Mandate.	Yes. All remaining vacation leave should be transferred to the new state employer.	Yes. All remaining sick leave should be transferred to the new state employer.	Yes, if that is the agreement between the agencies. ^f	Yes, if that is the agreement between the agencies. ^f Otherwise, the employee must be paid for the remaining balance.

⁷⁵⁹ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.153 and 661.204.

⁷⁶⁰ Texas Government Code, Sections 661.062, 661.152(k), and 661.205.

Transfer and Rehire Leave Reinstatement Entitlements

Employment Status	Transfer or Reinstatement of Vacation Leave	Transfer or Reinstatement of Sick Leave	Transfer or Reinstatement of State Compensatory Time	Transfer or Reinstatement of FLSA Overtime
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^a The transfer and reinstatement of vacation leave applies to “unused” and “accumulated” vacation leave in accordance with Texas Government Code, Sections 661.152(k) and 661.153. Vacation leave donated to the family leave pool is not eligible for transfer or reinstatement.

^b The transfer and reinstatement of sick leave applies to “earned” and “accumulated” sick leave in accordance with Texas Government Code, Sections 661.204 and 661.205. Sick leave pool, family leave pool, and donated sick leave hours are not eligible for transfer or reinstatement.

^c Code of Federal Regulations, Title 29, Section 553.27(b), states that employees must be paid unused FLSA compensatory time upon termination with an employer.

^d Texas Government Code, Section 661.023(a), as added by House Bill 2063 (87th Legislature, Regular Session), allows a state employee to contribute to the family leave pool one or more days of the employee’s accrued sick leave or vacation leave. Sick leave or vacation leave donated to the family leave pool is not eligible for transfer.

^e Employees who separate for reasons other than a formal reduction in force and who are re-employed by the same agency or institution within 12 months may only have their sick leave balance restored if they have had a break in service of at least 30 calendar days since their date of separation.

^f Texas Government Code, Section 662.0071, provides the specific situations in which agencies must agree to transfer an employee’s state compensatory balances and may also be applicable to FLSA overtime.