

# Working for Washington



**WELCOME TO STATE SERVICE**  
**EMPLOYMENT**  
**BENEFITS**  
**EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY**

# Reference

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Work unit/division</b>
<b>Position/title</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Supervisor title</b>
<b>Agency director</b>	
<b>HR Consultant</b>	<b>Telephone number</b>
<b>Payroll Officer</b>	<b>Telephone number</b>
<b>Union</b>	
<b>Union representative</b>	<b>Telephone number</b>

To accommodate persons with disabilities, this document is available in alternate formats. For more information contact the Department of Personnel at (360) 664-1960.

# Congratulations

Congratulations on your start on a great career. Whether you work directly serving the public or do work that supports agency operations or employees, what you do makes a difference in the lives of your fellow state residents. Each Washington resident, every day of the year, benefits from work done by state employees. You make a positive difference in the quality of life in the state of Washington.



## Online Resources for State Employees

**Web sites referred to in the following pages can be accessed using this list.**

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**Washington State's official site:** [www.access.wa.gov](http://www.access.wa.gov)

**Combined Fund Drive:** [www.cfd.wa.gov](http://www.cfd.wa.gov)

**Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP):** [www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/dcap.html](http://www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/dcap.html)

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** [www.dop.wa.gov/more/EAP](http://www.dop.wa.gov/more/EAP)

**Employee Self Service (Portal):** <https://wahrms.wa.gov/irj/portal>

**Ethics Board:** [www.ethics.wa.gov](http://www.ethics.wa.gov)

**Flexible spending account:** [www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/fsa.html](http://www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/fsa.html)

**Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET):** [www.get.wa.gov](http://www.get.wa.gov)

**Governor's Office:** [www.governor.wa.gov](http://www.governor.wa.gov)

**Health Care Authority (HCA):** [www.hca.wa.gov](http://www.hca.wa.gov)

**Labor Relations:** [www.ofm.wa.gov/labor/](http://www.ofm.wa.gov/labor/)

**Department of Personnel (DOP):** [www.dop.wa.gov](http://www.dop.wa.gov)

**Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB):** [www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/](http://www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/)

**Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) :** [www.drs.wa.gov](http://www.drs.wa.gov)

**State Jobs:** [www.careers.wa.gov](http://www.careers.wa.gov)



# Welcome

As a new employee of Washington State government, you've joined a team that provides a wide variety of services to the residents of our state. Services range from education to agriculture, social and health services to forestry and fisheries, tax collection to protection of our environment, and many more. You can access a wealth of information about the state and agencies and information referenced in this booklet through Access Washington, **WWW.access.wa.gov.**

**State government is primarily in the service and information business.**

The quality, capabilities and enthusiasm of state employees are critical to providing efficient, effective services to Washington residents. Take pride in being a state employee. You make Washington a great place to live, work, and play.

**The diversity of state agencies** and the services they provide are only surpassed by the diversity of talent and backgrounds of the state employees working for those agencies. The women and men who work for state government represent a wide variety of skills, education, ages, physical abilities, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. We respect and are proud of our diversity.

This booklet provides an overview of Washington State's human resource system and your employment with the state government. You can get more specific information from your employer or by using the resources referenced in this booklet.

**The Human Resource System**

There are three types of employment in state government:

- **Washington General Service (WGS)**
- **Washington Management Service (WMS)**
- **At Will employment**

Washington General Service and Washington Management Service employees are in the classified service. At Will employment is at the will of the employer.

State Civil Service Law, Chapter 41.06 RCW, creates the legal framework for employment of classified state employees. Under collective bargaining law, employees in bargaining units are represented by unions that negotiate working conditions and wages with the state. Other employees are covered by civil service rules adopted by the director of the Department of Personnel.

Your employer will inform you whether your position is covered by a collective bargaining agreement or governed by civil service rules.

## Represented Employees

### Collective Bargaining

If your position is in a bargaining unit, a collective bargaining agreement covers the terms and conditions of your employment. An electronic copy of the agreement is available through your employer or the Labor Relations Office website. ([www.ofm.wa.gov/labor/](http://www.ofm.wa.gov/labor/))

Labor organizations (unions) represent employees in bargaining units and negotiate with the Governor through the Labor Relations Office. Through the negotiation process, master agreements are established to set working conditions for represented employees. Wages and dollar amounts for health care benefits are negotiated through this process and included in the Governor's budget and submitted to the Legislature for funding approval.

There is one master agreement for each union that represents 500 or more employees. Unions that represent less than 500 employees are part of a coalition. One master agreement covers unions that are part of a coalition.

Some master agreements include a union security provision that requires employees in the bargaining unit, as a condition of employment, to either become members of the union and pay membership dues, or pay an agency representation, or non-association fee. Your union or employer can provide more information.

## Nonrepresented Employees

### Civil Service Rules

If you are not a represented employee, the general terms of your employment are governed by civil service rules. Some employees are specifically prohibited from bargaining by law. These include WMS employees, internal auditors, and employees of the Public Employee Relations Commission, Office of Financial Management, the Department of Personnel, and some employees in the Office of the Attorney General.

The civil services rules are adopted as Chapter 357 of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). The rules govern employment conditions and processes such as appointment, pay practices, and separation.

The Department of Personnel has responsibility for adoption and administration of the civil service rules. Rules are adopted through a public process. Once final, the civil service rules are linked from the DOP website.

## Equal Employment Opportunity & Reasonable Accommodation

Washington is committed to equal employment opportunity. All applicants and employees will be treated fairly and equally. Reasonable accommodation is provided in all aspects of employment, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act and state law.



# Employment

Employees newly appointed to permanent positions with the state go through a probationary period in Washington General Service or a review period in Washington Management Service. Employees successfully completing their probationary or WMS review period gain permanent status in the classified service with the state.

## **Classification & Compensation**

Your employer is responsible for assigning the duties and responsibilities of your position. These will be described in a position description form. This form is used in Washington General Service to allocate your position to an occupational level/classification. A similar form is used in WMS to assign positions to a salary band.

The salary range or salary band for your position sets the upper and lower limits of pay and the parameters for setting your base salary. If you are in Washington General Service, you are eligible for periodic increases until you reach the top of your position's salary range.

Other compensation provisions may apply to your position. Contact your employer for details. Provisions are specified in collective bargaining agreements or the civil service rules.

## **Performance Planning & Appraisal**

Washington state government is focused on improvement measures to determine how well state agencies are performing and accomplishing their responsibilities.

Each program is held accountable for its performance to the Governor and to the citizens of Washington State. All state organizations are to perform to meet citizen expectations.

It is the performance of state employees that drives the success of state organizations. The performance and appraisal process for individual employees links results expected of employees with organizational goals. The contributions of each employee are combined to accomplish the organization's goals and drive effective and efficient services to our state's citizens.

Your supervisor will work to ensure that you know what is expected of you at work and how your performance will be judged. You will receive a formal performance appraisal at least once a year. Most state organizations use the Performance and Development Plan (PDP) for this process. Information about the PDP is available at the Department of Personnel's website. Check with your employer about the specific forms and processes used in your organization.



### **Developmental Opportunities**

The continued development of employees is essential to helping the state meet the challenges of today's quickly changing world. Ongoing training and other developmental opportunities will help prepare you to perform the duties defined by your organization.

The Department of Personnel and your employer offer a variety of training and other developmental opportunities for improving your skills. Vocational schools, community colleges and universities also offer off-hour programs and courses. State employees may receive tuition waivers under certain circumstances. Many agencies have tuition reimbursement policies.

### **Promotional Opportunities**

The state is a large employer with a variety of promotional opportunities. You may find opportunities for advancement within your own agency and throughout state government. You can research opportunities through job announcements on the careers.wa.gov website or through your employer.

### **Work Schedule**

Office hours for most agencies are 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. However, there are alternatives. For example, many state organizations are

open 24 hours per day, seven days a week, and employees work different shifts. Also many agencies have policies that allow flexible work hours (flex-time).

Your work schedule will depend on your position and the area where you are assigned. Working hours, lunch periods, and work breaks will be explained to you by your supervisor or human resource consultant.

Your employer will inform you whether your position is eligible for overtime pay and of conditions that apply to changes in your work schedule.

### **Safety & Accidents**

Safety is the responsibility of the employer and every employee. If you observe an unsafe condition, faulty equipment or other hazard, report it immediately to your supervisor. Always use safety equipment.

If you are in an accident, obtain first aid immediately, and, if necessary, seek medical attention. Every accident that occurs on duty must be reported to your supervisor. This includes automobile accidents. Be sure to prepare a written accident report when required.

# Benefits

State paydays are twice per month -- usually the 10th and 25th. If you do not receive your check, or if any amount on the check or earnings statement is in error, notify your supervisor or payroll officer immediately.

## Holidays

**State employees receive 11 paid holidays.**

**New Year's Day** | January 1

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** | 3rd Monday  
in January

**Presidents Day** | 3rd Monday in February

**Memorial Day** | Last Monday in May

**Independence Day** | July 4

**Labor Day** | 1st Monday in September

**Veterans' Day** | November 11

**Thanksgiving Holiday** | 4th Thursday and  
Friday in November

**Christmas Day** | December 25

**Personal Holiday** | Employee's selection each  
calendar year

When a holiday falls on Sunday, it is observed on the following Monday for those on a standard Monday through Friday work schedule. When a holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. If you work a schedule other than Monday through Friday, contact your employer for more information about observing holidays.



## Leave

You will be eligible for vacation and sick leave. Provisions regarding leave accumulation and use are in the master agreements and the civil service rules.

You earn 12-22 days of paid vacation per year depending on your length of employment.

Full-time employees earn one day of sick leave each month. Part-time employees earn sick leave on a pro rata basis.

Other forms of leave, such as educational leave, military leave, bereavement leave, leave without pay, and family and medical leave are detailed in master agreements and civil service rules.

## Insurance Benefits

Most employees and their families are eligible for medical, dental, basic life and basic long-term disability insurance plans approved by the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB). You may choose the program that suits your needs from the available medical plans.

Your agency has enrollment forms and informational brochures on all of the plans offered by the state. Further information is available from the Public Employees Benefits Board section of the Health Care Authority website. (<http://www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/>)

## Retirement

Most state employees are members of the Washington Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). Your employer will give you a booklet that can assist with your retirement planning. You can learn more from your HR or payroll office, or the Department of Retirement Systems website. ([www.drs.wa.gov](http://www.drs.wa.gov))

## Employee Assistance Program

Sometimes a personal or work-related problem may impair job performance. Employees may seek confidential, professional help with such problems through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at the Department of Personnel. There is no charge for this assistance. Offices are located in Olympia and Seattle, with contracted providers located in other locations across the state. Contact information can be found on the web: ([www.dop.wa.gov/more/EAP](http://www.dop.wa.gov/more/EAP)).

## Employee Self Service

As a state employee, you can use a secure internet portal to review your recent earning statements, update your contact information, and emergency contacts. You access Employee Self Service using your Employee ID number and a password (<https://wahrms.wa.gov/irj/portal>). For more information, contact your HR office.

# Invest

## Electronic Deposit

You can sign up for electronic deposit. This will ensure that your check will be deposited in your financial account. An Electronic Funds Transfer form is available from your employer.

## Salary Deductions

Your payroll office makes five mandatory deductions from your paycheck.

1. **Federal Withholding Tax**
2. **Federal Social Security**
3. **Medicare**
4. **L & I Medical Aid** (Workers' Compensation Insurance)
5. **State Employee Retirement Fund**

The payroll office may make other deductions from your paycheck for actions such as union dues, optional long-term disability insurance, U.S. Savings Bonds, credit union deposits, or loan payments.

## Deferred Compensation Program

State employees are eligible to participate in the Deferred Compensation Program (DCP), a supplemental retirement plan that offers participants control over their investments. The Department of Retirement Systems administers the program. DCP allows you to invest a portion of your salary before it is taxed. For more information, contact DCP or your payroll office.

## Social Security

All state employees are covered by the federal Social Security system. Your contributions are automatically deducted from your pay. The state matches your contribution.

## Guaranteed Education Tuition

GET is Washington's 529 Prepaid College Tuition plan that helps families save for college. It works on a "unit" system, where 100 units represent one year of tuition and state-mandated fees.



### **Workers' Compensation**

As a state employee, you are automatically insured under the Workers' Compensation Act for injuries sustained during the course of your employment. It is the employee's responsibility to file a claim with the state Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) within one year of the date of an injury. You can do this by filling out an accident report in the office of the doctor who treats your injury. If your claim is approved by L&I, you are entitled to full medical care, time loss compensation, and other accident-related compensation.

The Act also provides pension benefits for the surviving spouse and dependents in cases where death results from the injury. If you have any questions regarding Workers' Compensation coverage or benefits, contact the Department of Labor and Industries.



### **Dependent Care Assistance**

The Dependent Care Assistance Program provides a simple, efficient, and inexpensive way to pay your dependent care expenses. It reduces your taxable income, your income tax liability, and your Social Security taxes. A new employee may enroll within 60 days of becoming a state employee. For enrollment information, contact the Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB), Dependent Care Assistance Program ([www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/dcap.html](http://www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/dcap.html)) or your payroll office.

### **Flexible Spending Account**

You have the option of enrolling in a flexible spending account where you can set aside part of your pretax salary to cover certain health care costs. ([www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/fsa.html](http://www.pebb.hca.wa.gov/fsa.html))

### **Combined Fund Drive**

Each year thousands of state employees voluntarily support charities through the Washington State Combined Fund Drive (CFD). By contributing through the CFD, you can select charities, determine the amount to give, and have the convenience of automatic payroll deduction.

You may begin a CFD contribution at any time. You can find more information at the CFD website. ([www.cfd.wa.gov](http://www.cfd.wa.gov))

# Employee Responsibilities

As a state employee, you are responsible and accountable for your performance.

**1.** Clarify any duty or expectation that is unclear. **2.** Perform work as assigned and meet job expectations. **3.** Pursue training necessary to maintain and expand your job competencies. **4.** Conduct yourself in a professional manner with coworkers and the public. **5.** Comply with workplace rules and policies.



## Ethical Conduct

Public employees are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that represents the public interest and not use their state position for personal advantage. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the State Ethics Law and any specific policy your employer has established regarding ethical conduct.

## Key Ethics Issues

**Employees may not give or receive any compensation or gifts from any source except the state of Washington,** for any matter connected with their services as employees. Employees who engage in outside employment or self-employment must report such activity to their supervisor.

**Employees may not solicit on state property for any contribution to be used for partisan political organizations or purposes.** Compulsory assessments and involuntary contributions are also prohibited.

**Federal regulations pertaining to political activities may apply to some employees** in organizations that have federal loans or grants-in-aid programs.

**The use of state equipment and resources is limited to business use** except as allowed by law and agency policy.

If you have questions regarding ethics, contact your ethics advisor, human resources office, or the Executive Ethics Board.

**Discrimination & Sexual Harassment**

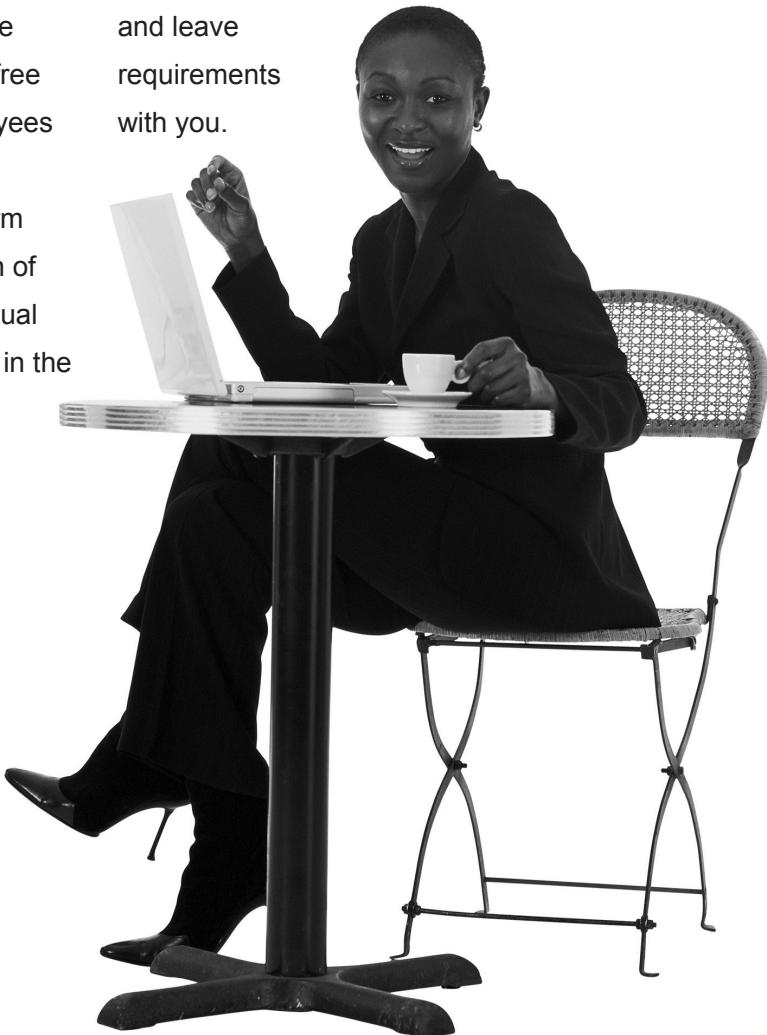
Each state employee is responsible for doing his or her part to ensure a workplace free from discrimination. Discrimination against co-workers or customers will not be tolerated. This includes discrimination on the basis of religion, age, sex, marital status, race, color, creed, national origin, political affiliation, status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran, sexual orientation, any real or perceived sensory, mental or physical disability, or because of the participation or lack of participation in union activities.

It is the policy of the state to provide and maintain a working environment free from sexual harassment for all employees and residents participating in state programs. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is a violation of state and federal law. Any form of sexual harassment is inappropriate behavior in the work place.

**Attendance**

Your supervisor and co-workers depend on your work. Cooperate by being on the job regularly and on time. If you are ill, will be late or cannot report for any other reason, call your supervisor as early as possible.

Represented employees should review their master agreements for more specific requirements on this subject. Prompt notification allows essential assignments to be assigned to others in your absence. Your supervisor or HR representative will discuss attendance and leave requirements with you.







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