

# Welcome to DCFS

## Employees Guide to the Department of Children and Family Services



<b>ED</b>	<b>MF</b>	<b>Programs</b>	<b>Operations</b>
Executive Division	Division of Management & Finance	Division of Programs	Division of Operations

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An Organization Providing Children and Family Services through Team Work

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## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations and welcome aboard. You have our best wishes as you begin your new duties.

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has a big job to do. Your supervisors feel that you have the background, experience, and personality to help us achieve the goals of DCFS. We are counting on you to continue and, perhaps, advance the standards and levels of achievement that have been set by your fellow employees.

You and your job are important. No matter what your job title, the duties assigned to you help the Department fulfill its overall mission – that of helping people. You are expected to carry out your assigned tasks as skillfully and efficiently as possible. You are also expected to be aware of, understand and abide by the policies, rules and regulations of the Department and Office for which you work.

State government exists for the sake of the people. It provides many services and regulates many activities for the people of a state. Some services include maintaining law and order and enforcing criminal law, protecting property rights and regulating corporations, supervising public education, operating public welfare programs, building and maintaining highways, operating state parks and forests, and regulating the use of state-owned land. State government has the authority over local government – parishes, cities, towns, and school districts.

State government is composed of three branches – the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch. The Governor heads the executive branch. The Governor commands the state militia, grants pardons, and may call the state legislature into special session. He directs the preparation of the state budget and gives the legislature its political leadership. The legislature passes laws, levies taxes, and approves money to be spent by the state government. It takes part in amending the state constitution, and has the power to impeach officials. The judicial branch includes the state's court system which empowered to settle disputes that come before them under various laws.

Each state, including Louisiana, has a constitution that sets forth the principles and framework of its government that includes a Bill of Rights. The Louisiana state constitution also establishes the state departments and the programs for which they are responsible to provide to the citizens of the state.

The DCFS Strategic Plan:

**Vision:**

Safe and Thriving Families and Individuals.

**Mission:**

The Department of Children and Family Services is working to keep children safe, help individuals and families become self sufficient, and provide safe refuge during disasters.

**Values:**

Quality – Providing individualized services with highly-skilled staff.

Efficiency – Ensuring accurate services are provided and received in a timely manner.

Respectfulness – Treating others with dignity, compassion and respect.

**Goals:**

► Promoting and supporting safe and thriving children and families.

- ▶ Encouraging and supporting individuals moving into self sufficiency.
- ▶ Improving customer service through staff productivity and satisfaction.
- ▶ Reducing fraud and abuse.
- ▶ Modernizing and realigning business practices.
- ▶ Improving emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation capacities.

We will maximize resources by operating the department in an efficient and effective manner.

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the rules, policies and employee benefits applicable to everyone in our agency. Specific procedures that affect you will be discussed with you by your supervisor.

To get the most out of this handbook, DCFS suggest you read it completely, section by section. Modifications to the handbook may be made periodically. The latest version can be found on the DCFS Intranet under the [DCFS Policy Management System](#).

## DCFS - ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) was originally created by an act of the legislature in 1988 and redefined in more recent legislation. The Department is responsible for the development and provision of Children and Family Services, improvement of social conditions for the citizens of Louisiana and the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities for employment. In general, DCFS's purpose is to provide high quality social and rehabilitative programs and services to the public.

In order to achieve this purpose, the Department has developed an initiative known as "No Wrong Door" to provide the full range of Children and Family Services in a comprehensive and seamless manner. This new approach includes more comprehensive initial screening and assessment of clients, as well as better coordination among DCFS agencies, to provide holistic services to clients.

This goal is being supported by the development and implementation of the Department's new web-based computer technology, known as the One DCFS Transformation Project. The primary feature of this Project is the Common Access Front End (CAFÉ), which allows clients to utilize easier, web-based technology to access DCFS programs and services, and allows staff to process most of their work without having to access aging legacy systems. The Project includes a Customer Service Center (CSC) that enables client calls and inquiries to be handled by contracted Customer Service Representatives, thus allowing DCFS staff more time to focus on their regular caseload work. The Project also includes a Data Processing Center (DPC) that receives mail from clients and staff, scans such mail, and indexes such mail to existing cases, thus reducing or eliminating the need for paper case records. And the Project includes a Master Client Index (MCI) and a Master Provider Index (MPI), which will allow DCFS to share certain information across its existing programs. All of these features of the Project are aimed to provide easier access and better service for clients while streamlining the workload of DCFS staff.

To achieve its goals, the Department consists of the Executive Office of the Children and Family Services, which includes the Executive Division, Division of Management and Finance and two major operating divisions, the Division of Programs and the Division of Operations. Under the direction of the Secretary, the Divisions perform all of the responsibilities assigned to the Department. Each of these Divisions has a specific function to perform in concert with the other divisions in order to address the mission of DCFS.

To facilitate understanding of the organizational structure of DCFS, please refer to the [organizational chart](#) that is available on the DCFS Intranet. A brief description of services provided by each DCFS Division is shown on the following pages.

## (EXECUTIVE) DIVISION OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services serves as the executive head and chief administrative officer of the Department and has responsibility for the policies of DCFS and for the administration, control and operation of the functions, programs, and affairs of the Department. In addition, the Secretary supervises the Executive Office of the Secretary. It consists of the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Press Secretary, and includes the following programs:

- **Bureau of Audit and Compliance Services**– The Bureau of Audit and Compliance Services independently appraises activities of the Department of Children and Family Services, as well as external contractors, as a service to management. It examines and evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control, the quality of performance in carrying out assigned responsibilities, and conducts contractor compliance reviews, and Internal Investigations for Reports of Fraud, Waste, & Abuse and Unethical/Unprofessional Acts.
- **Bureau of General Counsel** – The Bureau of General Counsel, better known as the “legal section,” serves the Department in much the same way as a law office would serve a large corporate client. Its employees have the responsibility of providing legal advice and consultation, legal opinions, providing policy interpretations and handling Civil Service appeals, appellate reviews, trial presentations, grant appeals or any other programmatic legal needs of the Department. The Bureau also represents the Department and its programs and offices in various judicial matters ranging from simple court motions to federal court cases. Civil Rights issues are also handled within the Bureau of Executive Counsel.
- **Bureau of Communications and Government Affairs** – This bureau coordinates the following functions for the Department of Children and Family Services:
  - Departmental strategic planning and monitoring of progress
  - Communications
  - Evaluation and statistics
  - Ombudsman functions
  - SSBG Supplemental Grant

Also, departmental policy formulation and issuance; rule making; evaluation and research; legislative tracking; DS/DMF Webmaster; special studies; and related activities are either performed by or coordinated through this Section.

- **Bureau of Emergency Preparedness**

DCFS is one of the two primary responsible agencies for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6. DCFS has the primary responsibility for coordinating mass care, housing, and human services during emergencies and disasters. This section administers all (ESF) 6 functions for the agency.



## DIVISION OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

The Undersecretary is responsible for accounting and budget control, procurement and contract management, information technology, management and program analysis, human resources management, grants management, facility construction and consulting services, and policy planning and evaluation for DCFS and all of its offices. The Undersecretary also directs the Office of Management and Finance which administers the following programs.

- **Budget Section**– This section is responsible for effective budget planning, development, implementation and control for the Department. The Division interacts with the Division of Administration and the Legislative Fiscal Office on budget matters.
- **Fiscal Services Section** – This section is responsible for fiscal management for the Department. The four units within the Division are: Administration, External Audit, Financial Management, and Payment Management.
- **Administrative Services Section** – There are twelve fundamental units within Support Services, each performing functions essential to the day-to-day operations of the Department as a whole. The twelve functions are Emergency Preparedness, Professional Services Contracting Section, Purchasing, ISIS Training, ISIS User ID's, ISIS Vendor, Compliance, Procurement Card, Travel Card, Rental and Leases of office space and storage space, Fleet, and Safety.
- **Human Resources Section** – Directs and manages the human resources programs for the department in the areas of classification, discipline, affirmative action, benefits, staffing, performance evaluation, compensation, and employee administration. Provides consultative and technical services concerning human resources laws, policies, rules and regulations throughout the Department.
- **Information Technology Section** – Information Technology, which has the largest communications network in the state, provides computer support to all offices within the Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of Health and Hospitals.

## DIVISION OF PROGRAMS

Major program areas are listed below.

### Child Welfare

The Child Welfare Program Section (CWPS) is responsible for the development of policy in accordance with research-based, best practices, and state and federal laws, for the following programs: Child Protection Investigation, Family Services, Foster Care, Adoptions, Home Development and Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). In addition, CWPS assists field staff in the implementation of policy and practice, and monitors programmatic outcomes as well as compliance with federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to all child welfare programs through a comprehensive Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) program. The Children's Trust Fund also operates under the umbrella of the CWPS.

## **Economic Stability and Self Sufficiency**

Sets policy and monitors federal compliance for the following federal programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), which includes the Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP), the Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP), the work program for FITAP (Strategies to Empower People, or STEP), and the TANF Initiatives, which include contracted services through various other state agencies and other entities, Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), and Disability Determinations Services (DDS).

## **Child Support Enforcement**

Develops and implements policy and procedures to ensure compliance with both federal and state laws as they relate to the following:

- ✓ Child Support
  - Locating Noncustodial Parents
  - Establishing Fatherhood
  - Establishing Child and Medical Support Orders
  - Intergovernmental Central Processing Unit
  - Collecting Support
  - Distributing Money Collected
- ✓ Access and Visitation
- ✓ Financial Institution Data Matching
- ✓ Federal Parent Locate Services
- ✓ In-Hospital Acknowledgement Program
- ✓ Non IV-D Program
- ✓ Passport Denial Program
- ✓ Project Save Our Children Program
- ✓ State Directory of New Hires

Negotiates and monitors compliance for the following contracts: District Attorney, Clerks of Courts, Centralized Collections, and Arrears Collection.

## **Licensing**

The Licensing Section is mandated to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the children of the state who are in out-of-home care on a regular or consistent basis. The Licensing section promulgates statewide minimum standards for the safety and well-being of children, insures maintenance of these standards, and regulates conditions in the following types of facilities through a program of licensing. On site inspections are conducted in the following types of facilities to verify compliance with the established standards: child day care facilities, child residential facilities, child placing agencies, maternity homes, and juvenile detention facilities.

The Provider Directory unit within the Licensing Section is responsible for determining child care provider eligibility for the Child Care Assistance Program.

## **Program Integrity and Improvement**

This section assures that the department is operating within set federal and state guidelines that govern its operation. This section's work is performed in four main areas: fraud detection and recovery of state assets,

which is especially important in disaster situations; quality improvement and case review to ensure appropriateness of eligibility decisions as well as accuracy of benefit levels; planning and policy circulation, including maintaining the Louisiana Administrative Code and rulemaking under the Administrative Procedures Act; and training, including instructor lead training, on-line training and web-ex training.

### **Systems, Research and Analysis**

The Systems, Research and Analysis Section is responsible for providing program guidance and assistance on matters relating to the maintenance and enhancements to the Department's computer systems. Services include program design for computer systems fixes and enhancements, data analysis and reporting expertise, computing and tracking performance measures across programs, generating ad hoc reports as needed, and assistance with communications with the field on what is implemented.

## **DIVISION OF OPERATIONS**

The Division of Operations is responsible for the day to day operation and efficiency of the Child Welfare, Exonomic Stability and Self Sufficiency and Child Support Enforcement programs throughout the state. In accomplishing this mission, the Operations Division utilizes a regional concept, whereby all of the aforementioned functions are controlled by a single regional administrator. Regions in the state include: Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Covington, Lafayette, Lake Charles, New Orleans, Monroe, Shreveport and Thibodaux, with each region operating offices in several parishes within the region.

## PART I - GENERAL EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

### JOB CLASSIFICATION

Each position is classified in one of the job titles established by the Louisiana Department of State Civil Service and used by this Department.

The duties and responsibilities of each position will be covered generally in a job specification and specifically in an individual position description. During their initial orientation, employees will be given a copy of their individual position description, which will explain their specific duties. Over a period of time, the job's duties may change, and it may be necessary to update position descriptions to indicate the present duties.

### APPOINTMENTS

There are several types of appointments that may be made to a Civil Service classified position. Among these are probational appointments, provisional, job and restricted appointments. A brief description of each type of appointment follows.

#### Probational Appointment

Before attaining permanent status, each employee must serve a probationary period of at least one year, but not more than twenty-four months. This probationary period is as much a part of the examination process as the written examination that may have been required by the Department of Civil Service. Unsuccessful completion of this probationary period will result in termination of employment. (Probationary terminations normally are not appealable, except in cases in which discrimination or violation of the Civil Service Rules is alleged.) Probational employees receive most of the same benefits as permanent employees with regard to leave, retirement, health care benefits, etc., except that they are ineligible for promotions.

#### Job Appointment

A job appointment is a temporary appointment that may last up to three years. Persons employed on such appointments perform duties of a temporary or seasonal nature, or substitute for another employee on extended leave. Job appointees earn leave for time worked; however, they do not gain permanent status and may be separated at any time. Because most of the DCFS job appointments last for more than 120 days, which makes them eligible for retirement system membership, these appointees are enrolled in the retirement system upon day one of their employment.

#### Reemployment

DCFS does not like to lose good, trained employees; but, if a permanent status employee resigns and the resignation was not to avoid dismissal, he or she will have non-competitive reemployment eligibility for a period of ten years. During that time the person may be considered for reemployment in any job having the same or lower maximum salary as the job in which he/she had permanent status, not counting a detail to special duty, provided the minimum qualifications are met. For this type of appointment, the person need not be on a Civil Service list of eligibles nor does he/she have to retake any examinations. If hired on a probational

appointment, the employee will have to serve a probationary period and all unused sick and annual leave is restored if re-employment occurs within five years. Such employee also will have unlimited time eligibility for their pay to be set up to their highest rate earned while serving in permanent status, not counting a detail to special duty. This eligibility does not constitute an employee “right”. The appointing authority may offer such candidate a lower salary but not lower than the range minimum or Special Entrance Rate (if applicable) for the job.

## Transfer

When vacancies occur in an office, the jobs may be filled by transfers into the Department/Office. Employees interested in transferring should apply to the job announcements. A transfer is when an employee changes from a position in one Department/Office to a position in another Department/Office without a break in service of one or more working days. Although some transfers involve a promotion or demotion, some involve lateral moves as well. If an employee transfers without actually resigning from their current position, then they transfer over to the gaining agency without a change in status (i.e., probation to probation; or, permanent to permanent). However, if the transferring employee resigns from their current position and accepts a new appointment, their status may change, depending upon the type of appointment with the gaining Agency (i.e., probational to job appointment; or, permanent to probational).

## Promotion

A promotion is the change of an employee from one position to another position that is assigned to a pay grade with a higher maximum salary. Only employees with permanent status and with a Successful or greater performance rating can be promoted. Except in few situations provided by Civil Service rules, a promotion must be made of a qualifying candidate whose name was officially certified from the job vacancy announcement.

With approximately 4,000 classified positions in our Department, there will be numerous promotional opportunities. It is the policy of this Department to fill vacant positions by selecting the best qualified and most suitable individuals from as wide a range of candidates as possible; but, efforts will normally be made to fill vacant positions by promotion of qualified permanent state employees from within the Department. In considering employees for promotion, administrators and supervisors will first consider the position to be filled and the experience, education, training or other special requirements of the position.

No matter what the employee’s background, experience or education, they are encouraged to apply for a vacant position if they are interested and meet the minimum qualification requirements. In some instances they may be required to first take and pass the Civil Service examination for that classification. It is the employee’s responsibility to apply for and take Civil Service examinations for positions as they are qualified. Civil Service has delegated authority to each major state agency to post their own job vacancy announcements and to accept applications directly. The Agency is not required to wait for any employee to receive a score. Employees should advise their supervisors or human resources representative of their interest, and ask how they can be made aware of promotional opportunities. Employees may visit the Civil Service website at [civil.service@la.gov](mailto:civil.service@la.gov) to learn more information of the job application process.

Employees may also wish to ask for specific recommendations on what they can do to improve their chances for promotion. This may include improving their attendance or work performance in specific areas, or acquiring special training.

## Demotion

A demotion is the change of an employee from one position to another position that is assigned to a pay grade with a lower maximum salary. When an employee demotes, his pay will be reduced by a minimum of 7%, provided that it is not less than the minimum of that salary range. Exceptions may be granted by the appointing authority, as provided for in the [DCFS Policy 4-25 Rate of Pay up Demotion](#).

## DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Department of Children and Family Services ([DCFS Policy 2-03 Non-Discrimination in Employment](#)) to prohibit discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other non-merit factor.

All employees in the Department with any responsibility for recruitment, selection, placement, training, evaluation, or any other aspect of human resources procedures must give their full support to the policy through active cooperation and personal example to ensure its successful implementation.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The [American with Disabilities Act](#) is an anti-discrimination statute that requires that individuals with disabilities be given the same consideration (in regards to job application procedures, hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment) that individuals without disabilities are given.

To ensure equal opportunity, DCFS will provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified applicant or employee with a disability. Qualified applicants or employees must notify either the interviewing supervisor or human resources representative of the need for any accommodation.

## OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees are expected to devote their primary attention to the requirements of their jobs with the Department of Children and Family Services. Outside employment is permissible, provided it does not affect the employee's regular work or require them to perform duties which would be prohibited for public employees by the [Code of Governmental Ethics](#). (Refer to Conflict of Interest below for more complete information).

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Since employees are in a position of public trust, they must not engage in any activity, either privately or officially, where a conflict of interest may exist. Some of the activities that may represent a conflict of interest for public employees, as outlined in the [Code of Governmental Ethics](#), are as follows:

- Accepting anything of value, other than their regular compensation and benefits from the Department, for the performance of their duties.
- Accepting finder's fees from a person to whom the employee has directed Department business.

- Accepting compensation, gifts or other economic reward for any service that draws substantially upon official data or ideas related to agency program that have not become public information.
- Accepting payment, while employed by the Department, in consideration of personal services to be provided following termination from state service.
- Accepting compensation for assisting or representing another person in a transaction with this agency.
- Bidding on or entering into any contract or transaction that is under the supervision of this agency.
- Soliciting or accepting gifts or gratuities from any person or business seeking to obtain contractual or other business with this agency or conducting operations which are regulated by this agency.
- Using the authority of the position held to coerce another public employee or other person to provide the employee with anything of economic value.

For further information, refer to the Louisiana Code of Governmental ethics at the link listed below:  
<http://www.ethics.state.la.us/Pub/Laws/ethsum.pdf>

## **DUAL STATE EMPLOYMENT**

State employees are prohibited by law from holding two full-time government jobs. It may be possible to hold more than one part-time job or one full-time and a part-time job as long as the second job is less than 35 hours per week.

In the event an employee is appointed to more than one state job, it is imperative that they notify their human resources representative or administrator of each Department/Office. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, the State of Louisiana is one employer. Therefore, even though the employee may work for two different departments of state government, one of their employers may be liable for overtime benefits if they actually work more than 40 hours per week or 80 hours per pay period (depending on the nature of the work for the position they hold).

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM**

Each employee's work performance will be evaluated under the Civil Service Performance Evaluation System (PES). This system provides two-way communication and feedback between the employee and their supervisor regarding performance.

Within 30 calendar days after employment, the employee and their supervisor will have a performance planning session in which performance expectations will be written and communicated for the different aspects of their job including job duties, conduct and attendance. The planning session will be documented by the employee and their supervisor's signature on the Planning and Evaluation form, and they will be given a copy for their reference.

The supervisor will observe and document employee performance and provide feedback to the employee via Quarterly Performance Reviews during the rating period. The supervisor will evaluate employee performance yearly; effective July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and the employee will be given a copy of the PES rating document. In the

event of a Needs Improvement/Unsuccessful or Unrated rating, should any employee not agree with the overall rating rendered, they may submit a written request for review to the State Office Human Resources Section no later than September 15<sup>th</sup> of that year.

No later than September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, each employee will sign a new planning and evaluation document that will begin for their next rating period. For more complete information, please refer to the [DCFS Policy 4-40 Employee Performance Evaluation System](#).

## PAY



Each job within the Civil Service Pay Plan is assigned a pay grade with a minimum and a maximum pay range. Usually a person is employed at the minimum of the range established for the pay grade of the job. However, recruitment and/or retention difficulties and/or a candidate's education, training and/or experience may allow for a higher rate above the minimum. On October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, employees will be considered for a 4% performance adjustment in pay. The increase is not automatic or guaranteed, but may be granted, as budget permits, when their work performance merits an increase. The performance adjustment may be granted annually until they reach the maximum for the pay grade of the job they occupy.

Employees will be informed during their initial interview of the entrance salary of the position for which they are applying. This salary will remain in effect until the pay range is changed (such as a reallocation upward), they receive a performance adjustment, or they are appointed to another position with a different pay range.

### Payroll/Paydays

The Department of Children and Family Services' payroll operates on a bi-weekly pay cycle. There are twenty-six (26) pay periods annually. The bi-weekly pay is the hourly rate x 80 hours. Paychecks are usually issued every other Friday by direct deposit into the financial institution(s) the employee designates. When a payday falls on a federally observed holiday by financial institutions, paychecks are deposited on the preceding Thursday. For more information, please refer to the [DCFS Policy 4-26 Direct Deposit Policy](#), which is available on the DCFS Intranet.

By law, the Department is required to withhold from employee checks federal and state income tax, and either state retirement, social security or deferred compensation, depending on their age. Employees may authorize other deductions to be made from their check such as insurance, union dues, United Way, and other miscellaneous deductions.

### Recording of time entry through Louisiana Employees Online (LEO)

With the exception of part time employees, intermittent workers, and a few other individuals whose time and attendance must be recorded on positive time-entry basis, everyone is required to use the On-line Leave Approval Process through Louisiana Employees Online (LEO). LEO is a part of the LaGov HCM system that enables employees to view, print and make changes to a variety of their information over the internet. It can be accessed at <https://leo.doa.louisiana.gov/> or by clicking on the [LEO](#) link on the DCFS Intranet.

LEO is used for all requests, approvals and cancellations of applicable leave. The requirement for online leave processing includes all current leave available on LEO and all future additions of leave to LEO. All leave (annual, sick, compensatory, leave without pay, etc.) must be approved in advance (unless there is an emergency situation). Leave that cannot currently be processed through LEO must be requested on an Application for Leave (SF-6) form. Additionally, employees who work overtime or who serve officially on-call



must enter and submit this time through LEO for compensation. Overtime or “on-call” time that cannot currently be processed through LEO must be so noted on the printed LEO Time Statement by the employee or submitted on a “Request for Overtime Form” for documented approval

Paper copies of employee pay statements are not sent to employees. Instead, employees may access their pay information through the LEO portal. Employees can also access a wide variety of information including their most recent employee notification form, address information, emergency contact information, pay statements, bank information, tax information, leave information, and benefit participation information on this site. In addition, the employee can utilize this same system to make changes to certain information such as their address, federal and state tax withholding, and bank information.

When employees review their bi-weekly paycheck information via LEO, they must be sure to check to see that their deductions and leave balances are correct. They should contact their supervisor or their human resources representative if they find any errors or have any questions,

## HOURS OF WORK

The normal work week for most DCFS employees will consist of 40 hours, divided into five eight-hour days. Some employees may be given the option of working four ten-hour days or four nine-hour days and one four-hour day, if approved by the agency head. There will be other work schedules designed to provide coverage in the service areas that require shift work. For more specific information, please refer to the Work Hours for DCFS Personnel policy, which is available on the DCFS Intranet and the “on-call” policy for certain Child Welfare and Information Technology staff.



### Attendance

Each employee’s job is important to the overall accomplishment of the Department’s mission, goals, and objectives. Employees should make every effort to be at their duty station at the scheduled time.

Except in unusual circumstances, leave must be requested and approved in advance. Sometimes, of course, there will be good reasons for absence or tardiness. If employees will be unable to arrive at work at the scheduled time, they must notify their supervisor no later than 30 minutes following their normal reporting time, or as required by their appointing authority and ask that they be granted appropriate leave. Their supervisor has the authority to approve or disapprove leave and unplanned absences may not be approved.

Remember, it is the employee’s responsibility to personally call and inform their supervisor of any unplanned absences. They may have someone else call for them when a critical condition or extreme emergency exists; however, they must personally call as soon as the condition allows.

### Break Periods



Employees may be given two 15-minute break periods away from their duty station during a work day. Any employee may be required to delay or forgo their break periods if their presence is needed at their post. These breaks are paid time and are given at the agency’s discretion and, as such, are in no way, mandated by law, state or federal requirements. Break periods cannot be accumulated to shorten the workday or to extend the lunch break, nor can the afternoon break be scheduled at the end of the workday. Employees should make every effort to be at their duty station at the scheduled time.

## Lunch Time



The employee's lunch break will be either one-half hour or one hour depending on their assigned work schedule. Employees will have to work one-half hour longer each workday if they choose the one-hour lunch period work schedule. No unit will be closed during lunchtime and all primary work areas will have coverage throughout.

## Overtime

Effective delivery of services may require employees to report to work on holidays, non-scheduled work days, or report to work before or remain at work beyond regular working hours. In accordance with appropriate Civil Service Rules, Department policies, and the Fair Labor Standards Act, employees will either be granted compensatory time or paid for overtime work at a rate equal to 1 or 1½ times their normal hourly salary. The regular rate of pay and the type of duties that are performed determine the rate of or exemption from overtime compensation. All overtime requires supervisory approval in advance, whenever possible. For specific information on overtime, please refer to the DCFS Overtime Policy, which is available on the DCFS Intranet.



## DCFS HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

Listed below are the DCFS Human Resources policies that are available on the Intranet. Additional policies may be added as needed.

- 4-1 Dress Code
- 4-2 DCFS Time and Attendance
- 4-3 Substance Abuse Testing for DCFS Employees
- 4-4 Accrual and Use of Leave for Classified Employees
- 4-5 Individual Pay Adjustments and Premium Pay Awards
- 4-6 Appointment and Pay of Student Employees
- 4-7 Disciplinary Corrective Actions and Separations
- 4-8 Drug Free Workplace
- 4-9 Employee Performance Planning and Review
- 4-10 Human Resources Procedures for Emergency-Disaster Operations
- 4-11 Family and Medical Leave Act
- 4-12 Grievance Procedures
- 4-13 Hiring Rate for Extraordinary or Superior Qualifications-Credentials
- 4-14 Miscellaneous Insurance Solicitation
- 4-15 Overtime Compensation
- 4-16 Promotional Policy Statement
- 4-17 Rewards and Recognition
- 4-18 Verification of Credentials
- 4-19 Return to Work
- 4-20 Work Hours for DCFS Personnel
- 4-21 DCFS Policies and Procedures for the Crisis Leave Pool
- 4-22 Optional Pay Adjustments
- 4-23 Disclosure and Retention of Human Resources Records
- 4-24 Reference Checking
- 4-25 Rate of Pay Upon Demotion
- 4-26 DCFS Direct Deposit

- 4-27 Unscheduled Absences
- 4-28 Recoupment of Overpayments
- 4-29 Permanent Status Attainment
- 4-30 Selective Service Registration Requirement
- 4-31 Conditional Offer of Employment
- 4-32 Prohibited Materials in the Work Place
- 4-33 Pro Bono Legal Services Provided by DCFS Employees
- 4-34 Payment for Attainment of Advanced Degree
- 4-35 State Central Registry Check
- 4-36 Criminal Background Check
- 4-37 Telework
- 4-38 Identification Badges for Employees
- 4-39 Dual Career Ladder Policy for Information Technology
- 4-40 Employee Performance Evaluation System

## PART II - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Employees of the Department of Children and Family Services will have a variety of benefits available to them. Listed below are some these benefits.

### PAID HOLIDAYS

In addition to special holidays proclaimed by the governor, the following are recognized as paid holidays:

- New Year's Day – January 1
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Third Monday in January
- Mardi Gras Day
- Good Friday – Friday preceding Easter Sunday
- Independence Day – July 4
- Labor Day – First Monday in September
- Veteran's Day – November 11 (if 11/11 falls on a weekend, the following Monday is observed as a holiday)
- Thanksgiving Day – Fourth Thursday in November
- Christmas Day – December 25
- General Election Day – Every 2 years
- Inauguration Day – Every 4 years for employees who work in the city limits of Baton Rouge

It may be necessary that some employees work on days observed as holidays. The supervisor will explain special provisions made for employees who have to work on holidays. Employees serving on restricted appointment are not paid for holidays unless they actually work on those days. Employees on Leave of Absence without Pay (LWOP) immediately before and after the holiday are not eligible for the holiday compensation.

### LEAVE

In addition to their regular days off, all permanent, probational, or job-appointed employees earn annual and sick leave for regular hours worked and while on accrued paid leave. Annual and Sick Leave is not earned for overtime worked, any hours of leave without pay, for any hours of travel outside regular duty hours, for any hours in an on-call status outside regular duty hours, or while on Crisis Leave. The amount of leave earned is based on the number of years of state service and the number of hours worked as depicted by the following schedule:

State Service	Hours of Leave Earned Per Hour Worked	Approximate Number of Hours Per Month	Days Per Year
0 to 3 years	.0461	8 hours	12
3 to 5 years	.0576	10 hours	15
5 to 10 years	.0692	12 hours	18
10 to 15 years	.0807	14 hours	21
15 years or more	.0923	16 hours	24

Employees do not earn annual or sick leave (1) for any overtime, (2) for any hours of leave without pay, (3) for any hours of travel outside regular duty hours, or (4) for any hours in an on-call status outside regular duty hours.

Employees are expected to use earned leave in a responsible manner. All leave taken must be properly applied for and properly documented on appropriate attendance records. All leave shall be taken and compensatory time shall be earned in fifteen (15) minute increments.

### Annual Leave

Accrued annual leave with pay is granted to employees for the purpose of rehabilitation, recreation and maintenance of work efficiency. Annual leave may be used to transact personal affairs, but this should be kept to a minimum so that they can retain sufficient leave for a vacation.

Except in cases of emergency, annual leave must be applied for and approved by the supervisor or section head in advance. Approval or denial of annual leave will be based on workload or other factors surrounding the need for leave. Employees who are absent without pre-approved leave, may be placed on administrative leave without pay (LWOP) for the unauthorized absence.

Accumulated unused annual leave is carried forward to the succeeding calendar year. Upon transfer to another department, all unused annual leave will be transferred to the gaining agency, unless the employee resigns and begins the new job as a job appointee. Upon retirement, the employee may receive a financial benefit for their unpaid, unused accumulated annual leave from LASERS.

### Civil and Special Leave

Whenever necessary, employees will be given time off from their duties, without loss of pay or accumulated leave, when:

- Performing jury duty;
- Summoned to appear as a witness before a court, grand jury, or other public body or commission, except when the employee is the plaintiff or defendant, or they are summoned as a result of employment other than state employment;
- Performing emergency civilian duty in relation to national defense;
- The appointing authority determines that they are prevented by an act of God from performing their duties; and,
- Voting in an election on a regularly scheduled workday and there is not sufficient time before or after working hours to vote.

### Crisis Leave Pool

The DCFS Crisis Leave Pool consists of annual leave hours that are donated by employees. These hours are used to assist an employee who has exhausted appropriate paid leave and encounters a crisis situation, described as a sudden catastrophic illness or accident, affecting himself or an immediate family member. The leave pool does not provide leave for a crisis situation that is long-term or permanent. Awarding of Crisis Leave is not

automatic and is handled by the Crisis Leave Pool Committee based on employee's application and medical certifications.

An employee may donate to the pool a maximum of 240 hours of annual leave per calendar year, and the minimum donation is 1 hour of annual leave. The leave recipient may request a maximum of 240 hours of annual leave per calendar year. The minimum receipt of annual leave for a single occurrence is 40 hours. For more complete information, please refer to the DCFS Crisis Leave Pool Policy available on the DCFS Intranet.

### Compensatory Leave

As stated earlier, occasions may arise which require that the employee work on holidays, non-scheduled work days, or longer than their regularly scheduled workday. In most instances they will receive compensatory leave in lieu of overtime pay for the additional time worked. Compensatory leave must be applied for in the same manner as annual leave and it must be used before annual leave or leave without pay. The employer may, at any time, require them to take any or all compensatory leave. For more details regarding compensatory leave, please refer to the DCFS Policy 4-15 / Overtime Compensation available on the DCFS Intranet.

### Educational Leave

Employees may be granted educational leave with pay, provided the course they take is pertinent to their work and provided the course will require no more than 30 calendar days (or 240 hours) in one calendar year. Normally, however, leave will not be granted if the course of study is available during off-duty hours. If an appointing authority (or designee) requires an employee to take special training, educational leave with pay may be granted for a maximum of ninety calendar days (or 720 hours) in one calendar year to a permanent employee.

**Full-Time Educational Leave Without Pay:** Employees may be considered for full-time educational leave without pay for a maximum period of one year at a time. Educational leave is not a vested right, but may be granted upon approval by the proper administrative personnel. If the employee qualifies and funds are available, they may be granted an education stipend (financial assistance for job-related education).

**Part-Time Educational Leave:** If an employee wishes to take one or two courses toward an undergraduate or graduate degree which are given during working hours, they may request leave to do so. Prior approval must be secured from the proper administrative personnel, and educational or annual leave or leave without pay may be granted.

### Family and Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, provides to eligible employees "job-protected" unpaid leave during any twelve (12) month period for:

#### Family or Personal Medical Leave

A total of twelve (12) workweeks (480 hours) of job-protected leave during a single twelve (12) month period will be provided to the employee for:

- The birth of a child, and the care of the newborn;
- The placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To care for a parent, child or spouse with a serious health condition; or

- The employee’s own serious health condition.

### Military Caregiver Leave

Up to twenty-six (26) weeks of job-protected leave during a single twelve (12) month period will be provided to the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next-of-kin of a member of the armed forces, including the National Guard or Reserves, per each qualifying event, to care for such member of the armed forces who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, who is in outpatient status otherwise; or who is on the temporary disability retired list for a serious injury or illness.

### Military Exigency Leave

Up to twelve (12) weeks of job protected leave during a twelve (12) month period will be provided for any qualifying exigency, which is a non-medical need for leave due to one of the following reasons:

- Short-notice deployment
- Military events and activities
- Childcare and school activities
- Financial and legal arrangements
- Counseling
- Rest and recuperation
- Post-deployment activities
- Additional activities which arise out of active duty, provided that the employer and employee agree, including timing and duration of such leave.

These three types of job-protected leave will run concurrently with each other. While on family and medical leave, an employee’s benefits are also protected. The unpaid FMLA leave will be run concurrently with their accrued leave or Leave Without Pay as applicable. For more complete information, please refer to the DCFS Family and Medical Leave Policy available on the DCFS Intranet.

### Funeral Leave

To help employees through the period of bereavement following the death of a relative, DCFS employees with permanent or probationary status may be granted up to two days of funeral leave to attend the funeral services or burial rites that take place on scheduled workdays. Funeral leave is special leave that is not charged to their accrued leave. A list of those for whom funeral leave may be approved is provided below:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Husband / Wife           | Daughter / Stepdaughter                 |
| Father / Stepfather      | Brother / Stepbrother                   |
| Mother / Stepmother      | Son / Stepson                           |
| Father-in-law            | Grandfather / Grandmother (of employee) |
| Mother-in-law            | Sister / Stepsister                     |
| Grandchild (of employee) |   |

Funeral leave may be granted for the burial, services held prior to burial, and travel time to and from the location of the burial or service. The maximum amount of funeral leave that will be granted is 2 days; however, not all circumstances require the full two days of leave. For example: if the funeral or services held prior to the service occur on a non-work day, the employee is not eligible for additional time off to achieve the full two

days of funeral leave. Annual leave may be granted for funeral arrangements or for additional time required for bereavement.

The employee will be required to provide the name of the deceased and relationship to them when applying for funeral leave. Annual leave may be approved in accordance with normal policy to attend the services of other relatives and friends or to extend funeral leave beyond the allowed time. Employees should contact their supervisor for details and to request leave.

### Leave Without Pay

Under unusual circumstances and upon request, leave without pay (LWOP) may be granted when it is in the best interest of the agency. Leave without pay when an employee is out of accrued leave is not automatic, and must be approved by an authorized supervisor. However, except for educational or military purposes, leave without pay will not be granted if the employee has any applicable types of accrued leave to their credit.

### Military Leave

The Department of Children and Family Services supports the commitment of our employees to serve in a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces of the United States or in the National Guard.

In the event an employee serving on job appointment, probational, or permanent status is ordered or volunteers for continuous and uninterrupted military service, which includes active duty, active duty for training, initial active duty for training, full-time National Guard duty, annual training and inactive duty for training (weekend drills), they will be granted military leave with pay for 15 working days per calendar year. If requested, the employee shall be granted annual and/or compensatory leave; however, leave without pay request for military purposes shall not exceed 6 years.

The employee will be required to provide military orders to document the need for such leave. They should contact their supervisor or human resources representative for more specific information and restrictions.

### Sick Leave

Accrued sick leave with pay is granted to an employee who is suffering with an illness or a disability which prevents him from performing his usual duties and responsibilities, or who requires medical, dental or optical consultation and/or treatment.

Sick leave should be considered as an insurance policy and used only when absolutely necessary. When unable to report for duty due to employee's own personal illness or injury, they must notify their supervisor directly and as soon as the need for leave is foreseeable. Special care should be taken to avoid abuse. Sick leave requests (either electronically or by leave application forms) should be submitted to the supervisor immediately upon return to duty following sick leave, if application was not made in advance. The supervisor may require medical certification of an employee's need for sick leave. Annual leave in lieu of sick leave may be granted to an employee who has exhausted sick leave; however, employees should not have the expectation that this will automatically be granted. Employees must be aware that exhaustion of sick leave may lead to separation from state employment as stated in [Civil Service Rule 12.6](#).

Accumulated unused sick leave is carried forward to the succeeding calendar year. Upon transfer to another department, all unused sick leave will be transferred to the gaining agency, unless the employee resigns and



begins the new job as a job appointee. Upon retirement, the employee may receive a financial benefit for their unused sick leave from LASERS.

### Voluntary Disaster Service Leave

A full-time classified employee may be granted a leave of absence without loss of pay or leave for a period not to exceed 15 working days in a calendar year, to participate in American Red Cross relief services in Louisiana for disasters designated as Level III or above. The employee must be certified by the American Red Cross as a Trained Disaster Volunteer.

### Other Types of Leave

- **Civil Service Examination** – Employees may be granted special leave to participate in a Civil Service examination not to exceed 6 exams per year. Annual leave may be approved for any additional examinations.
- **Job Interview** – Employees may be granted time off with pay with no leave charged to report for an interview in connection with a possible transfer or promotion within the agency, or with another state agency, provided the vacancy is a bona fide scheduled, posted vacancy. The period of time shall be for the actual time present at the interview plus travel time, but not to exceed eight (8) hours. Annual leave or leave without pay will be charged for interviews conducted in the private sector.
- **Orientation, Conferences, and Workshops** – No leave will be charged for orientation, conferences, conventions or workshops if attendance at such a function is required or considered to be in the best interest of the Department.

### Unscheduled Absences

Punctuality and regular attendance is a required part of every job, and is expected of all DCFS employees. To assist supervisors in managing staff attendance, the Department adopted a policy on Unscheduled Absences that allows for the non-disciplinary removal of employees for such absences that exceed more than 7 occurrences during any consecutive 26-week period. This policy is designed to decrease absenteeism, improve the efficiency and quality of department operations, and minimize the burden that is shouldered by employees who attend work regularly and who must cover for their absent coworkers. For more information, please refer to the [DCFS Policy 4-27 Unscheduled Absences Policy](#)

### Leave Payment Upon Separation From Service

Upon separation from state service, employees will be paid the value of any accrued annual leave up to a maximum of 300 hours, unless they are dismissed for theft of agency property or funds. The total amount will be calculated based on their current hourly rate multiplied by the number of whole hours of accrued leave. Fractions of an hour will be disregarded. All sick leave and any annual leave above 300 hours will be recorded in their human resources record and re-credited if they are reemployed in state service on an appointment other than restricted or job appointment within 5 years of separation (provided their last separation was not a removal for cause, resignation to escape dismissal, or a retirement). The rate of pay shall be based on the employee's hourly rate of pay in his regular position at the time of his separation. The hourly rate of pay for employees who are on detail immediately before separation shall not include the employee's pay in the detail position.

## INSURANCE

All eligible new employees and their dependents are provided with the opportunity to enroll in health and life insurance coverage under the State Employees Group Benefits Program. This program is state sponsored. Should the employee choose to participate in this program, the agency will pay a portion of the premium, with the remainder being deducted from their paycheck. These new employees and dependents are subject to a six-month/one year pre-existing condition clause. It is waived if they have portability rights under federal laws. Life insurance may be obtained at the basic amount or the basic plus supplemental amount, which is based on their annual income.

As an alternative to the Group Benefits program, health maintenance organizations (HMO's) are also available. For these programs, the agency will pay a portion of the premium equal to that paid for the State Employees Group Benefits coverage with the remainder being deducted from their paycheck. Information about these programs may be obtained from their human resources office.

When the employee retires they may continue their health coverage and all or part of their life coverage (depending upon age). The agency will continue to pay a portion of their premium. State portions of health premiums vary from 19% to 75% depending on State Employees Group Benefits Program laws and number of participation years.

### Supplemental Insurance

From time to time private insurers approved by the Office of State Uniform Payroll will offer additional life and health, as well as accident and dental insurance policies. Employees may enroll in the different plans and if they are authorized for payroll deductions, the Department will deduct the premiums from their check; however, the employee will be responsible for 100% of the premiums. The Department of Children and Family Services in no way promotes them, but it does allow payroll deductions.

### Worker's Compensation Insurance

Employees are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance which pays certain benefits to employees who become disabled or miss work because of a work-related injury.

Worker's Compensation is a legally required employer-paid program designed to protect the employee from loss of income due to injuries occurring on the job. Should they become injured while working on their job, they should at once notify their immediate supervisor and request that an injury report be completed, no matter how minor the injury may appear. This report is submitted to their office's risk management representative. A Risk Management adjuster determines if they are entitled to medical benefits only or medical and income benefits. If applicable, their income benefits combined with any paid leave for the same period shall not exceed 100% of their base salary.

## RETIREMENT

One of the major benefits of working for the Department of Children and Family Services is the retirement program. Except for a small number of specifically excluded employees, all employees become members of the Louisiana State Employees Retirement System (LASERS) upon employment. (Excluded employees are usually covered by Social Security or the Teachers' Retirement System.)

As a member of the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System who joined prior to July 1, 2006, employees will have 7.5% of their gross salary deducted per paycheck as their contribution while employees who became a new member on or after July 1, 2006, will have 8% deducted as their contribution. Employers pay a contribution rate that is determined each year based on an actuarial formula that is set by state law. If an employee left state service without withdrawing their retirement contributions and later is rehired after July 1, 2006, they will resume eligibility for the retirement provisions in affect prior to July 1, 2006. Contributions are placed in a trust account that is used to pay benefits after meeting retirement eligibility.

### Eligibility-Regular Retirement

**Any employee who joined LASERS prior to July 1, 2006** will be eligible to receive regular retirement benefits when they either:

1. Have 30 years of service credit, regardless of age.
2. Have 25 years or more of service credit and are at least 55 years of age.
3. Have 10 years or more of service credit and are at least 60 years of age.

If the Early Retirement provision is selected, an employee must have 20 years of service credit, regardless of age, and benefits are actuarially reduced.

**If an employee joined LASERS on or after July 1, 2006**, they will be eligible to receive regular retirement benefits when they either:

1. Have at least 10 years of service credit, reach 60 years of age, and apply for retirement prior to 1/1/2011.
2. Have at least 5 years of service credit, reach 60 years of age, and apply for retirement on or after 1/1/2011.

If an employee is in state service at the time of retirement, their unpaid annual leave (above 300 hours which are payable by DCFS) and all unused sick leave will either be added to their service credit to increase their benefits, or they may elect payment of these hours. If payment is requested, the amount they receive is based on an actuarially reduced figure (not their current hourly salary). Additional service credit and/or unused leave payments are processed and provided by LASERS.

### Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP)

Active employees who have obtained regular retirement eligibility may elect to participate in this program. It is an optional method of retiring from LASERS, but is not a termination of employment. During participation in this program, members "freeze" retirement benefits, stop contributions to the system, and continue working while retirement benefits accumulate in a special account to be used upon retirement. Employees may enter DROP on the date they first become eligible for regular retirement, or within 60 days of the eligibility date, to participate in DROP for a full three years. If the employee waits until after the 60 days to enter DROP, the length of time they may stay in DROP is reduced by the amount of time they waited, less 60 days.

## Disability Retirement

LASERS members who have accumulated at least 10 years of service credit and become disabled may be entitled to disability benefits. To be eligible, members must:

1. file an application while in State service
2. have a physician on the State Medical Disability Board certify the disability; and
3. prove the disability occurred while an active member of LASERS.

If an employee is a Regular Member eligible for Regular retirement, including the 20 years at any age actuarially reduced retirement, they cannot apply for Disability benefits.

Members who leave State service and then file for a disability that resulted while employed by DCFS must present clear and convincing evidence that the disability was incurred while an active member of LASERS.

## Retirement Formula

Retirement benefits will be based on the following formula for regular and disability retirement:  $2.5\% \times \text{number of years of service credit} \times \text{the employee's average monthly salary} = \text{Maximum Benefit}$ . For those employees enrolled or reenrolled prior to July 1, 2006, the average salary is computed by adding the 36 highest consecutive months' income and dividing the sum by 36. However, for those employees enrolled or reenrolled on or after July 1, 2006, the average salary is computed by the highest consecutive 60 months and dividing by 60. There are actually several retirement plans and options from which they may choose. Their benefit will be changed from the maximum by varying amounts, depending upon the plan, option, and beneficiary they select.

Retirement benefits for Early Retirement are actuarially reduced and are not calculated using the 2.5% formula.

## Survivor's Benefits

Survivor's benefits are payable to the surviving spouse and/or minor children of a deceased member. The deceased member must have accumulated a certain number of years of creditable service; the number of years required is different for each situation. Further information can be provided by the agency human resources representative or LASERS.

## Refunds

The money contributed to the retirement system is not lost. Either the employee or their beneficiary will receive benefits at least equal to their contributions. Should the employee leave state service before gaining retirement eligibility, they may request a refund of all monies they have contributed to the system. They may obtain the appropriate LASERS form (Refund of Accumulated Contributions) from their agency Human Resources Office. The completed form, along with a copy of their signed social security card, must be returned to the agency Human Resources - State Office for certification and submittal to LASERS. **DO NOT MAIL THE FORM DIRECTLY TO LASERS AS THIS WILL DELAY THE RECEIPT OF THE REFUND.**

Eligibility for a refund begins when the employee has been out of service for 30 days. Most refunds are paid within 90 days of termination. Refunds of contributions automatically cancel all service credit in LASERS. In other words, a refund cancels their membership in the retirement system, and renders them ineligible for benefits. The refund will only be of their contributions, not the employer's contributions, and will not include interest. The amount of contributions sheltered from federal income tax (amounts paid after January 1, 1984)

are subject to federal taxes when refunded, unless the sheltered refund amount is rolled over into another qualified retirement plan (such as an IRA).

### Repayment of Refund

In order to repay a refund, the employee must return to LASERS-covered employment, and have a minimum of 18 months active service credit. To restore prior service credit, the employee must repay the refunded amount plus 8 percent interest compounded annually from the date of the refund until payment is made. Payment must be made in a lump sum for any service restored. Repayment of a refund(s) is completely optional, and may be done at any time prior to the day of retirement. Repayment of refunds does not entitle employees to return to their original retirement contribution percent factor and/or retirement eligibilities.

### Other Service Credits

The retirement system allows coordination of benefits with other systems and purchases of various types of service credit. If the employee has at least five years of service credit in LASERS, they may purchase up to five years of additional service credit, or Air Time, in one-year increments. Employees should contact their human resources representative or LASERS for details on any retirement questions.

### Leave Benefit

Unused annual and sick leave may have a financial benefit to the employee upon retirement.

## TAX SHELTERED ANNUITY – DEFERRED COMPENSATION

To supplement their retirement benefits, employees may wish to participate in the state's deferred compensation plan. Contributions to this plan are payroll deductible and allow employees to reduce their present taxable income. Taxes will be paid on their income from the annuity at the time they receive it. The taxes are usually lower because, at the time the annuity becomes due, the employee's taxable income is usually lower. Should any employee be interested in this plan, they may contact the Louisiana Deferred Compensation Plan office at (225) 926-8082 or 1-800-345-4699.

## TAX-FREE FLEXIBLE BENEFITS PLAN

The State of Louisiana Flexible Benefits Plan is an Internal Revenue Code Section 125 sanctioned cafeteria plan. IRC Section 125 allows certain qualified benefits premiums – such as group medical premiums – to be paid with “untaxed” salary. By setting aside a certain portion of an employee's salary to pay premiums on an untaxed basis, the amount of “taxable” income is automatically reduced, taxes are lowered and take-home pay is increased. If interested, new employees to state service must enroll in the plan within 30 days of employment or wait until the annual enrollment period to join.

## CREDIT UNION

Employees of the Department of Children and Family Services, and members of their immediate family are eligible to join one of several credit unions established for our employees. DCFS does not take part in the administration of the credit unions nor in the approval or denial of loans. Should any employee be interested in becoming a member of a credit union, they may contact their human resources representative or the credit union of their choice.

## PART III - CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

While we want to project a positive image of the Department, it would be unfair to gloss over certain performance expectations, which, if unmet, could result in disciplinary action. The employee's appearance and the manner in which they conduct themselves will affect the overall image of the Department. Please read this part of the handbook carefully and make special note of the prohibited activities.

DCFS maintains a Zero (0) tolerance policy as it relates to fraud, theft and the misappropriation of funds. All allegations of fraud, theft and misappropriation of funds will be aggressively investigated and pursued. DCFS shall also report to the appropriate law enforcement agency, District Attorney, Legislative Auditor, State Office of Inspector General, and if applicable the appropriate programmatic Office of Inspector General all findings of fraud, theft or misappropriation of funds committed by any employee to determine if criminal prosecution or other penalties are warranted. All employees that commit theft, fraud or misappropriate public funds will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Likewise, All employees that use the Department, its programs, offices, property, name or employees as a place or means to commit fraud, theft or misappropriation of funds, regardless if public or private funds are involved, will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees are required to immediately report all allegations of fraud to their immediate supervisor **and** Bureau of General Counsel for DCFS. The failure to do so will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## CONTACT WITH THE PUBLIC

Employee conduct as public servants reflects on the Department of Children and Family Services. Employees should always follow these guidelines to build good public relations and interpersonal communication:

- Develop a courteous telephone and communication etiquette.
- Be prompt in returning telephone calls or responding to requests from the public, state and other official personnel.
- Be friendly to all visitors.
- Help interested citizens by answering their questions or directing them to the proper source for information.
- Conduct themselves in a respectful and cooperative manner.

## APPEARANCE

In projecting a respectable image to the public, the employee's personal appearance is important. The clothes an employee wears should be suitable for the type of work they do. Employees should review the [DCFS Policy 4-1 Dress Code Policy](#)

so they know what items are inappropriate. If they have any doubt, they should ask their supervisor. No matter what the employee wears, they should be neat and well-groomed.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The records of our clients and employees are, in most cases, confidential and, in all cases, highly personal. Their confidentiality must be maintained. The passing along of confidential information to others, except authorized persons who need the information to perform their jobs, is expressly forbidden by law and departmental policy and can result in significant penalty. Please see DCFS Policies 6-1 and 8.01 for more information on the importance of maintaining confidentiality of information.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated in a prompt, thorough and impartial manner, per [DCFS Policy 2-03 Non-Discrimination in Employment](#). If it is determined that sexual harassment has occurred, immediate and appropriate corrective action will be implemented.

## POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

To protect the many privileges associated with state employment, limiting of certain political activities is necessary. Employees of this Department and as citizens of this country **may**:

- Vote,
- Express opinions privately,
- Sign a recall petition,
- Serve as a poll commissioner or official watcher on behalf of a governmental entity at the polls,
- Publicly support or oppose issues of public debate or election other than in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction. (See section below regarding restrictions on lobbying.)
- Sell services that they regularly offer or sell for fair market value to a candidate or political party or faction, even if doing so requires their presence at a fundraiser.
- Be a member of a private organization that may, under certain circumstances, endorse a candidate for public office, so long as the primary purpose of the organization is not the support or opposition of candidates, political parties, or factions. However, when the organization does support or oppose a candidate, party, or faction, they may not take an active part in the management of the affairs of the organization—even in matters not related to that support or opposition.
- Attend a free function open to the public where any or all of the candidates may speak or present their views.
- Attend an election night party (even before the polls close) or a party after election night that is open to the public at large and is not a fundraiser.
- Attend an inaugural celebration or a victory party after election night that is not a fundraiser.

Prohibited political activity is defined generally as any effort to support or oppose a particular candidate for election or a political party in an election, whether the election is for a state, local, national, or even out-of-state office. As a result of the prohibitions in the State Constitution, an employee cannot be forced to engage in the following acts either directly or indirectly, through their spouse or another person. Violation of any of prohibited political activity may result in disciplinary action. If in question, employees should ask their

supervisor or human resources representative to determine if the activity they plan is allowable. Some examples of prohibited activities are listed below. **Employees may not:**

- Become a candidate for nomination or election to public office.
- Become a member of any committee of a political party or faction.
- Make or solicit contributions for any candidate or political party or faction.
- Take an active part in the management of the affairs of a political party, faction, candidate, or campaign.
- Attend any fund raising function of a candidate or political party or faction—even if someone gives them a free ticket. A function will be considered a fundraiser if it is advertised that anything—including food—will be sold at the function—even if they do not plan to buy anything.
- Solicit votes for or against a candidate or political party or faction.
- Publicly announce, in writing or otherwise, support or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction.
- Prepare or distribute campaign material for or against a candidate or political party or faction.
- Contribute or volunteer time, effort, property, or any other thing of value in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction.
- Display a bumper sticker on the vehicle they own or drive in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction.
- Place a sign on their property supporting or opposing a candidate or political party or faction or allow anyone who is not their spouse to do so.
- Contribute or loan money in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction.
- Vote at the caucus or convention of a candidate or political party or faction.
- Wear, use, display, or distribute tee shirts, hats, stickers, pins, fans, water bottles, or any other material in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction.
- “Like” a candidate or party on Facebook or follow on Twitter or any other social media.
- Take an active part in the recall from office an elected official.

## RESTRICTIONS ON LOBBYING

[R.S. 24:56](#) prohibits all state employees, in their official capacity or on behalf of their employer, from lobbying for or against legislation or any matter intended to have the effect of law. Employees **are** authorized to provide factual information relative to a legislative matter. Employees who appear in committee to testify on legislative matters must be careful to provide **ONLY** factual information on the matter being discussed, and must refrain from voicing their personal opinions regarding the legislation.

The above restrictions do not apply to employees on their own time, either outside of their normal working hours or while on approved annual leave. Also, [R.S. 43:31](#) prohibits agencies, officials, **and employees** of the state from printing material or otherwise urging any elector to vote for or against any candidate or proposition on an election ballot. Factual information on any such matter may be disseminated.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The purpose of disciplinary action is to motivate employees to correct improper conduct and to remove inefficient, unproductive employees from the work force. In most cases a simple non-disciplinary counseling session is sufficient action to achieve the necessary correction. However, if counseling does not cause the improper conduct to be corrected, or if the improper conduct caused a serious disruption of work productivity or services to clients, disciplinary action may be taken. Types of disciplinary action include suspension without



pay, reduction in pay, involuntary demotion and dismissal. [DCFS Policy 4-07/Disciplinary Corrective Actions and Separations](#).

Employees will be disciplined only for just cause. Their responsibility as an employee includes knowing, understanding, and abiding by the rules, regulations, policies and procedures that govern their work. Employees are held to the standard of professionalism at all times and should act accordingly while in the scope of their employment. The list below is not an inclusive list, and the Appointing Authority may deem any other behaviors improper, inappropriate or unprofessional, which may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. However, if employees review the list of rules infractions provided below, they will know, generally, what actions could result in discipline.

- Abusive behavior, such as the use of threats, intimidation, vulgar or profane language, derogatory comments or slurs
- Sexual harassment or false accusations of sexual harassment made in bad faith , [DCFS Policy 2-06 Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- Disorderly conduct, fighting or physical harassment
- Failure to comply with attendance policies and procedures, such as excessive absenteeism or tardiness, unauthorized absence, etc.
- Falsification of records, such as attendance records, doctor's slips, and expense reports, employment applications, position descriptions, client case records, etc.
- Failure to report for duty as scheduled or when so instructed for overtime or disaster duty
- Unauthorized use, misuse or abuse of DCFS property, such as vehicles, telephones, computers, or other equipment
- Theft
- Unsafe work practices
- Failure to perform assigned duties during work time
- Sleeping on the job
- Insubordination or failure to promptly and cooperatively follow direct orders, instructions or directives given by a supervisor
- Conduct unbecoming of a public employee
- Unauthorized release of confidential information
- Carelessness or negligence in performance of duties
- Possession, use or under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty
- Indecent or immoral behavior while on duty
- Failure to comply with department and/or agency policies and procedures
- Inappropriate or unprofessional behavior or appearance
- Conduct which violates the Code of Governmental Ethics or participation in prohibited political activities
- Failure to cooperate with (or giving false information to) authorized investigations
- Failure to meet performance standards or expectations
- Frangrances or inappropriate music that disturbs the workflow/process
- Horseplay or inappropriate joking with the workplace
- Smoking in unapproved areas
- Possession of unauthorized firearms or other weapons
- Consuming alcoholic beverages while on duty, while in any state owned/leased property or while on unpaid break (ex: lunch break) when the employee intends to return to work
- Possessing sexually explicit materials depicting nudity, or is of a sexually suggestive nature, or abusive, obscene or profane language; additionally photos of people in skimpy attire should not be displayed in the workplace

- Wearing inappropriate clothing
- Violation of any policy listed on the DCFS intranet.

## VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The Department is committed to providing a workplace that is free and secure from threats and acts of violence, intimidation, harassment, and other disruptive behaviors. (See [DCFS Policy 3-4 Violence in the Workplace](#)). All employees are expected to treat each other with dignity, respect, and civility

## WEAPONS

To maintain the safety and security of its employees and clients, DCFS prohibits the possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons while in DCFS vehicles, DCFS buildings and DCFS-leased office spaces. Furthermore, DCFS prohibits the possession of firearms by its employees in the course and scope of their employment, even if the employee is not in a DCFS vehicle, DCFS building, or DCFS-leased office space. Some exceptions exist which allow for the following:

1. Firearms carried by authorized law enforcement officers with Child Support Enforcement, in the conduct of official duties.
2. Firearms kept secured by employees in their personal vehicles, including personal vehicles parked on state property.
3. Firearms kept by employees in their homes while working at home, and
4. Firearms carried pursuant to exceptions granted by the Secretary of DCFS.

## USE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

The use of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is prohibited. An employee found under the influence of any such substance shall be subject to immediate suspension and/or dismissal. Employees must notify their supervisor when they must take prescribed medication that could alter their work performance in any way or jeopardize their safety or that of others. Employees are also required to notify their supervisor within five (5) days of any arrest or conviction of a criminal offense, drug or drug-related offense, which occurs on or off duty, including DWI arrest.

## PART IV - GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

### GRIEVANCES

In an organization as large as ours, it may be expected that misinformation, poor communication, or other problems may cause an employee to feel that certain actions taken or not taken were unfair. It is the policy of DCFS to resolve employee problems at the lowest possible supervisory level and at the earliest possible opportunity after such problems are recognized, and to insure that each employee shall have access to an appropriate grievance procedure for resolving such problems. (See [DCFS Policy 4-12 Grievance Procedures](#)).

A grievance is defined as a disagreement, dispute or complaint between an employee and management; an alleged act of unfair treatment of an employee; or an alleged violation of Department/Division policy.

Excluded from this definition are those matters within the jurisdiction of the Department of Civil Service or Civil Service Commission and allegations of discrimination (based on race, sex, age, disability, national origin, or political or religious belief).

The grievance procedure does not guarantee that everyone will be pleased with the outcome of a grievance once it is filed. It does, however, guarantee that the employee will have an opportunity to have their problem reviewed through a process that promotes resolution or, at least, clarification of the circumstances which formed the basis of the complaint without fear of reprisal.

If an employee is claiming harassment by anyone in their chain of command, the employee may skip the grievance step that would directly involve that individual and may proceed to the next step in the grievance process.

## Grievance Process

Should an employee feel it necessary to file a grievance, certain steps must be followed. These steps are outlined below.

**Informal Discussion** – Discuss the grievance with their immediate supervisor before implementing the formal steps of the grievance procedure. They may possibly find an immediate solution to their complaint. Their request for a discussion must be made within five (5) working days following the date they became aware of the action or situation which caused the grievance. Their immediate supervisor must schedule a meeting with them within three (3) working days following their request.

**Step I** – Should the grievance not be resolved through discussion with their immediate supervisor, the employee must submit the grievance to their supervisor in writing within five (5) working days following the date of discussion with their supervisor. Their supervisor will take the appropriate steps to investigate the grievance. An answer to the grievance, in writing, will be provided to them within five (5) working days from receipt of the grievance.

**Step II** – If the employee is not satisfied with the decision made in Step I, they may submit their grievance in writing to the next respondent level which is the designated appointing authority of their agency (usually the Regional Administrator, Programs Section Director, DMF Section Director, or OS Bureau Chief) within five (5) working days following receipt of their immediate supervisor's decision. The Step II respondent will take the necessary steps to:

1. review all information in prior step;
2. investigate the grievance, which shall include a meeting or discussion with them; or
3. direct a hearing before a grievance committee, to be held within fifteen (15) working days from receipt of the grievance.

If an investigation is conducted, a written response will be provided within ten (10) working days following receipt of the grievance. If a hearing is conducted, a response will be provided within seven (7) working days after the hearing is over.

**Step III** – If the employee is not satisfied with the decision issued in Step II, they may submit the grievance in writing to their agency head or authorized agent (Secretary, Undersecretary, Deputy Secretary of Programs or Deputy Secretary of Operations) within five (5) working days following

receipt of the decision in Step II. The respondent will render a written decision within twenty (20) working days of receipt of the grievance. **The decision rendered at Step III is final.**

If the respondent at any step fails to render a decision within the established time limits, the employee may advance their grievance to the next higher step in the process. They must process their grievance properly within the established time limits at every step using the department's grievance form or it may be dismissed by the respondent at the step in which the procedure lapsed. For more complete information, employees may refer to the DCFS Grievance Policy, which is on the DCFS Intranet.

## **CIVIL SERVICE APPEALS**

The Civil Service Commission also has a procedure for hearing employee appeals. The Civil Service Commission will generally hear the following types of cases:

- Dismissal of a permanent employee, suspension, demotion, or reduction in pay.
- Claims of discrimination based on political or religious beliefs, sex or race.
- Violation of Civil Service law and/or rules.

Should an employee decide that it will be in their best interest to file an appeal; the notice of appeal to the Civil Service Commission must conform to the guidelines listed in [Chapter 13 of the Civil Service Rules](#).

## **PART V - OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION**

### **USE OF STATE EQUIPMENT AND PROPERTY**

Employees must properly handle all equipment and property of the Department with care. They should report misuse of property or damage and unsafe equipment to their supervisor. They should use only that equipment that they are authorized and trained to use for state business only.

### **COMPUTER POLICY**

Computers, software, computer media, fax machines and copy machines are the property of the State of Louisiana and are to be used exclusively for legitimate business purposes. Internet/Intranet services, e-mail and other on-line services are likewise to be used exclusively for legitimate business communications. DCFS employees are prohibited from using State equipment and services for personal business and communications. Employees should be aware that Internet/Intranet usage, e-mail, other on-line and fax communications, and the material stored on any department computers, diskettes, etc. are not privileged, nor private, and are subject to review, at any time, by the appointing authority. Every employee signs a statement of agreement to comply with the information security policy at the time of employment, and certifies that they understand this policy every time they log on to their computer. (Refer to [DCFS Policy 5-3, Computer Security Policy](#)).

Workplace discrimination and harassment prohibitions equally apply to all written e-mail and other on-line communications. Absolutely no obscenities; vulgarities; sexual communications; race, age, disability, ethnic or

gender oriented communications; nor other defamatory, derogatory or offensive information, are to be transmitted, received, printed, stored or duplicated.

### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

Many DCFS employees occupy safety sensitive positions. In accordance with [La. R.S. 46:51.2](#) and [La. R.S. 15:587.1](#), department shall conduct a criminal history check for any potential or current employee whose duties include:

- the investigation of child abuse or neglect,
- supervisory or disciplinary authority over children,
- direct care to a child, or
- performance of licensing surveys.

Refer to DCFS Policy 4-36 for specific information on this requirement for current employees.

### **OPERATION OF STATE VEHICLES**

Employees using state-owned vehicles must have proper authorization to do so and must also have a valid driver's license of the proper class in order to operate such vehicle. State-owned vehicles are to be operated in accordance with state and local traffic laws at all times. Employees are expected to drive defensively and to take every possible safety precaution whenever these vehicles are utilized. Safety belts are to be used at all times while any vehicle is being operated.

Before driving a state-owned vehicle, be sure to check with their supervisor about what to do in case of an accident or breakdown. Use of any state-owned vehicle for purposes other than state business is strictly prohibited and such use may be followed by dismissal and/or criminal prosecution. The same is true for the abuse of state-owned vehicles and their use by unauthorized personnel.

### **USE OF PERSONAL OR OTHER NON-STATE (RENTAL) VEHICLE**

If travel is required in the course and scope of employment and a state vehicle is not available or appropriate for use, employees are required to use a personal or other non-state (rental) vehicle, and must have access to such vehicle. ([See DCFS Policy 1-5 State Vehicles and Driver Program](#)).

A personal vehicle driver's license is required, and employees must pay all operating expenses, such as, but not limited to fuel, repairs, replacement of parts, and insurance for their own personal vehicle. The employee's personal automobile liability policy is the primary coverage. A mileage allowance is authorized and reimbursable at the rates established by the Division of Administration.

Enterprise Rent-a-Car state motor pool rental contract must be used when a state vehicle is not available and travel exceeds 100 miles. Employees should purchase fuel with the State's Fuel Card (FuelTrac) while traveling and prior to returning the vehicle.

### **NOTIFICATION**

Employees are required to immediately report to their supervisor the revocation or suspension of their driver's license, the dropping of liability insurance coverage or the receipt of any driving citations. Employees with revoked or suspended driver's license shall immediately certify in writing to their supervisor that they will not operate any vehicle for purposes of conducting business for the state of Louisiana during the period of time in

which the license is suspended. Upon receipt of the notification of revocation or suspension and certification, the supervisor is required to advise in writing their appointing authority, Administrative Services/Support Services and the Bureau of General Counsel that the employee's license has been suspended and the employee certified in writing that they will not operate any vehicle for purposes of conducting business for the state of Louisiana, during the period of time in which the license is suspended. The failure to report as required in this section may subject an employee and or the supervisor to disciplinary action. It shall be the responsibility of the supervisor and the appointing authority to ensure that employees within their supervision are not operating any vehicle for purposes of conducting business for the state of Louisiana during the period of time in which their license is suspended. The supervisor and appointing authority must follow-up with the employee every 30 days after learning of the suspension until such time as the suspension is cleared, and report their findings to Administrative Services/Support Services and the Bureau of General Counsel.

## TRAVEL

Employees in certain positions may be required to travel. In many cases, this may be a condition of employment and should be discussed in the initial interview.

Employees who are required to travel, they must always have an official authorization form approved by their supervisor before travel is begun. Also, the only means for reimbursement of personal expenses for official travel is the filing of an expense account. It will be necessary that the employee keep records of mileage and vouchers for tolls, parking and any overnight accommodations, or other applicable expenditures to support payment claims. Supervisors will discuss the allowable limits for reimbursements from time to time, particularly when changes occur in rates. For specific information, employees may refer to the [DCFS Policy 1-14 Travel Regulations policy](#).

## WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS

Employees shall not use a Wireless Telecommunications Device while driving in a state owned, rented/leased, or private vehicle that is being driven on state business. This includes writing, sending, or reading a text based communication and engaging in a call. Use of a Wireless Telecommunications Device is permissible for passengers in such vehicles. (See [DCFS Policy 1-15 State Vehicle and Driver Program](#)).

Exceptions:

1. Report a traffic crash, medical emergency, or serious road hazard.
2. Report a situation in which the person believes his personal safety is in jeopardy.
3. Report or avert the perpetration or potential perpetration of a criminal act against the driver or another person.
4. Engage in a call or write, send or read a text-based communication while the motor vehicle is lawfully parked.

## DWI's

Employees shall not operate a state vehicle, rented/leased or private vehicle (while conducting state business in the course and scope of their duties) when under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or when his/her ability to operate a vehicle safely may be impaired. (See [DCFS Policy 1-15 State Vehicle and Driver Program](#))

## VIOLATIONS

Failure to comply with the [DCFS Policy 1-15 State Vehicle and Driver Program](#) may result in disciplinary action, up to an including termination.

## SAFETY

One of the Department's priorities is assuring employees a work environment that is safe and accident free as much as possible. It is up to everyone to recognize his or her individual responsibility for safety rules, proper use of safety devices, supporting all safety programs, and offering constructive suggestions for improvement. Employees should devote daily attention to making safety an integral part of their day-to-day operations, and remember **EMPLOYEES** are the key to safety.

## DISASTER DUTY

DCFS is one of the two primary agencies responsible for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6. DCFS has the primary responsibility for coordinating mass care, housing, and human services during emergencies and disasters. As such, all employees are subject to being required to work in an assigned area and/or on disaster related duties at any time, in any location throughout Louisiana, for extended hours, and on any day of the week, including office closures, holidays, Saturdays and Sundays and any other regular non-scheduled work day. While DCFS recognizes its responsibilities during emergencies and disasters, and has the expectation that all employees will report for duty and perform in an efficient and cooperative manner when activated to disaster duty, the Department also recognizes that certain employees may have circumstances that would limit their ability to be of service. These employees may request an exemption.. For more information regarding disaster responsibilities and exemption, refer to the [DCFS Policy 1-02 Emergency Preparedness](#).

## PRIVACY IN THE WORKPLACE

To ensure the efficient and proper operation of the department, management must have access to employees' offices, desks, file cabinets, etc., for work related, non-investigatory reasons such as to retrieve needed files and papers. Further, access may be necessary to conduct investigations into employee misconduct. Employees should have no expectation of privacy in the offices, desks, file cabinets, etc., and should refrain from storing personal papers and effects therein.

## EMPLOYEE INTERACTION WITH PRISON INMATES

DCFS utilizes prison inmates to perform certain activities in the buildings and on the grounds in order to preserve the State's financial resources. There are very strict guidelines that all employees must follow when interacting with prison inmates. These guidelines can be found by accessing the DCFS Intranet by a click on Human Resources in the left-hand column of the screen, and then click on ["Do's and Don'ts When Dealing with Offenders"](#).

## SMOKING

Supervisors will review the [DCFS Policy 3-3 Smoking Policy](#), which is on the DCFS Intranet, with new employees, and they may smoke only in designated smoking areas.

## TRAINING

Within each section, the supervisor will instruct employees personally or assign someone to instruct them in the basic tasks involved in their work. On an on-going basis, the Louisiana Department of Civil Service ([civil.service@la.gov](mailto:civil.service@la.gov)) publishes class schedules for instructor lead courses as well as web-based training for the professional development of state employees. Additionally, those in a supervisory position are required to take all of the Minimum Supervisory Training courses listed in the supervisory group to which the employee's job is

listed. With the supervisor's permission, these courses may be taken during work hours. Enrollment for instructor-lead classes is on a first-come, first-serve basis. These courses are offered free of charge under what is known as the Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP). Employees should check with the CPTP Coordinator in their respective region for further details.

Employees of the Department of Children and Family Services may request special educational leave for courses related to work. Their Appointing Authority will evaluate the request in light of the importance of the course to their work and the needs of the agency.

### **CHANGES IN PERSONAL DATA**

It is very important to employees, as well as the Department that current, accurate information be maintained in each employee's employment record. Some of this information may be changed on-line by utilizing LEO; however, on-line changes in LEO will not change records for LaCarte cards, retirement records, etc. Therefore, employees must report any changes in their name, insurance coverage, marital status, beneficiaries (either retirement or life insurance), etc., to their human resources representative immediately.

If an employee finds that any of the information on their Employee Notification Form is incorrect (sex, date of birth, etc.), they should ask their human resources representative to correct this information.

### **PERSONNEL CHANGES**

Whenever a change occurs that affects an employee's pay or their position, an Employee Notification Form is processed and they will be given a copy. Employees shall keep copies of the forms in a file so that they will have a record of their employment history.

### **PERSONNEL FILE**

Each employee of the Department of Children and Family Services has a personnel file. Included in this file are their Civil Service application and official personnel transactions. Employees may review the contents of their personnel file upon written request to their human resources office and by appointment, in the presence of a designated employee of that office.

An activity folder may be maintained by their supervisor for performance evaluation purposes. This is separate and apart from their personnel file.

### **APPLYING FOR JOBS**

Most job announcements will be listed through the LA Careers system within the Civil Service website located at <http://www.civilservice.la.gov> (click "job seeker's" link) or by direct link which may be accessed using <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/louisiana/>

Job announcements listed on this site will have specific application instructions that must be followed when applying for jobs. Some job titles are open to continuous announcement and will not be posted individually. Employees may determine which jobs are continuously announced by accessing the [Job Information and Test Finder](#) link on the Civil Service website (click the "state employees" link). Employees are encouraged to obtain grades for continuously announced jobs as soon as they qualify to ensure that they are on the list when the agency creates a Certificate of Eligibles for a position. If employees want to be sure that they are aware of postings for job titles that they are interested in for promotional opportunity, they should complete the "Job



Notification” process in the LA Careers system. By doing so, they will receive email notifications when these jobs are posted. There is a great deal of other pertinent information for state employees on the Civil Service website.

## LAYOFF

When there is a shortage of funds or work, or if jobs must be abolished, a layoff could occur. In that case, every effort will be made to transfer the affected employees to vacancies elsewhere in state service.

If an employee must be separated as a result of a layoff, they may have their name placed on preferred reemployment lists for the same, equivalent, or lower jobs in the applicable career field for which they qualify. To do this they must submit an application to the Department of Civil Service within 30 days following the layoff, noting that it is for placement on the preferred reemployment lists.

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The State of Louisiana Employee Assistance Program is designed to assist and support employees who are experiencing personal problems and may benefit from outside management or professional help. These problems include substance abuse, family, emotional, financial, and other problems that affect job performance, job security, or the health and well-being of the employee. The employee can access this information by going to the Human Resources option on the DCFS Intranet and clicking on the “State of Louisiana Employee Assistance Program” link.

## RESIGNATION COURTESIES

DCFS would regret the loss of a conscientious and competent employee, but we realize that not all employees will be with us from initial employment to retirement. If an employee finds it to their advantage to leave, they should please give their supervisor at least two weeks advance notice. This will allow their supervisor to make arrangements to cover their workload with the least disruption of service to our clients.

If an employee has a change in address, they should make sure to notify their human resources representative or make the changes themselves in LEO. This will assure that their W-2 form (statement of earnings that must accompany their income tax return) or other separation documents can be sent to them promptly.

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We hope that the information provided in this handbook will assist you in becoming more quickly oriented to Department policies and programs as well as basic Civil Service provisions. As new questions come to mind, call them to the attention of your supervisor.

It is also our hope that you will find your job with DCFS to be interesting, challenging and personally rewarding. We wish you every success as you begin your new duties.

**PERSONAL EMPLOYMENT RECORD**

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>EMPLOYEE #:</b>
<b>DATE OF EMPLOYMENT:</b>	
<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	
<b>SALARY:</b>	
<b>SUPERVISOR:</b>	
<b>NOTES:</b>	