

# **State of Iowa Employee Handbook**

**Iowa Department of Personnel  
Revised December 2002**



## *Welcome to Employment with Iowa State Government.*

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I hope you will find a great deal of challenge and personal satisfaction in your employment with the State. You have an important role in accomplishing the goals of your department and of state government. The State has a proud tradition built on the excellence of its employees and their work. We challenge you to help maintain and improve upon this tradition. You soon will discover that our pride is contagious!

As a state employee, it is very important that you always present the best possible image to the public. Remember to act promptly, be courteous, and treat people, our customers, respectfully. Your actions will make a lasting impression .... be sure it is a positive one.

This is your employee handbook. This information is based on Iowa Department of Personnel (IDOP) rules and policies. Much of the information in this handbook is also covered in the State's collective bargaining agreements. Where there are differences between a collective bargaining agreement and this handbook, the collective bargaining agreement prevails for employees covered by the agreement. Where there are differences between this handbook and IDOP rules and policies, IDOP rules and policies prevail.

Some of the employee benefit plans described in this handbook are subject to legal requirements concerning reporting and disclosure. This handbook contains highlights of those plans. For complete details about benefit plans, consult the benefit handbooks and the official plan documents. In case of any discrepancy, the official plan documents prevail. Of course, changes in laws may affect the benefit programs described in this handbook.

The State of Iowa reserves the right to amend the contents of this handbook at any time without prior notice. The provisions of this handbook and other policies do not establish contractual rights or conditions of employment between the State and its employees.

If you have any questions, contact your supervisor, your department's personnel assistant, or your personnel officer.

*Again, welcome to the State's workforce.*

Mollie Anderson, Director  
Iowa Department of Personnel

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**AFFIRMATIVE  
ACTION, EQUAL  
EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITY  
AND ANTI-  
DISCRIMINATION  
POLICIES**

**AA and EEO Policy  
Summary**

**Anti-Discrimination  
Policy Summary**

The State of Iowa is strongly committed to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action (AA) and to the benefits that come from a diverse workforce.

Appointments, promotions, assignments, training and performance evaluations are to be based on individual qualifications and merit, and shall be equally available to all qualified applicants and employees.

State government is committed to balancing the State's workforce by providing employment opportunities to minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. The Iowa Department of Personnel (IDOP) administers the Affirmative Action Program for the State's executive branch.

All executive branch departments submit an annual affirmative action plan outlining efforts to be undertaken in the next year toward balancing the State's workforce. Affirmative action progress is monitored and reported to the Iowa Department of Management and the Governor.

The State will not tolerate or condone any form of sexual or discriminatory harassment of its employees. Immediate action will be taken to stop harassment or discrimination where it exists. If you believe you are the subject of sexual or other discriminatory harassment by anyone, you need to report your concerns to your supervisor or in accordance with your department's established complaint-filing procedure. You may also report alleged discrimination to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission and the Federal Equal Opportunity Employment Commission.

If the alleged problem involves your direct supervisor, you may go directly to your next higher supervisor or to the IDOP personnel officer assigned to your department.

The State also prohibits any form of harassment or other abusive conduct directed at employees for any reason. Any harassment of this kind is also to be reported through the same process described above.

**GENERAL  
EMPLOYMENT  
ISSUES**

**Probationary Period**

During your first few days on the job, your supervisor will discuss your job duties with you and your department's personnel assistant will give you information regarding your employment benefits.

If you are employed in a permanent position, as a new employee, you will serve a period of probationary status for six months. (NOTE: Peace officers employed by the Iowa Department of Public Safety are subject to a twelve-month period of probationary status.) Before your probationary period is completed, your supervisor will evaluate your work performance. At that time, you may be granted permanent status or you may be terminated. There is no right of appeal if you are terminated during your probationary period. If you successfully complete your probationary period and obtain permanent status, your work performance will be evaluated at least annually and your supervisor will discuss your evaluation with you.

Permanent status does not mean that you cannot be disciplined or discharged for misconduct, poor job performance, or any other just cause. Further, permanent status does not guarantee that you will not be subject to layoff. NOTE: If you are employed in a permanent position that is exempt from the provisions of the State's merit system and the collective bargaining agreements, you are not subject to a "just cause" standard for discipline or discharge. Instead, you are an "at-will" employee and, as such, you may be discharged at any time for any reason or for no reason.

**At-Will Employees**

At-will employees serve at the pleasure of a Department Director, the Governor, or a Board or Commission and 1) are not covered by the State merit system; and 2) are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement; and 3) are not covered by Iowa Code provisions relating to cause or just cause discipline and discharge hearings; or 4) are designated by the Iowa Code as being at-will. Therefore, at-will employees may be terminated for any lawful reason at any time without regard to the just-cause standard. Ask your supervisor or your department's personnel officer if you have questions about your employment status.

## **Work Hours**

The standard work schedule for most employees is 40 hours per workweek. In locations with round-the-clock operations, schedules and days off will vary. In some departments, employees may be permitted to use various options which give them flexibility in scheduling their work hours. Your supervisor will explain any options that may be available to you. A 15-minute paid rest period in the first half of your workday, another 15-minute paid rest period in the second half and a 30-minute unpaid lunch period will be arranged by your supervisor. (NOTE: Employees covered by the collective bargaining agreements may have alternative options. Please discuss them with your supervisor, if applicable.)

## **Overtime**

During emergencies or periods requiring extra work, your workweek may be adjusted by your supervisor. Overtime compensation is in accordance with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, IDOP rules, or the applicable collective bargaining agreement. If you are eligible for overtime pay, you must have prior approval from your supervisor to work overtime. For specific information, refer to your collective bargaining agreement, IDOP rules, or consult with your supervisor.

## **Promotion**

To be considered for promotional opportunities in positions covered by the merit system, you must apply for the appropriate job class and be on the IDOP list of eligibles for that class.

IDOP continuously accepts applications for promotion from permanent employees. You may obtain an IDOP Employment Application form from the personnel assistant in your department. You will also find one on the IDOP website at <http://www.state.ia.us/idop>. Completed applications are to be submitted to the Iowa Department of Personnel in Des Moines.

Qualifications for each job title are listed in the IDOP job class descriptions, which are available at your local Iowa Workforce Center, at IDOP, or on the Internet at the same Website as above.

If you are promoted within your employing department, you may be required to serve a probationary period in your new position. This requirement does not affect your permanent status. Refer to the IDOP rules for further information. If you do not perform satisfactorily in the new position, you may be returned to a position in your former class.

Promotion may entitle you to a pay increase.

Promotional opportunities for positions not covered by the merit system are handled directly by the department involved.

### **Job Reclassification**

Management may change the duties and responsibilities of your position. If the changes are significant and assigned permanently, the position may be considered for reclassification to a job class that more accurately reflects the new duties, if necessary. If a different job class is necessary, it may be higher, lower, or in a different class in the same pay grade. If your position is reviewed, you and your supervisor will be asked to complete the appropriate forms, which will include a description of your duties.

You or your department may request a classification review of your position. Approval must be obtained from IDOP (and the Department of Management if there are budget implications) before a reclassification can be effective. If you are affected by a reclassification and you do not agree with the decision, you have the right to file an appeal with the Classification Appeal Committee in accordance with IDOP rules.

### **Performance Reviews**

Probationary employees will receive one or more performance reviews prior to the end of their first six months of employment. Permanent employees will receive job performance reviews at least once a year. If you do not receive a timely job performance review, you should request that your supervisor do one with you.

### **Political Activities**

All employees have the right to express their opinions as individuals on political issues and candidates. However, employees are prohibited from engaging in political activity during scheduled work hours, when using state equipment, or while on state property. These activities include, but are not limited to, soliciting or receiving political contributions. Political buttons may be worn by employees who have minimal contact with the public, if the buttons do not constitute a safety risk. In certain situations, departments may have additional work rules regarding the wearing of political buttons.

An employee working in connection with a program financed in whole or in part by federal funds may be covered by the provisions of the federal Hatch Act. An employee covered by the Hatch Act shall not be a candidate for public office in a partisan election, may not use official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the results of an election or a nomination for office, and shall not directly or indirectly solicit or coerce contributions from subordinates in support of a political party or candidate. If you

have questions concerning your status under the Hatch Act, you may request an advisory opinion by writing to:

The Office of the Special Counsel  
U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board  
1120 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20419  
(202) 653-7188

**Outside  
Employment/ Selling  
Goods or Services**

You may accept outside employment if it does not conflict with the interests of your department or interfere with the performance of your job duties with the State. No outside work may involve the dissemination of official information not generally available to the public or other employees. In addition, a state employee may not perform work for another state department which is the same or substantially similar to work performed as part of your regular employment duties. For example, a maintenance engineer for General Services cannot perform the same type of work on a part-time basis for Natural Resources. If you are considering outside employment it is recommended you first check with your supervisor.

Finally, employees in state regulatory departments may not sell any goods or services to individuals, associations, or corporations that are regulated by their department without the prior approval of their department director.

**Gifts and Gratuities**

An employee shall not solicit or knowingly accept anything (including money, items of monetary value, any other benefit, or any promise of the previously mentioned items) that is given with an understanding or arrangement that it will influence the public service rendered by the employee or a decision by the employee or by the employee's department. As a general rule, employees of the State and their immediate family members may not receive gifts (including food or beverages) that are valued at more than \$3.00 from any person, lobbyist, or entity doing business with or lobbying their employing department. Honoraria are also prohibited, as are loans from lobbyists. If anyone attempts to influence you through a gift or gratuity, you must report it to your supervisor immediately. For further clarification or exceptions, see Iowa Code chapter 68B (1999).



## **Safety**

The State promotes a safe work environment for its employees. Employee job safety is very important. It is the duty of every employee to work safely and, when job duties require the operation of a motor vehicle, to drive safely.

When driving or riding in a state vehicle for any reason, you are required to wear the safety lap and shoulder belt provided. The safety belt must be adjusted and fastened before the vehicle moves. All motor vehicle and traffic regulations, including speed limits, must be obeyed. Failure to comply with the safety belt requirement, speed limits, or other traffic regulations can result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

You are expected to cooperate in every respect with the State's safety program to ensure your own safety and the safety of your coworkers, clients, residents, inmates, and the public.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the emergency procedures for your department and work location. You are expected to follow these procedures. Always check with your supervisor if you are in doubt about any safety factors when performing your assigned duties.

## **Resignation**

To resign or retire in good standing, you must give at least 14 calendar days written notice to your supervisor prior to your departure. If you fail to give this prior notice you may, at the request of the appointing authority, be barred from certification or appointment for a period of up to two years.

## **Unauthorized Leave**

If you are absent from duty for three consecutive workdays without proper notification and authorization, you may be considered to have voluntarily terminated your employment. All absences from work must be authorized by your supervisor.

## **Employee Personnel Records**

Each department is responsible for maintaining personnel records for employees in accordance with IDOP rules and policies. An employee's personnel file includes payroll documents, insurance applications, beneficiary designations, performance plans and evaluations, and other documents pertinent to employment.

Employees shall have access to information in their own personnel files during business hours except for confidential employment references or other materials identified by IDOP rules or by statute. Employees who wish to review their personnel files must arrange a time that is convenient to their departments. Employees may be charged the actual cost of copying their records, but not more than \$5.00.

## **Management Access To Work Areas**

Employees are provided work areas and certain materials, equipment and tools to facilitate the performance of their jobs. Such materials, equipment and tools are to be used for business or work-related purposes only. Management has the right of access to all work areas at any time. This includes, but is not limited to, the employee's work area, state vehicles, desk drawers, file cabinets, storage areas, passwords, mail, e-mail, keys, lockers, and computer data and information. Purses and briefcases belonging to employees are not, under normal circumstances, considered work-related areas.

**Employees given keys to locked work areas or passwords to computer data or information, are hereby given notice that this action does not create an expectation of privacy.**

Keys, access badges, or passwords are provided at the discretion of management to preserve confidentiality or to protect state property from unauthorized access. Employees may not install or change locks or combinations on equipment provided by the State without prior written supervisory approval. Failure to exercise due care and diligence in the use and protection of state issued equipment, including keys, access badges, or passwords, can be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

## **Use of State Property**

Government-owned and private property on department work sites or other state premises must be protected. Unauthorized entry to state premises; unauthorized use, abuse, misuse, or waste of property or materials; unauthorized possession or sale of items; and unlawful operation or use of state vehicles and equipment for other than state business is prohibited. The state's long distance service and state-owned cellular phones are to be used for official state business only. Local personal calls from state office phones must be kept to a minimum. State postage stamps and metered mail are for official business only. Employees provided access badges will not allow others to utilize the badge to permit entry to facilities, and during all work hours must prominently display the badge, unobscured by clothing or other objects, on the front upper third of the body, except when the card is being used by the employee to gain authorized electronic access to buildings, offices, facilities, or electronic communication equipment. Employees are responsible for the care and secure use of access badges provided by the employer and must, immediately upon discovery, report the loss or theft of any issued badge to management. The State's internal mail system is not to be used for the distribution or receipt of personal mail or packages. State

equipment must be checked out through a management representative before removal from the premises. Equipment may not be taken off premises for employees' personal use. Personal copies made on department photocopy machines may be permitted at a charge to be set by the employing department and with the approval of the employing department. Internet service is provided by the State of Iowa to support open communications and exchange of information, as well as to provide the opportunity for collaborative government-related work. The State of Iowa encourages the use of electronic communications by its employees. Like any resources made available to employees of the State, use of the Internet service is a revocable privilege. The use of state-provided Internet service must be for state government-related activities and not for personal business, for-profit activities, commercial advertising, entertainment or other use that interferes with an employee's productivity or reflects poorly on state government. Misuse of the Internet, allowing others unauthorized entry to state facilities, or the unauthorized use and/or abuse of state property and equipment could be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Upon termination of employment, whether voluntary or involuntary, all state equipment issued employees must be returned to the appointing authority.

**Protection from Reprisal**

The Employer shall not take reprisal action against an employee for disclosure of information by that employee to a member of the General Assembly, the Legislative Service Bureau, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau or the respective caucus staff of the General Assembly, or for disclosure of information which the employee reasonably believes is evidence of a violation of law or rule, mismanagement, a gross abuse of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.

Employees may contact the Office of the Iowa Citizen's Aide at 1-888-426-6283 to report violations of this rule.

**PAY DAY AND PAYCHECKS**

Paychecks are distributed every other Friday. Federal and state income taxes, Social Security (FICA), mandatory wage withholding, and retirement system contributions will be deducted from your check as required by law.

Other voluntary deductions will be made only at your written request. These could include: health, dental, and supplemental life insurance premiums; credit union deductions; deferred compensation deductions; union dues; and dependent care deductions.

Your paycheck stub will show the deductions taken from your salary, your available vacation and sick leave balances, the maximum number of vacation hours you may accrue and, if applicable, compensatory leave and holiday compensatory leave balances.

**Direct Deposit**

Direct deposit is a safe and efficient way of handling your paycheck. You are encouraged to have your net pay deposited directly to an account at the participating financial institution of your choice. Your personnel assistant has the forms you will need to enroll in this program.

**Travel Expenses**

If you, as a state employee, are required to travel on state business, you will be reimbursed for approved expenses incurred, such as meals and lodging. Your supervisor will provide you with a copy of the allowable reimbursement rates, as well as information on how to reserve and check out a state vehicle. If a state vehicle is unavailable, you will be reimbursed for using your own vehicle. You must have receipts for lodging expenses. To receive reimbursement, travel expenses must be approved by your supervisor.

**Credit Unions**

As a state employee, you and members of your immediate family may join one of several state employee credit unions. Share accounts, checking accounts, consumer loans, home improvement loans, automatic teller machines, and vacation club accounts are some of the many services typically provided.

Payroll deductions are also available for savings, loan payments, pre-authorized bill payments, and some insurance payments.

Your personnel assistant can provide you with further information.

**Charitable Contributions**

State employees may voluntarily participate in the annual One Gift Campaign. Through payroll deductions, you may designate contributions to the charities of your choice from the list of participating charities. Your personnel assistant can provide you with further information.

**Savings Bonds**

If you wish, you may authorize automatic regular deductions from your paycheck to purchase U.S. Savings Bonds. Details and forms for this program are available from your personnel assistant.

## **GROUP BENEFIT PROGRAMS**

### **Health Benefits**

An employee with probationary or permanent status who works at least 20 hours per week may participate in the State's group health plans or in one of several health maintenance organizations (HMOs) or in the Organized Delivery System (ODS). (NOT all HMOs or the ODS are available in all parts of the state. Your personnel assistant has information explaining which ones are available to you.) The portion of the premium paid by the State and the portion paid by the employee depends on the number of hours worked by the employee, the collective bargaining agreement, if any, that applies to the employee, and the company the employee selects to provide health coverage. [Employees covered by the State Police Officers Council (SPOC) have a separate group health and dental plan. See your personnel assistant for information.] If you do not enroll at the time of hire, you may enroll within 30 days after starting employment or during the first annual enrollment and change period following your employment date. Coverage will become effective the first calendar day of the month following 30 calendar days of employment. If the first day of employment is the first working day of the month, coverage will be effective the first day of the next month.

### **Health Insurance**

The plans offered through Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Plan 3 Plus and Iowa Select, have an 11-month pre-existing conditions waiting period for new enrollees. This means that for the first 11 months of your coverage, benefits will not be provided for conditions that are considered to be pre-existing. However, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) passed by congress in 1996 allows for reduction of the pre-existing condition waiting period for any time you were covered by another group health plan without a break in coverage of 63 days or more. (See your personnel assistant for more details.)

The health benefits programs offered include a pre-certification provision. This means, in part, that the employee is obligated to call the carrier to confirm the medical necessity of an inpatient admission and pre-authorization of mental health and chemical dependency services. Just because a doctor orders a specific treatment does not mean it will be covered. Review your health benefits booklet provided by the carrier to ensure compliance with all pre-certification provisions.

When both a husband and wife are employed by the State, and

both spouses are eligible for the same benefit plans, the couple may elect one family plan with the same carrier. The State's combined contribution will depend on several variables, including the plan chosen and the number of hours worked. Contact your personnel assistant to determine your eligibility and to determine the State's premium contribution in your particular situation. This applies to both the group health and dental programs.

Certain events, such as marriage or the birth or adoption of a child, may provide an opportunity for an employee to join and/or add eligible members to, or delete members from, coverage. The changes must be made within 30 days of the event. See your benefits booklet for your specific options.

If you do not enroll yourself or your dependents in a health plan when you are first hired, at your first enrollment and change period after hire, or at the time of an eligible event, you and your dependents may be subject to an 18-month late enrollees pre-existing condition waiting period. Again, this waiting period can be reduced by your proof of other coverage without a break of 63 days or more. Details about the late enrollee process may be obtained from your personnel assistant and from the information materials provided by the health benefit companies.

## **Dental Benefits**

An employee with probationary or permanent status who works at least 20 hours per week is eligible to enroll in the State's dental insurance program. The State pays all or part of the single-policy monthly premium, depending on the number of hours the employee works. The State's portion of the monthly premium for a family policy is equal to the State's share for a single premium.

You must enroll within 30 days after your date of employment. **NOTE: THIS IS THE ONLY TIME YOU MAY ENROLL** unless an applicable collective bargaining agreement provides otherwise. Coverage will become effective the first calendar day of the month following 30 calendar days of employment. If the first day of employment is the first working day of the month, coverage will be effective the first day of the next month.

Certain events, such as marriage or the birth or adoption of a child, may provide an opportunity for an employee to add eligible members to, or delete members from, coverage. The changes must be made within 30 days following the event. See your benefits booklet for your specific options.

**Life Insurance**

The State provides group term life insurance for employees (\$20,000 for United Electrical/Iowa United Professionals and \$10,000 for all others) with probationary or permanent status who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week. Additional supplemental life insurance is available, at the employee's expense, in \$5,000 increments (up to a maximum of \$40,000) and may be applied for at any time. You may enroll for the first \$5,000 increment without an approved statement of health if you apply within 30 days after your employment date.

An approved statement of health is required to obtain additional supplemental life insurance. If supplemental life insurance is approved, premiums will be paid by payroll deduction. To increase or decrease your life insurance, you need to submit the appropriate forms to the personnel assistant in your department. Both basic and supplemental life insurance programs include a double indemnity provision in case of accidental death. This insurance also pays a benefit for certain accidental bodily injuries. See your group life insurance booklet for further information.

**Long Term Disability**

Long Term Disability insurance is provided for employees with probationary or permanent status who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week. A partial monthly income benefit is paid on approved claims starting 90 workdays following the date of disability or after you have exhausted all of your accrued sick leave, whichever is greater. You are eligible for benefits when you are disabled due to injury either on or off the job or due to a serious illness. See your group long term disability insurance booklet for more information.

**Deferred  
Compensation  
457 Plan**

The State of Iowa's Deferred Compensation Program is an excellent way for you to supplement your retirement income through tax-deferred savings. The Program allows you to defer a portion of your salary from current state and federal taxes. When you increase your personal savings, you rely less on your pension and Social Security benefits and have the freedom to choose how you live in retirement.

Deferred Compensation allows you to direct your savings into any combination of approved investment options, including mutual funds, variable annuities and fixed annuities. You may save as little as \$25 per month or up to 25% of your taxable salary for a maximum of \$8,000 per year. As you near retirement, you may be able to increase your contributions up to \$15,000 per year by using the catch-up provision. Deferred Compensation allows you the flexibility to change your contribution amount (increased, decreased, or suspended) each month.

You are eligible to participate in the Program if you are a permanent or probationary employee of the State of Iowa and are regularly scheduled for twenty (20) or more hours of work per week. In addition, employees who have a fixed annual salary are also eligible to participate. Contact the Deferred Compensation Team or an approved provider for information on how to enroll. If you need to make changes to an existing account, you can contact your investment provider, the IDOP Deferred Compensation Team or your personnel assistant.

### **Dependent Care**

The Dependent Care Program gives you the opportunity to use pre-tax dollars to pay for care expenses for either a dependent child or adult. The plan is available to any non-temporary employee with permanent or probationary status who is regularly scheduled to work at least 20 or more hours per week on a year-round basis. If you are a current employee, you must enroll during the open enrollment period each year or within 30 days following a qualifying change in family or employment status. If you are a new employee, you must enroll within 30 days following your first day of employment.

Changes in participation are allowed only with an eligible change in family or employment status. Some restrictions apply. Contributions not claimed at the end of the calendar year are forfeited to the State of Iowa. Contact your personnel assistant for information to determine if you qualify for this program and if it would be beneficial to you.

### **Tax-Sheltered Annuity (TSA) 403(b) Program**

The TSA program is a supplemental pension plan for employees who work for the Department of Education. Contributions to the program are on a tax-deferred basis and can be invested in an annuity, life insurance policy, or mutual fund.

### **Pre-Tax Premium Conversion**

The Pre-Tax Premium Conversion Program offers you the opportunity to pay your portion of health and dental benefits and life insurance premiums with pre-tax rather than post-tax salary dollars. The plan is available to any non-temporary employee with permanent or probationary status who works at least 1,040 hours per calendar year and who is enrolled in an eligible program.

Changes in participation in the pre-tax program can be made only during designated annual enrollment periods or within 30 days following a qualifying change in family or employment status. **NOTE:** Newly hired employees who DO NOT want to participate must complete a form within 30 days following their first day of employment. If you have any questions concerning this program, contact your personnel assistant.



## **LEAVES**

### **Holidays**

Holidays are granted pursuant to the Iowa Code Chapter 1C, the collective bargaining agreements, and the IDOP rules to employees who are eligible to accrue vacation and sick leave.

### **Vacation**

Probationary and permanent full-time employees accrue 80 hours of vacation per year during the first four years of employment. Two unscheduled holidays are added to the vacation accrual rates each year after 80 hours are accumulated. Part-time employees accrue vacation on a prorated basis. Intermittent, seasonal, and emergency employees do not accrue vacation. Specific information regarding accrual rates is available from your personnel assistant, or you may read the IDOP rules or the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Vacation accrual amounts vary with years of service. You can accrue no more than twice your annual entitlement plus any accrued sick leave conversion.

You may use accrued vacation time with your supervisor's prior approval. Collective bargaining agreements may have specific provisions regarding the scheduling of vacation leave.

If you terminate your employment, you will be paid a lump sum for your unused vacation. Vacation shall not be granted after your last day at work.

### **Sick Leave**

Each month, full-time permanent and probationary, noncontract employees earn one and one-half days (12 hours) of paid sick leave. Less than full-time permanent and probationary, noncontract employees are eligible for prorated accrual (see IDOP rules). Employees covered by the AFSCME, UE/IUP or SPOC collective bargaining agreements may have different accrual rates. Read the appropriate IDOP rules or collective bargaining agreement for specific provisions.

All permanent and probationary employees who have accrued sick leave will be paid at their regular rate of pay during absences from work when those absences are caused by physical or mental illness, surgery, treatment, or medically related disabilities caused by pregnancy or recovery from childbirth. Sick leave may also be used for medical examinations, dental or optical examinations that cannot be scheduled outside of regular work hours, and exposure to contagious diseases. Be sure to consult IDOP rules or the appropriate collective bargaining agreement for specific details. Use of sick leave requires supervisory approval and may require verification. All employees are expected to use this benefit only for its intended purposes.

To be paid for the time you are absent, you are required to immediately notify your supervisor of your return to work. You may be required to provide a doctor's certificate or other verification for your use of sick leave. Your department may have specific requirements for reporting sick leave. Check with your supervisor.

All permanent employees who have accumulated a minimum of 30 days (240 hours) of sick leave and who do not use sick leave during the previous calendar month may convert sick leave to vacation leave. For AFSCME, SPOC, and noncontract employees, this conversion is on a three-to-one ratio of sick leave to vacation leave. For example, 12 hours of sick leave will convert to 4 hours of vacation leave. The UE/IUP conversion rate is a two-to-one ratio, i.e., 8 hours of sick leave will convert to 4 hours of vacation leave.

When an employee is eligible, has applied and been approved for benefits under the Iowa Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS), the employee's sick leave balance will be converted to a cash equivalent and will be paid to the employee up to a maximum of \$2,000 upon termination. Certain collective bargaining agreements may provide otherwise.

**Care of and  
Necessary Attention  
to Family Members**

Sick leave may be used as leave by an employee for the temporary care of or necessary attention to, members of the employee's immediate family. Specifics are defined in IDOP rules or the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Special conditions and time limits apply. For further information, ask your supervisor or personnel assistant.

**Bereavement Leave**

When a death occurs in an employee's immediate family (as defined in IDOP rules or the applicable collective bargaining agreement), an employee may be eligible to utilize accrued sick leave. This type of leave may also apply when an employee is a pallbearer or funeral attendant for a non-family member. In both situations, special conditions and time limits may apply in accordance with IDOP rules or the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Information concerning specific situations is available from your supervisor or personnel assistant.

**Military Leave**

If you are called for military duty as a member of the National Guard, organized reserve, or any component part of the military of the State of Iowa or the United States, you will be paid your regular salary for time spent on military leave for up to 30 calendar days per year. You must provide a copy of your orders or other appropriate verification to the personnel assistant in your department.

## **Leave Without Pay**

Leave without pay may be granted to an employee for any reason considered acceptable by the employee's supervisor. You must submit a request for this type of leave in writing and receive prior written approval from your supervisor to use this type of leave. Other requirements or stipulations may also apply. Check IDOP rules or the applicable collective bargaining agreement and contact your supervisor for further information.

## **Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year and for 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months and met other eligibility requirements. FMLA is not an additional type of leave; it is a way of designating leave that the employee already has. In most cases, employees must exhaust all paid leave before unpaid leave is granted.

### **Reasons for Taking FMLA Leave**

Leave must be granted for any of the following reasons:

- to care for the employee's child after birth, or after placement for adoption or foster care;
- to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his or her job.

### **Advance Notice and Medical Certification**

The employee is required, if possible, to provide advance leave notice and medical certification before receiving approved FLMA. Taking FLMA leave may be denied if requirements are not met.

- The employee ordinarily must provide 30 days advance notice when the leave is "foreseeable."
- An employer may require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition, and may require second or third opinions (at the employer's expense) and a fitness-for-duty report before the employee's return to work.

### **Job Benefits and Protection**

- For the duration of FMLA leave, the employer must maintain its share of the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan."

## **Donated Leave For A Catastrophic Illness**

- Upon return from FMLA leave, employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms of employment.
- The use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's FMLA leave.

### **Unlawful Acts by Employers**

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA; or
- discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for being involved in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

### **Enforcement**

- The U.S. Department of Labor is authorized to investigate and resolve complaints of violations of the FMLA.

FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights. For additional information, contact your personnel assistant.

Noncontract employees, as well as employees covered by the AFSCME, UE/IUP, and SPOC collective bargaining agreements, are eligible to donate or receive donated leave (vacation, compensatory leave time, holiday banked and holiday compensatory time) hours when the employee or the employee's immediate family member has a catastrophic illness. Special conditions apply in accordance with IDOP rules or the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.

A "catastrophic illness" means a physical or mental illness or injury of the employee or the employee's immediate family member as certified by a licensed physician, that will result in the inability of the employee to report to work for more than 30 work days on a consecutive or intermittent basis.

Contributions shall be designated as "donated leave" and shall be subject to the rules, policies and procedures of the Iowa Department of Personnel.

**Jury Duty and Court Leave**

If you are called for jury duty or subpoenaed as a witness in a court proceeding, you may be paid for the time you must be in court. This provision does not apply to actions in which you are a party or have an interest in the outcome. In order to receive full pay, you must pay to your department's accounting office any compensation you receive from the court (except for travel, parking, food and lodging expense reimbursements). If you elect to use vacation leave, you are entitled to keep any compensation received from the court. Other requirements may apply. See IDOP rules or the appropriate collective bargaining agreement for details.

**Emergency Closings**

Procedures exist that provide guidance when inclement weather conditions or other emergencies cause a department (or one of its offices or facilities) to be closed, or when travel to work is not prudent. **When the employer closes a state facility due to an emergency, the employee may use vacation time, compensatory time, leave without pay, or may make the time up within the same work week with the approval of the employee's supervisor. See IDOP rules or the appropriate collective bargaining agreement for details.**

**Educational Leave and Assistance Program**

Educational opportunities, such as workshops, seminars, or conferences, may be available to employees. Attendance-related fees may be paid by an employee's department, with the approval of the supervisor and in accordance with IDOP rules or the appropriate applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Fees for academic work undertaken by an employee at an educational institution may be approved for reimbursement by the employing department, provided that:

- 1) course work is job-related;
- 2) expenses (tuition and books) are approved by the department director and IDOP prior to course enrollment;
- 3) course work is successfully completed ("C-" grade for undergraduate courses and "B-" grade for graduate courses); and
- 4) funds are available.

Educational leave may also be granted at the discretion of the employing department. For more information, contact your supervisor, your training representative, or your personnel assistant.

## **OTHER BENEFITS**

### **Workers' Compensation**

Workers' Compensation benefits are mandated by law to provide benefits for employees who sustain work-related injuries and illnesses. The benefits consist of compensation for salary lost (subject to a waiting period and based on the salary received at the time of the injury) and related medical services.

On-the-job injuries must be reported immediately to your supervisor. An injury form (First Report of Injury) must be completed and given to your personnel assistant or workers' compensation designee, who will forward it to IDOP. Your department may have other forms to complete to assist in accident investigation and injury prevention.

Several programs are in effect to help the State and its employees manage workers' compensation. The Managed Care Network is a group of medical providers specializing in occupational medicine. You may be directed to see one of these providers if you are injured on the job. The State also encourages early return to work from injuries through the Restricted Duty Program. Under this program, injured employees are able to return to the job with temporary medical restrictions.

State employees may supplement their workers' compensation benefits with sick leave, vacation leave or compensatory leave. This helps to fill the gap between what is received under workers' compensation and a full paycheck.

Workers' compensation is designed to compensate for work-related injuries and illnesses only. Reimbursement for personal medical conditions should be submitted to your group insurance carrier. Keep your supervisor informed of your progress if you are off work. In addition, work with your department to make arrangements for returning to your job as soon as possible.

## **RETIREMENT PLANS**

### **IPERS (Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System)**

Public employment provides most employees with coverage under the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS). Your employer is required to deduct a specified amount from your gross pay. Your deduction is contributed on a pretax basis for federal income tax purposes and effective January 1, 1999, will be contributed on a pretax basis for state income tax purposes as well. (Pretax contributions lower your taxable income.) In addition, your employer contributes a specified amount to IPERS on your behalf.

Even if you do not retire under IPERS, the contributions you make

will always be your money. If you leave public employment before retirement age, you may withdraw your contributions and any accumulated interest or you may leave them in your account and retire when you reach 55. Effective July 1, 1999, vested members who receive refunds also receive a portion of their employer's contributions and accumulated interest. You may put the money in another retirement plan or into your own savings.

You must be a vested member of IPERS to be eligible to receive a monthly retirement benefit. If you remain in public employment for at least four years, or are at least age 55, you will be a vested member of IPERS. As a vested member you are entitled to a retirement benefit:

- if you have terminated public employment and are at least age 55; or
- before age 55, if you are determined disabled by Social Security Disability; or Railroad Retirement; or
- without terminating public employment, if you are age 70.

Your retirement benefit is calculated using your highest three years of covered wages and your years of service in public employment. For regular service members, your benefit is 2% per year of service up to 30 years times your final average salary. Special Service members have a higher multiplier.

Please contact IPERS for more information. The phone number is 1-800-622-3849.

Employees should:

- keep a current beneficiary form on file with IPERS;
- contact IPERS in writing to report all address changes;
- contact IPERS upon termination of public employment to receive information regarding your vesting status, rights to a retirement benefit, and refund procedures;
- contact IPERS three to five years prior to retirement to receive information on your estimated monthly retirement benefits, death benefit options, current laws that may affect your retirement, your optimal retirement date and any possible service purchases; and
- consult the IPERS Retirement Planning Guidelines booklet for more information.

IPERS retirement specialists travel throughout the state to provide group presentations and individual retirement counseling. In addition, IPERS provides training sessions for employers to ensure that coverage issues are understood and to update them on changes in the law.

**POR (Peace Officers' Retirement System)**

All peace officers in the Iowa Department of Public Safety are provided coverage under the Peace Officers Retirement System (POR). Upon retirement, employees eligible for POR have specific provisions regarding their sick leave balances. Contact your personnel assistant for more information.

**TRAINING**

Many training opportunities are provided through IDOP to state employees.

Courses are offered through Personnel Development Seminars (PDS) to assist employees in developing skills to perform their jobs and to prepare for other jobs. You may be eligible to enroll in one of the PDS certificate programs. A catalog of course offerings is published annually. For further information about PDS courses or certificate programs, contact your supervisor or your department's training representative.

**IOWA EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Iowa Employee Assistance Program (IEAP) provides professional consultation and referral services, as well as short-term counseling, to assist employees with a broad range of personal problems, including substance abuse, family or marital problems, financial concerns, career issues and emotional problems.

The services provided by IEAP are confidential and offered at no initial cost to the employee. The IEAP is intended to promote a healthy and productive work force.

A brochure describing IEAP services is available from your personnel assistant. Services can be accessed by calling IEAP at 244-6090 in Des Moines or 1-800-EAP-IOWA (327-4692).

**DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

**Policy Statement Summary**

The State of Iowa is committed to maintaining a safe work environment that is free from the use, abuse or effects of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances (hereinafter referred to as "drugs"). Employees have the right to work in an environment that is free from drug or alcohol abuse or misuse. Employees who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol may adversely affect other employees and the public at large.



**Federal Reporting Requirement**

In accordance with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, employees are required to report to their supervisors any criminal drug-statute convictions for violations occurring in the workplace or on work time within five days following such a conviction.

**Chemical Dependency**

The State of Iowa recognizes drug and alcohol dependencies as treatable illnesses. Such dependencies can cause major health problems, as well as safety and security problems. Employees needing help to deal with such problems are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the State's confidential IEAP Program.

**Drug Testing**

The State of Iowa complies with the Federal Highway Administration's rules and regulations which implement the Omnibus Transportation Employer Act of 1991. This law requires pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, random, post-accident and return to duty drug testing of employees who operate a commercial vehicle requiring a Commercial Drivers License (CDL).

**Acknowledgement**

All executive branch employees are required to review the State's Substance Abuse Policy and sign an acknowledgment indicating awareness and receipt of the policy.

**VIOLENCE FREE  
WORKPLACE  
POLICY**

**Policy Statement  
Summary**

The State of Iowa recognizes that violence at work can seriously affect employees' work performance and morale. Threats, intimidation, harassment, or acts of violence will not be tolerated. The State of Iowa is committed to a violence-free workplace, and its goal is to prevent violence in the workplace.

**Reporting  
Requirement**

Any employee who has been the victim of workplace violence, or who has a concern about potential workplace violence, is directed to bring the matter to the attention of his or her supervisor, or the appointing authority, or his or her designee, in accordance with the department's established complaint procedure. All complaints will be promptly investigated by the appointing authority or the Iowa Department of Personnel.

**Acknowledgement**

All executive branch employees are required to review the State's Violence Free Workplace Policy and sign an acknowledgement indicating awareness and receipt of the policy.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND YOUR RIGHTS

### Disciplinary Actions

Employees covered by the merit system are subject to any of the following progressive disciplinary actions when based on a standard of just cause: written reprimand, disciplinary suspension, reduction of pay within the same pay grade, disciplinary demotion, discharge, or other appropriate disciplinary measures. Disciplinary action involving employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement shall be in accordance with the provisions of the applicable agreement. Disciplinary action may be based on, but not limited to, any of the following reasons: inefficiency, insubordination, less than competent job performance, unauthorized use or abuse of state property, failure to perform assigned duties, inadequacy in the performance of assigned duties, dishonesty, improper use of leave, unrehabilitated substance abuse, negligence, conduct which adversely affects the employee's job performance or the department, conduct unbecoming a public employee, misconduct or any other just cause.

Not all employees are subject to the just-cause standard for discharge. **The provisions of this handbook do not establish contractual rights or conditions of employment between the State and its employees.**

### Grievance Procedures

All employees have the right to file grievances. The procedures for filing grievances are outlined in the collective bargaining agreements for contract-covered employees and in IDOP rules for noncontract employees.

Employees who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement and who have grievances alleging a violation of the agreement must file grievances on the appropriate forms provided by the union. For grievances alleging a violation of IDOP rules and for issues not covered by a collective bargaining agreement, contract-covered employees must follow the same procedures designated for non contract-covered employees in IDOP rules (Chapter 12).

Noncontract employees must file grievances on a form designated by IDOP, which is available from your personnel assistant.

All grievances must state the issue(s) involved, the relief sought, the date of the incident, and any rule(s) or contract violation(s)

involved. For noncontract employees who are covered by the merit system, issues involving disciplinary suspension, reduction in pay within the same pay grade, disciplinary demotion, or discharge must be filed as appeals in accordance with the procedures listed in IDOP rules (Chapter 12).

**Violations of Rules  
and Policies**

Violations of the work rules of the employing department or of any of the state's policies may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

**Employee  
Recognition**

Some departments have internal employee recognition programs and awards. Check with your supervisor or personnel assistant for more information.

# STATE OF IOWA

## Acknowledgment of Receipt

Of

### Employee Handbook

### Revisions

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have received the December 2002 State of Iowa Employee Handbook, including the revised pages 7 and 8 which address Management Access to Work Areas and Use of State Property, and that I have been directed to read the revised documents and was offered an opportunity to ask questions about their contents. I am also aware that I am expected to read and be familiar with any future updates to the information contained in this handbook.

Employee's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature and Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature and Date \_\_\_\_\_