

Office of Human Resources  
***1900 Separations / Reduction in Force***

2025-05-22

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# 1901 Employment Separations



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #1901

### Employment Separations

**Release Date:** December 15, 2010

**Revised Date:** June 11, 2020

**References:** Georgia Department of Labor  
State Personnel Board Rule 478-1.28 — Voluntary Separations for Classified Employees  
DHS Human Resources Policies Identified Below

Separations from employment may be voluntary or involuntary depending upon the specific circumstances. The Georgia Department of Labor Separation Notice (DOL-800) must be provided to all DHS employees who separate from State employment, and copies are to be maintained in the employees' official personnel file. Instructions for completion are included on the reverse side of the Separation Notice. Please see [Attachment #2](#) of this policy to access the notice.

## Section A: Resignation

1. Employees who resign from employment should provide written notice. Generally, a two-week notice is recommended. The date of resignation is effective upon receiving notice and can be changed with supervisory approval. Supervisors should notify employees in writing of acceptance and confirmation of resignations as soon as possible.

## Section B: Retirement

1. Employees who have selected a retirement date and have received confirmation from the Employees' Retirement System should advise their supervisors and Office of Human Resources (OHR) of the retirement date as soon as possible. Supervisors should be given at least thirty (30) calendar days advance notice.

## Section C: Classified Employee Voluntary Separations

1. **Presumptive Resignation** – Classified employees who are absent from work for five (5) consecutive workdays or the equivalent of a scheduled workweek without proper authorization may be considered to have voluntarily resigned from employment. Employees must be notified in writing of the voluntary separation and advised of their appeal rights to the State Personnel Board.
2. **Failure to Return from Leave of Absence** – Classified employees who do not return to work at

the expiration of a leave of absence may be considered to have voluntarily resigned from employment. Employees must be notified in writing of the voluntary separation and advised of their appeal rights to the State Personnel Board.

3. **Suitable Vacancy Not Available** – Classified employees must be separated from employment if a suitable vacancy is not available at the expiration of a contingent leave of absence without pay. Employees should be notified in writing of the voluntary separation. No appeal rights to the State Personnel Board are provided.
4. **Forfeiture of Position** – Classified employees may be considered to have voluntarily forfeited their positions if they:
  - a. Fail to secure or maintain a license, certificate or registration required by law or appropriate regulatory authority for the performance of the employee's duties.
  - b. Engage in conflicting employment in violation of the Rules of State Personnel Board.
  - c. Engage in political activity in violation of the Rules of State Personnel Board; or,
  - d. Make a false statement of material fact on an application for employment, or an examination.

**NOTE**

Employees must be given written notice of forfeiture of position and advised of their appeal rights provided in the Rules of the State Personnel Board. Please note the notice requirement for forfeiture of position is the same as that required for an adverse action.

5. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) should be contacted prior to initiating any of the above voluntary separations of classified employees.

## Section D: Classified Employee Involuntary Separation on Working Test

1. Classified employees who do not successfully complete the working test period following inter-departmental transfer may be separated from employment under the following conditions. Please refer to [DHS Human Resources Policy #1101—Classification and Compensation](#) for additional information.
  - a. If employees have fewer than five (5) years of continuous State employment, they can be separated at any time during the working test period.
  - b. If the employees have at least five (5) years of continuous State employment, and the last job in which they have permanent status on a lower pay grade is not utilized by DHS, they can be separated at any time during the working test period.
  - c. Employees must be notified in writing of the separation no later than the calendar day prior to the effective date of separation.
  - d. The separation cannot be appealed except as otherwise provided by the Rules of the State Personnel Board.
2. Classified employees who are working on test due to promotions may be separated from

employment due to disciplinary reasons as described in [Section G](#) below.

## Section E: Unclassified Employee Involuntary Separation

1. Unclassified employees are hired and retained by the Department “at will.” They may be separated from employment at any time at the discretion of the Department. (See [Section H](#) for exceptions)
  - a. Unclassified employees must be notified of the involuntary separations in writing. Please refer to DHS Human Resources Policy #1602 — Unclassified Employee Disciplinary and Dismissal Actions for specific procedures and guidelines regarding information to be provided.
  - b. If unclassified employees are to be separated due to staff reduction, please refer to [DHS Human Resources Policy #1905 — Staff Reduction](#).
  - c. Supervisors and Managers must consult with the OHR Compliance Management Section prior to separating unclassified employees.

## Section F: Reduction in Force (RIF) of Classified Employees

1. Employees may be separated from employment based on a RIF due to shortage of work or funds, abolition of a position, material changes in duties or organization, or otherwise. Affected employees must be given written notice of a RIF action at least thirty (30) calendar days before the effective date, and the procedures set forth in the State Personnel Board Rule must be followed. Please refer to [DHS Human Resources Policy #1905 — Staff Reduction](#) for specific information on Reduction in Force.

## Section G: Dismissal of Classified Employees for Disciplinary Purposes

1. Specific procedures outlined in the Rules of the State Personnel Board must be followed in order to dismiss classified employees for disciplinary purposes. OHR must be contacted prior to proposing the dismissal of classified employees who have permanent status.

## Section H: Involuntary Separation Retirement Law

1. Employees who first established membership in the Employees' Retirement System **prior to April 1, 1972** and who have a minimum of **18 years of State employment** may have involuntary separation rights under the Retirement Law. Please refer to [DHS Human Resources Policy #1904 — Involuntary Separation Retirement Benefits](#) for specific information.
  - a. State Law requires that specific procedures be followed in order to separate employees with involuntary separation rights.
  - b. The OHR Director must be contacted prior to taking separation action against employees who may have involuntary separation rights.

# Section I: Notification & Human Resources

## Information Systems Entries

1. Supervisors must create a requisition in HR PASS for the separating employee, whether voluntary or involuntary. This should be done as soon as possible to ensure overpayments do not occur.
  - a. In the case of a voluntary separation, the requisition should be created when the supervisor receives the resignation letter.
  - b. In the case of an involuntary separation, the requisition should be created immediately after the employee receives their separation notice.
2. Upon completion of the requisition in HR PASS, the assigned Human Resources Representative (HRP) will complete an Electronic Personnel Action Request (e-Par).
3. Upon completion of the e-Par, the appropriate data transactions representative will enter the separation into PeopleSoft.
4. Managers are subject to disciplinary action when the requisition is not completed in accordance with these provisions.
5. Appropriate reason codes for separation are to be entered into HR PASS and PeopleSoft for tracking purposes. Frequently used codes include:
  - a. **DIS** [Dismissal] entry code should be used when employees are separated for reasons **directly related** to inappropriate conduct or performance deficiencies. This code should also be used when separating unclassified employees under circumstances that would warrant presumptive resignation for classified employees.
  - b. **RLS** [Release] entry code should be used when employees are separate due to no fault of their own. This code **should only be used** to terminate unclassified employees. Examples of such terminations include:
    - I. Budgetary constraints or reduction.
    - II. Downsizing.
    - III. Reorganization; or,
    - IV. Termination of program.
  - c. **LVE** [Failure to Return from Leave] entry code should be used when employees are separated for failing to return from a leave of absence.
6. Supervisors are to review employees' work performance, behavior, and the reasons for separation to determine if it is appropriate to enter a recommendation that the employee is not rehired.
  - a. In some circumstances, employees who are separated from employment are not to be re-employed. Please refer to DHS Human Resources Policies: [#504 — Criminal History Record Checks](#), [#1301 — Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace](#) and [#1302 — Alcohol and Drug Testing Programs](#) for mandatory disqualifications from re-employment.
  - b. Each circumstance, other than those requiring mandatory disqualification from re-employment, is to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with OHR.

- c. If it is determined appropriate to enter a recommendation that employees are not re-employed, “No Rehire” is to be selected on the e-PAR.
- d. Documentation of the reason(s) supporting the request for “No Rehire” must be available upon request.

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local Human Resource Office, or email [DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov).

## **1901 A1 Employee Offboarding Checklist**

## **1901 A2 Separation Notice DOL - 800**



# 1902 Retirement



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #1902

### Retirement

**Release Date:** September 1, 2001

**Revised Date:** February 19, 2020

**Next Review Date:**

**References:** 29 U.S.C. Chapter 14, Subsection 623 — Prohibition of Age Discrimination  
O.C.G.A. §47-2-1 et al. — Employees' Retirement System  
DHS Human Resources Policy #901 — Employee Benefits

As an equal opportunity employer, the Department of Human Services (DHS) will not force any employee to retire based on age. Employees of any age may continue employment provided that the quality and quantity of their performance and work conduct meet the standards of performance expected of all employees. This does not change the “at will” employment status of unclassified employees.

## Section A: Retirement Benefits

The Employees' Retirement System (ERS) manages the retirement process for eligible employees. Benefits through ERS include service retirement, disability retirement and death benefits.

1. The ERS Plan contains three (3) different benefit structures in which an employee could be a member:
  - a. Old Plan Structure - Members continuously employed on a full-time basis before July 1, 1982.
  - b. New Plan Structure - Members are employees who were hired between July 1, 1982 and December 31, 2008.
  - c. Georgia State Employees' Pension and Savings (GSEPS) Plan - Members hired on and after January 1, 2009 are automatically enrolled in the GSEPS Plan.
2. Members of ERS become vested for service retirement after accumulating ten (10) years of creditable service. There are three different types of Service Retirement you can apply for: Normal Retirement, Early Retirement, and Terminated Vested Retirement.
3. Members of ERS who become totally and permanently disabled from performance of duties in their positions may apply for disability retirement benefits, if they have accumulated at least 13 years and 4 months of creditable service for Old Plan and New Plan members. GSEPS Members positions may apply for disability retirement benefits, if they have accumulated at least 15 years of creditable service.

4. The benefits payable to a member's beneficiary(ies) upon death are dependent upon employment / retirement status, age, and Creditable Service at the time of death. Members are encouraged to have current beneficiary information on file with ERS.
5. Members should refer to the ERS Plan Guide for comprehensive retirement benefits information at the ERS website at [www.ers.ga.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/ers\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.ers.ga.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/ers_handbook.pdf)
6. Please refer to [DHS Human Resources Policy #901 — Employee Benefits](#) for information regarding eligibility for membership in ERS.

## Section B: Involuntary Separation Retirement Benefits

1. Employees who first established membership with ERS **prior** to April 1, 1972 and have more than 18 years of State service, may be eligible for involuntary separation retirement benefits under retirement law.
2. The Office of Human Resources **must** be contacted prior to taking action to separate employees who may be eligible for involuntary separation retirement benefits.

## Section C: Creditable Service

ERS members earn credits toward retirement for each month of membership contributions. Members may receive additional creditable service toward retirement under certain circumstances.

1. Creditable service may be received for current accumulated and unused sick leave, forfeited annual and sick leave, and sick leave that was previously lost due to a break in service, if these leave balances total at least 960 hours.
2. ERS members, who are placed on leave without pay due to job-related temporary disabilities and do not qualify for disability retirement benefits, may purchase creditable service for up to twelve (12) months of the period of absence without pay.
  - a. This creditable service must be purchased within six (6) months after returning to work.
  - b. Employees must pay the employee portion of the retirement contribution for the period of absence plus regular interest compounded based on the last monthly salary before going on leave without pay. ERS should be contacted for additional information.
3. ERS members who are called to active military duty may purchase creditable service for the period of military leave without pay, up to a maximum of five (5) years.
  - a. Employees must provide ERS with a copy of your orders as soon as possible.
  - b. Employees must pay the employee portion of the retirement contribution for the period of absence within five (5) years or within three (3) times the length of the qualified military service, whichever is shorter. ERS should be contacted for additional information.
4. Employees should refer to the *ERS Plan Guide* for a complete list of opportunities for receiving creditable service.

## Section D: Refund of Contributions

1. Employees who leave employment with state government for a reason other than retirement

may request and receive a refund of their contributions to ERS plus interest.

**NOTE**

In the case of death, the named living beneficiary may receive a refund of contributions plus interest.

2. The portion of employee contributions used for Group Term Life Insurance premiums is not refundable.
3. Requests for refunds must be submitted on the correct Application for Refund of Contributions Form (Form D3-ERS) for ERS.

## Section E: Filing for Retirement Benefits

1. Applications for retirement are to be filed with ERS **at least 30 calendar days**, but **no more than 90 calendar days** before the retirement date.

**NOTE**

Applications for retirement are not considered filed until received by ERS.

2. When applications for retirement are received less than 30 days prior to the effective date of retirement, there will be a one-month delay in receiving the first check.
3. Applications for disability retirement must be filed prior to the last day of employment. It generally takes at least 60 to 90 days to process an application for disability retirement.

**NOTE**

The five-part disability application must be forwarded to OHR prior to submitting to ERS.

4. Retirement benefits always begin on the first of a month.
5. Employees who have selected a retirement date and have received confirmation from ERS should advise their supervisors of the retirement date, as soon as possible. Supervisors should be given at least thirty (30) calendar days advance notice.

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local Human Resource Office, or email [DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov).

# 1903 Unemployment Compensation



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #1903

### Unemployment Compensation

**Release Date:** September 01, 2009

**Revised Date:** June 11, 2020

**Next Review Date:**

**References:** O.C.G.A. §34-8-1 et seq. — Employment Security Law  
O.C.G.A. §45-9-110 — Authorization for consolidation billing procedure reserve fund investment of funds contracting for services provision of unemployment compensation benefits to certain county employees

## Section A: General Information

1. All DHS classified and unclassified employees who separate from employment may file for unemployment compensation benefits. A determination of eligibility will be made by the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL).
2. The Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) oversees the unemployment compensation process for State agencies.
3. DHS Officials (which includes supervisors and Human Resources Representatives (HRP)) are to provide job-related information regarding separations to GDOL representatives. Unusual circumstances should be discussed with the Office of Human Resources Compliance Management prior to releasing information.

## Section B: Separation Notice

1. Immediately following the separation of an employee, regardless of the reason, a Separation Notice (DOL-800) is to be completed. Instructions for completion are included on the reverse side of the Separation Notice. Please see [Attachment #2](#) of DHS Human Resources Policy #1901 — Employment Separation to access the notice.
2. If an employee is separated for any reason other than “lack of work,” please refer to [Attachment #1 — Unemployment Compensation Guidelines](#) of this policy for comments to be added to the Reason for Separation section on the Separation Notice.
  - a. When an employee resigns, or otherwise voluntary leaves employment (e.g., does not return from a leave of absence, stops coming to work), a reason should be provided if known. If the reason for leaving employment is not known, then the statement “No Reason Given” should be included.
  - b. If there is a question regarding what should be entered in the Reason for Separation section

of the Separation Notice, contact Compliance Management.

3. The Employer's Name to be listed on the Separation Notice is the "Georgia Department of Human Services" and the specific DHS organizational unit. The Address and Employer's Telephone Number to be listed are: 2 Peachtree Street, NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 (Phone) 404.656.6750 (Fax) 404.463.0920.
4. The completed Separation Notice is to be distributed as follows:
  - a. The original is to be given to the employee at the time of separation, when possible. If not possible, the notice must be mailed to the last known address of the separated employee as soon as possible, but no later than five (5) calendar days after the date the separation occurred or became known; and,
  - b. A copy is to be placed in the separated employee's official personnel file.
5. In the event of a mass separation (25 or more employees), the Mass Separation Notice and Mass Separation Notice Continuation Sheet (DOL-402 and 402A) should be completed and mailed to the nearest GDOL Unemployment Insurance Claims Office. Copies must be provided to OHR at 2 Peachtree to be placed in each affected employee's official personnel file. Please include on the Mass Separation Notice a telephone number of the DHS official who has knowledge of the separation.

## **Section C: Notice of Claim Filed**

1. When a former employee files a claim for unemployment compensation benefits, a Notice of Claim Filed and the Request for Information may be issued by GDOL. This notice is sent to Compliance Management (CM). CM will forward the notice to the appropriate HRP.
2. The HRP will complete the Notice of Claim Filed and the Request for Information.
  - a. A representative from DOL may contact the HRP directly for additional information. All requested job-related information is to be immediately provided to GDOL.
  - b. The HRP is responsible for ensuring that the completed notice is returned to the GDOL Unemployment Insurance Claims Office on or before the response due date indicated on the notice.

## **Section D: Fact-Finding Interview**

1. A fact-finding interview with the former employee may be scheduled by the GDOL Unemployment Insurance Claims Office.
2. The time and date will be indicated on the Notice of Claim Filed and Request for Information.
3. If additional information or clarification is needed during the fact-finding interview, a representative from GDOL may contact the HRP directly.
4. The HRP, supervisor, or other DHS official is to disclose to all factually accurate job-related information regarding the separation of classified and unclassified employees.
5. An initial claim determination will be issued by the GDOL Unemployment Insurance Claims Office to the HRP.
6. If the initial claim determination grants unemployment compensation benefits to the former

employee, GDOL will advise the HRP.

7. If a former employee is granted unemployment compensation benefits after being separated based on *inability to perform assigned duties or lack of work*, no further action will be taken by the Department.

## Section E: Appeals

1. If unemployment compensation benefits to an employee separated for any reason other than inability to perform assigned duties or lack of work, the Department may appeal the claim determination.
  - a. If it is determined that an appeal is appropriate, OHR is responsible for filing the appeal.
  - b. Any appeal must be filed by the specified deadline provided by the GDOL Unemployment Insurance Claims Office.
2. The former employee may also appeal the initial claim determination.
3. When a timely appeal is filed by DHS or the former employee, GDOL issues notification that an appeal has been filed and schedules an administrative hearing.
4. Compliance Management is available to consult with DHS officials on material needed for the administrative hearing.
5. A DHS official with first-hand knowledge of the separation must be present at the administrative hearing if testimony is necessary.
6. The GDOL administrative hearing officer will issue a decision either upholding or modifying the initial claim determination.
7. If the decision upholds or grants unemployment compensation benefits to the former employee, GDOL will notify DHS. If it is determined that a further appeal is appropriate, DHS is responsible for filing the appeal.
8. The GDOL administrative hearing officer's decision will include a deadline by which a further appeal may be filed.
9. If a timely appeal is filed by DHS or the former employee, a review will be conducted by a Board of Review. The Board of Review will issue a final decision on the claim determination.

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local Human Resource Office, or email [DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov).

## 1903 A1 Unemployment Compensation Guidelines



Georgia Department of Human Services  
Human Resources Policy #1903 A1  
Unemployment Compensation Guidelines

## Comments to be Listed on the Separation Notice (DOL-800).

### 1. Reason for Separation — Classified Employee Dismissal or Separation

- a. **Adverse Actions** (dismissals) involving reasons listed in State Personnel Board **Rule 15** of the such as misconduct, chronic absenteeism, negligence in performing assigned duties, etc. should have comments similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Dismissed from a classified position due to misconduct, chronic absenteeism, and negligence in performing assigned duties.

- b. **Voluntary Separations** based on State Personnel Board **Rule 12**, such as failure to return from a leave of absence, should have comments similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Voluntary separation from a classified position due to failure to return from a leave of absence.

- c. **Involuntary Separations** based on the **Employees' Retirement System Law** should be based on reasons cited in the law such as malingering, neglect of duty, etc. and should have comments similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Separated from a classified position due to malingering and neglect of duty.

- d. **Dismissal Actions Involving Drug Testing** (State Personnel Board **Rules 9, 15 and 25**) should have comments similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Dismissed from a classified position due to drug testing.

- e. **Working Test** separation from a classified position (with less than 5 years of continuous service) involving **Interdepartmental Transfer** should have a comment similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Separated while on working test.

### 2. Reason for Separation — Unclassified Employee Separation or Release

#### NOTE

The Rules of the State Personnel Board should not be referenced in any document since unclassified employees are not covered by Board Rules.

- a. **Separation Actions** for **disciplinary** reasons other than those listed in Items 2(b) or 2(c) below, should have a comment similar to the following added to the Separation Notice. No reasons are to be given.

**Example:** Separated from an unclassified position.

- b. **Separation Actions Involving Drug Testing** should have a comment similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Separated from an unclassified position due to drug testing.

- c. **Involuntary Separations** based on the **Employees' Retirement System Law** should be based on reasons cited in the law such as malingering, neglect of duty, etc. and should have comments similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Separated from an unclassified position due to malingering and neglect of duty.

- d. **Releases** from employment when employees **do not return from leaves of absence** should have comments similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Example:** Released from an unclassified position due to failure to return from a leave of absence.

- e. **Releases** from employment that do not involve performance deficiencies or inappropriate conduct, and are **no fault of the employee**, should have comments similar to the following added to the Separation Notice:

**Examples:** Released from an unclassified position at the expiration of a time-limited appointment.

Released from an unclassified position due to one of the following: budgetary constraints, downsizing, reorganization, or termination of program.

### 3. Employer's Name, Address & Telephone Number on the Separation Notice

- a. The Employer's Name to be listed on the Separation Notice is:

**Georgia Department of Human Services & the specific organizational unit.**

- b. The Address and Employer's Telephone Number to be listed are:

**Office of Human Resources  
2 Peachtree Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Phone: 404.656.6750  
Fax: 404.463.0920**

### Information that may be Disclosed Regarding Separation Actions

1. **Classified employees** not on working test may be advised of the factually accurate, job-related reasons for dismissal/separation.
2. No reasons for separation are to be given to **unclassified employees** who are separated for **disciplinary** reasons, except as indicated in Reason for Separation —Separation of Unclassified Employees, Items 2(b) and 2(c) on page 2 of this document.

Reasons for separation may be provided to unclassified employees who are released for not returning at the end of a leave of absence or for reasons other than performance deficiencies or inappropriate conduct that are no fault of their own (e.g., staff reduction, expiration of a time-limited appointment, etc.).

3. All factually accurate, job-related information regarding separations is to be provided to the Georgia Department of Labor Representatives.



**Example:** Employee refused to carry out assignment, theft, patient abuse.

Unusual circumstances should be discussed with the Office of Human Resources Compliance Management prior to releasing information to the Georgia Department of Labor.

# 1904 Involuntary Separation and Retirement Benefits



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #1904

### Involuntary Separation and Retirement Benefits

**Release Date:** March 1, 2001

**Revised Date:** February 19, 2020

**References:** O.C.G.A. 45-24-1 through 8 — Reorganization  
O.C.G.A. 47-2-2 and 47-2-123 — Involuntary Separation

Georgia Law provides retirement benefits to eligible state employees who are involuntarily separated from employment without prejudice. There are specific requirements that must be followed when separating eligible employees.

## Section A: Eligibility

1. Employees who first established membership in the Georgia Employees' Retirement System prior to April 1, 1972, and who, if involuntarily separated from employment without prejudice, have enough membership service under the retirement system to qualify for a retirement allowance because of such involuntary separation from employment.

## Section B: Disciplinary Separations

1. Eligible employees will not receive involuntary separation retirement benefits if they are separated from employment for the following reasons:
  - a. Insubordination,
  - b. Irresponsible performance of duties,
  - c. Malingering,
  - d. Neglect of duty, or,
  - e. Unsatisfactory performance of duties in a willful manner.
2. In addition, involuntary separation retirement benefits could be jeopardized if otherwise eligible employees are separated under the provisions of State Personnel Board Rule (e.g., misconduct, etc.).
3. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) must be contacted prior to separating eligible employees for disciplinary reasons.

## Section C: Reorganization

1. Any organizational unit considering a reorganization that has employees eligible for involuntary separation retirement benefits must contact the OHR Director prior to taking any action.
2. If it is determined that the reorganization will take place, each eligible employee must be transferred to either:
  - a. a position not being eliminated in the reorganization,
  - b. another component of DHS not involved in the reorganization, or
  - c. another State employer.
3. In order to be considered appropriate, the transfer must meet the following requirements:
  - a. The annual compensation must be the same or greater than the specific employee's current level,
  - b. The duties and responsibilities of the position must be reasonably compatible with previous work experience and educational qualifications of the specific employee, and,
  - c. The position must include the employee as a member of the Georgia Employees' Retirement System.

### NOTE

The transfer of a Classified employee to an Unclassified position is considered appropriate if these requirements are met.

4. An employee who does not accept a transfer as described above will be considered to have voluntarily resigned employment and will not be eligible for involuntary separation retirement benefits.

## Section D: Requesting Separation Authorization

1. When the separation of one or more eligible employees is being considered for reasons other than disciplinary reasons, the procedures outlined in this section must be followed.
2. The Division/Office Director, or appropriate designee, must provide written notification to the DHS Commissioner and the OHR Director at least 120 days prior to the proposed date of separation.
3. This notification must include the following information regarding the employees proposed for involuntary separation:
  - a. Name,
  - b. Current annual compensation,
  - c. Age,
  - d. Length of service,
  - e. Current job description,
  - f. Summary of work experience,
  - g. Educational qualifications, and

- h. Explanation of the reasons for the proposed involuntary separation.
- 4. The DHS Commissioner will determine if separation should be recommended.
- 5. If it is determined that separation should be recommended, the DHS Commissioner will provide written notification to the State Personnel Board.
  - a. DHS is required to notify the State Personnel Board at least 90, but no more than 120, calendar days prior to the proposed date of separation.
  - b. The written notification must include the same information identified in Section D, #3.

## **Section E: State Personnel Board Review**

- 1. The State Personnel Board will provide written notice to other State Department heads that eligible employees are available for employment.
- 2. Within 21 calendar days of the date that notice is sent, Department heads must provide written responses to the State Personnel Board indicating whether appropriate positions are available within their Departments for the continued employment of eligible employees.
- 3. If appropriate positions are available within State government, the State Personnel Board will make an offer of continued employment.
- 4. Eligible employees who are offered continued employment must accept the offer or will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from employment. Employees who voluntarily resign from employment are NOT eligible for involuntary separation retirement benefits.
- 5. If appropriate positions are not available within State government, the State Personnel Board will meet to review the proposed involuntary separation.
  - a. The DHS Commissioner, or designee, must show the State Personnel Board that the involuntary separation is necessary, justified and in the best interest of the State.
  - b. The State Personnel Board will then determine if the involuntary separation will be approved or denied.

## **Section F: Approval of Involuntary Separation**

- 1. If the State Personnel Board approves the involuntary separation, the Department will proceed with the action.

## **Section H: Responding to State Personnel Board**

- 1. When DHS is notified by the State Personnel Board that one or more eligible employees from other State employers are available for employment, DHS must determine if there are appropriate positions available within the Department which would allow the employees to continue employment.
  - a. OHR will contact DHS organizational units to determine the availability of appropriate positions.
  - b. DHS must provide a timely response advising the State Personnel Board of the availability of appropriate DHS positions in accordance with the law.

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local Human Resource Office, or email [DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov).

# 1905 Staff Reduction



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #1905

### Staff Reduction

**Release Date:** October 1, 1999

**Revised Date:** July 10, 2023

**Next Review Date:** July 09, 2025

**References:** O.C.G.A. 45-20-19 — Reduction in Force Notice  
O.C.G.A. 47-2-2 and 47-2-123 — Involuntary Separation  
Rules of the State Personnel Board 478-1-.04 — Reduction in Force

A reduction in force (RIF) is the separation from a job, furlough, or salary reduction of one (1) or more employees as the result of a shortage of work or funds, a change in organization or operations, or to otherwise support the financial health and viability of an agency.

Any staff reduction involving employees eligible for **involuntary separation** retirement benefits must receive prior approval from the State Personnel Oversight Commission.

**Prior to initiating a staff reduction, the impacted division must contact the Office of Human Resources (OHR) for assistance.**

## Section A: RIF Plan for Classified Employees

When it is necessary to initiate a staff reduction of classified employees, a RIF Plan must be prepared in accordance with the Rules of the State Personnel Board.

1. The impacted division is to advise OHR of the circumstances requiring the RIF and the proposed effective date of the RIF.
2. OHR will work with the impacted organization to develop the RIF Plan.
3. OHR will forward the completed RIF Plan to the Commissioner for review and approval for submission to the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS).
4. A copy of the approved RIF Plan must be made available for inspection by any employee impacted by the RIF.

## Section B: Competitive Process for Classified Employees

1. The order of retention of classified employees involved in a competitive process is determined

by a combination of retention credits, average summary of performance rating, and status as a veteran of a period of armed conflict, as outlined in this section.

## 2. Retention Credits

- a. Retention credits are calculated using an employee's average summary rating of annual performance and length of continuous and most recent service.
- b. Summary ratings on performance evaluations are assigned the following numerical values for the purpose of computing retention credits:
  - I. zero (0) for a summary rating of "Unsatisfactory Performer"
  - II. two (2) for a summary rating of "Successful Performer – Minus"
  - III. three (3) for a summary rating of "Successful Performer"
  - IV. four (4) for a summary rating of "Successful Performer – Plus"
  - V. five (5) for a summary rating of "Exceptional Performer"
3. The average summary rating is derived by adding the numerical values assigned to the summary ratings of all annual performance evaluations issued in the two (2) years immediately prior to the performance evaluation cutoff date set by the agency in the reduction in force plan and dividing the sum thereof by the number of ratings, rounded to the nearest tenth of a point.
4. If no performance evaluation was issued during the two-year period, an employee will be assigned a presumptive average summary rating of three (3) Successful Performer.
5. The average summary rating converts to retention credits as follows:
  - a. 0 retention credits for an average summary rating of 1.0 to 1.9
  - b. 60 retention credits for an average summary rating of 2.0 to 2.4
  - c. 68 retention credits for an average summary rating of 2.5 to 2.9
  - d. 76 retention credits for an average summary rating of 3.0 to 3.4
  - e. 84 retention credits for an average summary rating of 3.5 to 3.9
  - f. 92 retention credits for an average summary rating of 4.0 to 4.4
  - g. 100 retention credits for an average summary rating of 4.5 to 4.9
  - h. 108 retention credits for an average summary rating of 5.0
6. Employees receive one (1) additional retention credit for each full year of continuous service, including any period of leave which has been allowed in accordance with these Rules.
  - a. One-half year or more will be considered as one (1) year; less than one-half year will be disregarded.
  - b. For determining years of continuous service as provided in this section, service shall be computed up to the effective date of the reduction in force.
  - c. If a classified employee was hired into the Executive Branch from a local department of Public Health or Community Service Board, or vice versa, without a break in employment, then continuous classified service with these employers is considered when determining retention credits.
7. The sum of the retention credits for the average summary rating of performance and length of

continuous service equals the total number of retention credits for an employee.

**NOTE**

It is not necessary to compute or list retention credits in the RIF Plan for a competitive job when the competitive job consists of only one employee or when all incumbents in the competitive area are to be separated effective the same date.

## Section C: Order of Retention

1. Within a competitive job in a competitive area the order of RIF of employees in each job shall be, from the lowest to the highest number of retention credits:
  - a. The first group of employees impacted are those who **are not** honorably discharged veterans during a period of armed conflict and whose average summary rating of performance is lower than three (3) “Successful Performer”;
  - b. The second group of employees impacted are those who **are** honorably discharged veterans during a period of armed conflict and whose average summary rating of performance is lower than three (3) “Successful Performer”;
  - c. The third group of employees impacted are those who **are not** honorably discharged veterans during a period of armed conflict and whose average summary rating of performance is three (3) “Successful Performer” or higher; and,
  - d. The final employees impacted are those who **are** honorably discharged veterans during a period of armed conflict and whose average summary rating of performance is three (3) “Successful Performer” or higher.
2. If two (2) or more employees have the same total number of retention credits, and one (1) or more will be impacted by the RIF, the order of retention will be determined as follows:
  - a. Employees will be retained based on a review of their overall summary ratings on all performance evaluations which were used in the calculation of retention credits.
  - b. If two (2) or more employees have the same overall summary ratings on the performance evaluations, as referenced above, the order of retention will be determined by the original date of continuous employment in the classified service.
  - c. If two (2) or more of these employees were hired into the classified service on the same date, the order of retention will be determined by drawing lots.
3. Classified employees in the same competitive job in a competitive area are affected by reduction in force in the sequence within Section C1 of this policy, except as outlined in this paragraph. If the position of an employee is not to be abolished and the appointing authority determines its duties cannot be satisfactorily performed after a reasonable training period by an employee higher in the order of retention whose position is to be abolished, the employee who can satisfactorily perform the duties may be retained in preference to an employee higher in the order of retention. The facts supporting the use of this provision must be stated in the reduction in force plan.
4. In the event of a reduction in force that involves a layoff, the following provisions apply for employees in a competitive job within a competitive area who are either on contingent leave or



working test:

- a. Classified and unclassified employees on contingent leave without pay shall be the first to be separated, except as set forth in Section C3 of this policy.
- b. Classified employees on working test following a promotion shall revert to the last job (or equivalent if such job is not available) in which they hold permanent status and shall, if necessary, compete with other employees in that job, provided the job exists in the competitive area

## Section D: Competitive Process for Unclassified Employees

1. When a competitive process includes only unclassified employees, the agency has discretion to use the classified employee formula or implement another nondiscriminatory process that effectively supports its business needs. For example, the agency may consider some combination of performance, tenure, competencies, discipline history, etc.

## Section E: Required Notice

1. When a DHS office unit proposes to eliminate one (1) or more classified positions or proposes to terminate one (1) or more classified employees through a RIF, written notice must be given to affected employees at least 30 days before the effective date. The notice must include:
  - a. The nature of the proposed action with respect to the impacted employee; and,
  - b. The impacted employee's rights with respect to the proposed RIF, including:
    - i. Any right of appeal,
    - ii. Other opportunities with respect to possible continued employment,
    - iii. Any opportunities to apply for employment with any public or private party assuming the functions of the employee, or other similar opportunities, and,
    - iv. Rights and options with respect to employment benefits, including but not limited to continued participation in any retirement system or insurance plan.
2. The above notice requirement does not apply when a RIF must become effective immediately due to insufficient funds to pay the salaries of affected employees.

## Section F: Reinstatement

1. Any **classified** employee who is separated or reduced in time status as a result of a RIF retains a right to reinstatement in the Department to a **classified position within the same job and competitive area from which the employee was separated or reduced in time status**.
  - a. To be eligible for **reinstatement**, the employee must meet all the position qualifications (including any special qualifications, licensure and certification requirements).
  - b. The employee is eligible for reinstatement for a period of one (1) year from the date of separation or reduction in time status.
  - c. Reinstatement is in inverse order of the separation or reduction in time status.

- d. A refusal of reinstatement after reasonable notice nullifies this right.

## Section G: Reemployment

1. Any employee (classified or unclassified) who is separated from a position, as a result of a staff reduction and then **reemployed** with DHS or any other Department **outside of the competitive area of the RIF** (if applicable) is hired into the **unclassified service**.

## Section H: Restoration of Leave

1. The following leave provisions apply to eligible employees who are reinstated or reemployed with DHS within one (1) year of the effective date of a staff reduction:
  - a. Any previously accumulated and unused sick leave will be restored.
  - b. Any forfeited leave accumulated at the time of the staff reduction will also be credited to the employee. It can only be restored and used under the conditions identified in DHS Human Resource/Personnel Policy #1006 – Accrued Leave.
  - c. The period of absence between the date of separation and the date of reinstatement or reemployment will not be considered a break in service for the purpose of graduated leave accrual.

## Section I: Retirement Status

1. Employees who were members of the old plan with the Employees' Retirement System (ERS) and did not request a refund of contributions when separated due to staff reduction, may upon reinstatement or reemployment continue to be members of the old plan.
2. Members of ERS who did request and received a refund of contributions will only be eligible for membership under the new plan upon reinstatement or reemployment.

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local Human Resources Representative.

# 1906 Exit Interviews



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #1906

### Exit Interviews

**Release D** March 24, 2010  
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**ate:**

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**ew Date:**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) recognizes the need to retain employees in order to provide quality services to its customers. In an effort to assess experiences, feedback from employees who resign from DHS should be requested, evaluated, and used as the basis for workplace improvements.

## Section A: General Provisions

1. An online Exit Interview Survey is available to collect work experience information from employees who are voluntarily leaving employment with DHS.
2. Every employee who resigns from DHS employment is strongly encouraged to complete the online Exit Interview Survey.
3. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) Operations, Benefits & Data Analytics Team (Operations) will review the Exit Interview Surveys and will provide summary data to Division/Office Directors or their designees as appropriate. The Operations Team will be available to assist Divisions and Offices with analysis of the data.
4. Exit Interview Survey responses are confidential and will only be used as a part of an aggregate report. No employee names will be disclosed.

## Section B: Process

1. Employees who provide notice of resignation will receive a link and password to complete the online Exit Interview Survey from their designated Human Resources Representative. Employees will be afforded an opportunity to use a DHS computer to complete the exit interview survey.
2. The information provided by this survey will be reviewed by the Operations Team and may be used to identify trends and make recommendations for improvement plans or other actions.

For additional information or assistance, please contact your designated Human Resources Representative.