

LOUISIANA MILITARY DEPARTMENT



**LOUISIANA
NATIONAL GUARD**



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO LOUISIANA MILITARY DEPARTMENT

Welcome to the Louisiana Military Department

Please allow me this opportunity to welcome you to the Louisiana Military Department (LMD). We hope your experience here will live up to your expectations, and your employment with us will be rewarding. If you have been working with us, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for your valued service.

We are pleased to provide you with your Employee Handbook which outlines the personnel policies and procedures in effect at the Louisiana Military Department. I'm sure the handbook will be a helpful reference during your tenure with our department. Also, we encourage you to freely ask questions of your supervisor and co-workers. By doing so, you will learn the job more quickly and will build interaction with those who are involved with your performance.

Early in your employment with us, you will realize that we have set very high standards for you. You were selected for your position because of your qualifications, training, experience, and qualities which will help us achieve the goals of LMD. The many people we serve in Louisiana are dependent upon you and your fellow employees to provide the necessary services delivered by LMD. Take pride in your work. We are committed in providing you challenges, recognition, appropriate compensation, and benefits to help you reach your professional goals and objectives, as well as those of the Louisiana Military Department.

I am confident that the future will be both productive and prosperous for all of us.

HR

Louisiana Military Department

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I. INTRODUCTION

This employee handbook introduces you to the Louisiana Military Department (LMD). It will acquaint you with information concerning policies, procedures, benefits, and other general guidelines which you will encounter during your employment. It is not all-inclusive, but offers general guidelines.

The information contained in this handbook applies to all employees of LMD and is presented as an information resource. Its contents should not be interpreted as a contract, expressed or implied, between the LMD and any of its employees. Furthermore, its contents should not be interpreted as superseding federal or state laws. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for future reference. Any questions concerning its contents should be directed to your supervisor or to LMD's Human Resources Office.

CHANGES IN POLICY

Since our business is constantly changing, we expressly reserve the right to change any of the policies and procedures at any time, including those covered in this handbook. We shall notify you of any changes by appropriate means. Changes will be effective on dates determined by the LMD. No manager or supervisor other than the Appointing Authority of LMD has authority to alter the policies and procedures of LMD. If you are uncertain about any policy or procedure, please check with your supervisor and/or Human Resources. This handbook supersedes all previous employee handbooks and management memos which may have been issued on subjects covered herein.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

LMD and all offices under its jurisdiction reaffirm the policy for Equal Employment Opportunity by hereby stating that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status or any other non-merit factor, be discriminated against in any employment practice. LMD is committed to this policy because it is morally right, it is good personnel management and is legally required by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972; the 1991 Civil Rights Act, Executive Order 11246; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974; and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any person having questions concerning Equal Employment Opportunity or Affirmative Action should contact the Human Resources office.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to Protect and Serve the citizens of Louisiana by providing a highly trained, qualified, and reliable force to support Emergency Responses and “At-Risk” Youth Education Programs.

DEPARTMENTAL VISION

To be the State’s premier agency, providing the pinnacle of support to the citizens of Louisiana and our fellow state agencies

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

In order to fulfill its mission, Louisiana Military Department intends to:

- Sustain Emergency Response capability
- Develop and retain a well-trained, resilient workforce
- Promote efficiencies, productivity, and readiness
- Provide education opportunities and life skills training for “At-Risk” Youth

ATTENDANCE

You are expected to report to work in accordance with the work schedule assigned by your supervisor, and you are responsible for letting your supervisor know as soon as possible if you expect to be late or absent. Your supervisor will instruct you regarding your agency's procedure for reporting absences. Failure to notify your supervisor appropriately may result in disciplinary action, up to and termination.

HOURS OF WORK

The regular work week consists of 40 hours. Your exact work schedule will be discussed with you by your supervisor. Your supervisor will also inform you of the manner in which you are to record your attendance.

OVERTIME/ COMPENSATORY TIME

Effective delivery of services may require your supervisor to direct you to report to work on your days off, holidays or before or after regular working hours. In accordance with appropriate Department policies, and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), you may be granted compensatory time or overtime pay for overtime work. Any questions concerning overtime pay or compensatory time should be directed to your supervisor, or you may contact Human Resources for information.

LUNCH AND BREAK PERIODS

Lunch periods are generally for a 30-minute period and are not considered to be working time. Your supervisor will inform you of your scheduled time for lunch.

At your supervisor's discretion, you may be given up to two fifteen-minute break periods away from your work station during a work day. If given, these breaks are considered to be working time and your supervisor will advise you of the times of your scheduled breaks, if any.

Pay Period for LMD Employees

LMD is paid on a bi-weekly pay cycle in accordance to the state payroll calendar. There are 26 pay periods annually. Your biweekly pay is your hourly pay rate times 80. Payroll is processed through the Office of State Uniform Payroll (OSUP). By law, LMD is required to withhold federal and state income taxes, FICA and/or Medicare tax, and either state retirement or social security deductions from your check. You may authorize other deductions such as health insurance, life insurance, dental insurance, credit union, tax shelters, and other miscellaneous deductions.

Physical Fitness During Duty Hours

Physical Fitness enhances the well-being of Full-Time Support (FTS) personnel and to assist in the reduction of workplace injuries. FTS personnel are authorized to perform 60 minutes of physical fitness four times per week in duty status (this includes preparation, recovery, changing to and from

physical training clothing and time for personal hygiene). A liability agreement prior to participating is required. Employee should work with their supervisor to determine the best time to conduct physical fitness training. Reference TAGS memo.

CATS Time Entry

LMD employees are on CATS Time Entry in LEO. Your supervisor will let you know if your position is a CATS time entry position. If you are in CATS time entry position, training for CATS in LEO must be completed prior to being enrolled and entering time in CATS. All leave must be entered in CATS and approved by the Supervisor prior to the end of the pay period. All time must be **CERTIFIED** no later than Tuesday 1:00 pm after payroll has closed. More details are available during the CATS training.

TRAVEL

Your position may require travel. In some cases, it is a condition of employment. All travel must be authorized and approved in advance by your supervisor. Expenses incurred should be well documented and limited only to those incurred during the performance of your job duties. Claims for reimbursement must be submitted on a Travel and Expense Account Form. LMD employees must ensure all requested details are provided on the form, including the employee's and supervisor's signatures. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of reimbursement compensation. If you are required to travel, consult your supervisor regarding the Department's travel policy.

OPERATION OF STATE VEHICLES

If you are required to drive a state vehicle or your own vehicle while on state business, you must have proper authorization from your supervisor. You also must have a (1) valid Louisiana driver's license, (2) have successfully completed the Louisiana Safe Drivers Course within the last 36 months, and (3) have your driving record on file in the Department.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

LMD plays a vital role in responding to situations such as hurricanes, environmental disasters, and other emergencies. During national or state-declared emergencies, all LMD employees are subject to being called upon to provide emergency assistance to the citizens of Louisiana. You will be notified of your role in an emergency by your supervisor and you will be provided with the necessary training to fulfill your responsibilities.

PERSONAL DATA CHANGES

It is very important to you and the Human Resource Office that current, accurate

information is maintained in your employment record. Therefore, it is your responsibility to report any changes in your name, address, withholding exemptions, insurance coverage, marital status, and beneficiaries (retirement and life insurance) to Human Resources.

RESIGNATION COURTESIES

We realize that not all employees will remain in our employment until retirement. If you find it to your advantage to leave your employment, please give your supervisor at least two weeks advance notice of your resignation. This will afford your supervisor time to make arrangements to cover your workload with the least disruption. Please sign all resignations.

Be sure you leave your current address with Human Resources. This will ensure that your W-2 form or other separation documents can be sent to you promptly. If you move after leaving LMD, be sure to inform HR of your new address to assure that your W-2 and other separation documents will be sent to the correct address.

III. LEAVE

ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE

All permanent, probational, and job appointed employees earn annual and sick leave. The amount of annual and sick leave earned is based on an employee's number of years of full-time state service. An equal amount of each type is creditable at the end of each pay period as follows:

Years of Service	Earnings Rate per Pay Period	Approximate Days per year
0-3 yrs.	3.688	12
3-5 yrs.	4.608	15
5-10 yrs.	5.536	18
10-15 yrs.	6.456	21
15-above	7.384	24

You do not earn annual or sick leave for any overtime hours or hours of leave without pay. Any hours of unused sick and annual leave held by an employee at the end of a calendar year are carried forward to the next year. There is no limitation on the amount of annual and sick leave that can be accumulated.

Annual leave is provided primarily for vacations and handling personal affairs. It must be

applied for in advance and can only be used when approved by your supervisor.

Sick leave is provided for those times you are prevented from performing your duties because of your own illness, medical, optical or dental appointment, or other personal medical reason. You may also request to use sick leave in lieu of annual leave for the illness or medical, optical or dental appointment of your spouse, child, stepchild, foster child, parent or stepparent. Use of sick leave in lieu of annual leave for this reason is subject to your supervisor's approval. Advance approval of sick leave is not required, except for scheduled medical appointments; however, you are required to file a leave request stating the cause of the absence and the amount of time absent. Sick leave to be used for medical, optical or dental appointments is approved only for the time required for the appointment when it is not possible to schedule the appointment during non-duty hours.

Upon separation from state service, you will be paid the value of any accrued annual leave up to a maximum of 300 hours. Annual leave in excess of 300 hours and all sick leave will be recorded in your employment record and will be reaccredited if you are reemployed in state service within five years of separation if your last separation was not a dismissal for cause or resignation in lieu of disciplinary action.

COMPENSATORY LEAVE (K-TIME)

You may use accrued compensatory leave in the same manner as annual leave. It must be used before annual leave or leave without pay for purposes other than those to which sick leave applies. You may, at your option, request the use of accumulated compensatory leave in lieu of sick leave. You may be required at any time, except for sick leave purposes, to take any or all accumulated compensatory leave.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

All eligible employees of the Department may request leave for qualifying family and medical purposes. Your accumulated annual, compensatory and/or sick leave is to be used for this purpose. An eligible employee is an employee who has been employed by the State of Louisiana for at least twelve (12) months and has worked at least 1,250 hours in state service during the 12 months immediately preceding the start of leave. An eligible employee shall be entitled to 12 weeks of FMLA during a 12 month period for one or more of the following circumstances: for the birth of child, or to care for a newborn child; for adoption or foster care of a child; to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; for a serious health condition; and for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his/her position. A father, as well as a mother, can take leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child. You may contact your supervisor or Human Resources for more information.

CIVIL LEAVE/ JURY LEAVE

You will be given time off, without loss of pay, or charge of annual, sick or compensatory leave, for performing jury duty and for appearing as a witness before a court, grand jury

or a public body or commission, provided you are not the plaintiff or defendant or the appearance is not as a result of previous non-State employment. You must furnish a copy of the court summons to your supervisor when requesting such leave. You will also be granted civil leave for performing emergency civilian duty.

FUNERAL LEAVE

To assist employees through periods of bereavement following the death of a relative, employees with permanent, probational, or job appointment status may be granted up to two days of funeral leave to attend funeral services of immediate family members.

Immediate family members include:

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

Annual leave may be approved in accordance with normal policy to attend the services of other relatives and friends or to extend funeral leave beyond the allowed time. Contact your supervisor to request additional leave.

CRISIS LEAVE

Crisis Leave may be requested by permanent employees with 12 months of employment who have experienced catastrophic illnesses or injuries but do not have sufficient paid leave to cover the crisis leave period. Please see the crisis leave policy and speak with your supervisor or Human Resource analysts.

MILITARY LEAVE

If you are a permanent employee and a member of a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces of the United States, you shall be granted military leave with pay not to exceed 15 working days in one calendar year, except that it shall be limited to 15 working days for each tour of duty. Advance notice must be given to the supervisor by providing a copy of the military orders to report to duty, except when such notice is either precluded by military necessity or otherwise impossible or unreasonable.

SPECIAL LEAVE

Special leave may be granted in cases of natural emergencies or local conditions such as civil disorders, floods, and hurricanes and closures authorized by the Governor or Appointed Authority.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

You may be granted time for attendance at conferences, conventions, and workshops for training purposes. You will be permitted to attend while on duty status, provided the content of the program is pertinent to your job and your attendance is approved by your supervisor.

PAID HOLIDAYS

State holidays observed by the Department are as follows:

New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Martin Luther King, Jr	Christmas Day
Mardi Gras Day	Inauguration Day in the
Labor Day	City of Baton Rouge
Veterans Day	General Election Day in
	the even-numbered
	years

In addition to the above, the Governor may declare other holidays during the year. You may be required by the Department to work on any of these days. If required to work, you will be compensated for the overtime with compensatory time at 1 ½ time.

UNSCHEDULED ABSENCES

An unscheduled absence occurs when an employee is absent from work without having obtained approved leave by the close of business on the last working day prior to the absence. Approval of leave, after the fact, to cover an unscheduled absence shall not prevent the absence from being considered unscheduled. A continuous absence for the same reason is one unscheduled absence, regardless of its duration. Employees who have seven or more unscheduled absences during any consecutive twenty- six-week period may be discipline up to and including termination from his/her position. You should request leave in advance, if possible, to avoid unscheduled absences.

JOB ABANDONMENT/ABANDONMENT OF POSITION

Any unscheduled absence, failure to show up for work after 7 consecutive days and the employee has not informed the supervisor of a valid reason for their absence, they may be considered as abandoning their job.

IV. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Disciplinary actions include suspension without pay, involuntary demotion, reduction in pay, and dismissal. Your responsibility as an employee includes knowing, understanding, and abiding by the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures that govern your work. Since it would be impossible to list every potential infraction, please consult with your supervisor or Human Resources concerning those actions that could bring about disciplinary results.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

An employee who is presently engaged in, or who plans to engage in, outside employment with any person should make LMD-Human Resource aware, and must complete the Disclosure of Outside Employment form and submit it to your Human Resource Representative.

V. GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

As in any organization, misunderstanding may arise between you and your supervisor or management. Through the Department's established grievance procedures, you will be given an opportunity to discuss your complaints with the appropriate personnel.

GRIEVANCES

The policy of the Department is to resolve employee problems at the lowest possible supervisory level and at the earliest possible opportunity after such problems are recognized.

A grievance is defined as any disagreement between a supervisor and an employee, a complaint, or any alleged act of unfair treatment of an employee which has occurred while conducting the agency's business.

A clearly defined policy has been established by the LMD to resolve employees' grievances. The process involves several steps which an employee must follow, with established timetables for each step. Should you find it necessary to file a grievance, you should first discuss the situation with your supervisor. You may request a copy of the policy and filing form from your supervisor or Human Resources.

VI. BENEFITS

HEALTH INSURANCE

You and your family members are eligible for health insurance coverage under the Office of Group Benefits. Should you choose to participate in the Office of Group Benefits, a portion of your premium will be paid by the agency, with the remaining portion of the

premium being deducted from your paycheck. It is to your advantage to make a decision within the first 30 days of employment. Open enrollment for insurance is every year Oct 1st -November 15th.

LIFE INSURANCE

Life insurance is also available to you and your family members through the Office of Group Benefits. You will have the opportunity to purchase life insurance upon your employment and during the yearly Group Benefits enrollment period.

MISCELLANEOUS INSURANCE

Other insurance plans may be available to you through payroll deduction including life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, dental insurance, and cancer plans. With these policies, the employee is responsible for the full premium.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

You are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance which pays benefits when you become disabled or miss work because of work-related injuries. Should you sustain a work-related injury, regardless how minor the injury may be, notify your supervisor or Human Resources immediately.

FLEXIBLE BENEFITS PLAN

You are eligible for participation in the Flexible Benefits Plan. This plan was implemented by the State of Louisiana to help you reduce your taxes and increase your spendable income. The plan enhances your employee group insurance program by allowing you to pay any eligible insurance premium costs or dependent care expenses tax free. You never pay federal or state income taxes on the money you save on these eligible expenses. If you are interested in enrollment, please contact your supervisor or Human Resources.

VII. RETIREMENT

Membership in the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS) is mandatory for all state employees, except those persons specifically exempted by law. Employees who must join LASERS are permanent employees with the exception of those who are contributing members of another state retirement system; are currently receiving a retirement annuity or persons that are older than age 55 at the time of employment

RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Your retirement contribution is deducted from your paycheck every two weeks. The state's contribution to your retirement (paid by our agency) is determined annually and is based on an actuarial formula provided by state law.

REFUNDS

The money you contribute to the retirement system is not lost. Should you leave state employment before gaining retirement eligibility, you may request a refund of all your contributions made to the system. Please be aware that the state's contributions are not refunded to you but are forfeited upon your receipt of the refund.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT

Should you become totally disabled and unable to perform your job duties, you may be eligible to apply for disability benefits after you have earned at least 10 years of creditable service and you are an active member at the time the disability application is submitted.

Disability retirement must be approved by a Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS) authorized physician. For more information, contact Human Resources or LASERS.

SURVIVORS' BENEFITS

If your death should occur prior to your retirement while in active state service or have at least 20 years of service, and are not retired, your spouse, minor children, and totally physically handicapped or mentally disabled children may be eligible to receive survivor benefits. For more information, contact Human Resources or LASERS.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION

To supplement your retirement benefits, you may wish to participate in the Louisiana Deferred Compensation Plan. This plan provides you an opportunity to invest money on a before-tax basis using payroll deduction. Because your taxable income is reduced with each contribution, you pay less federal or state income tax. Interest or earnings on your account accumulate tax- deferred, with no taxes being paid on the account until you begin withdrawing the funds.

VIII. TRAINING

As an LMD employee, you will be engaged in lifelong learning to fulfill the dynamic public service mission of Louisiana Military Department. In addition to the mandatory training requirements of LMD and other state governmental entities, you will be provided with training opportunities to further advance your knowledge and skills. Your supervisor will explain which training is required for you to complete and which courses are available for you to take on your own.

IX. SAFETY

LMD is committed to providing a safe environment for the Department's employees and clients. Each LMD employee must willingly assist management in accomplishing this goal which cannot be achieved without safe work practices. Each employee is responsible for immediately reporting accidents, unsafe conditions and work practices to supervisory staff and taking effective temporary actions to minimize risk to themselves and others.

X. IMPORTANT WEB LINKS

As an employee of the LMD, we hope you will enjoy the many benefits available to employees in state government. Listed below are links to some common state employee related web sites.

Louisiana Employees Online (LEO):

<https://leo.doa.louisiana.gov/iri/portal>

State of Louisiana Website:

<http://louisiana.gov/>

Department of State Civil Service Website:

<http://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov/>

State Travel Information:

<http://www.doa.la.gov/Pages/osp/Travel/Index.aspx>

Office of Group Benefits Website:

<http://info.groupbenefits.org/>

Louisiana State Employees Retirement System (LASERS) Website:

<https://lasersonline.org/>

State of Louisiana Public Employees Deferred Compensation Plan Website:

<https://louisianadcpretire.gwrs.com/login.do>