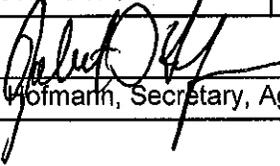


STATE OF VERMONT
Agency of Human Services (AHS)

Management of Internal Controls for AHS Systems and Property: Administration of Changes in Employee Work Status	REVISION HISTORY: 09/01/1992	Chapter/Number 4.01
	EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon signature	Attachments/Related Documents: <u>Department of Finance & Management</u> #BP-08
Authorizing Signature:  Robert D. Wolmann, Secretary, Agency of Human Services		Date Signed: <u>10/9/09</u>

PURPOSE:

To establish and document the procedures and responsibilities for ensuring that changes in an employee's work status are appropriately managed. This includes decisions regarding hiring, termination of employment, leave of absence and investigation. Personnel management impacts the operations of the Departments and Agency and is a shared responsibility to ensure accurate fiscal accounts, the protection and maintenance of records, and the continuity of duties based on job role.

BACKGROUND:

Position turnover in the Agency averages 10%, with some departments and positions averaging much lower rates and others averaging much higher. Due to the decentralized nature of our operations, it is necessary to have clear and consistent expectations for the management of employee information, resources, and access to data. Managers and supervisors are typically the first point of contact regarding an employee's work status. It is critical that employee work status be conveyed in a timely manner to key operational units of the Agency, including Human Resources, Information Technology and Fiscal Operations. Departments will be responsible for managing their own workflow to communicate changes to the appropriate operational units.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all employees and positions in the Agency of Human Services and all of its departments and offices.

STANDARDS:

Departments will follow the procedures outlined in Appendix A of this policy to record and communicate changes in an employee's work status and/or position in order to ensure that personnel actions, fiscal accounts and information technology access are updated in a timely manner and with appropriate written documentation.

COMPLIANCE:

Adherence to this policy and related procedures is a shared responsibility of the AHS HR Unit, Appointing Authorities, and hiring managers. Failure to utilize or document appropriate internal controls to safeguard information and equipment may result in audit findings.

ENFORCEMENT:

The Office of the Secretary may initiate reviews, assessments or other means to ensure that policies, guidelines or standards are being followed.

Procedures – Appendix A

EMPLOYEE SEPARATION

Each department shall establish procedures and delegation of responsibility consistent with the Best Practices for Employee Separation issued by the Department of Finance & Management, #BP-08. These procedures provide internal controls that pertain primarily to the IT systems and state property.

A separation check list must be fully completed upon the effective date of termination and submitted to the HR Unit for inclusion in the employee's official personnel file. The check list will be completed for all terminations. (Termination is a broad term and includes numerous types of separation, including resignation, retirement, dismissal, etc.) In those cases where termination is retroactive, the checklist should be completed within one pay period. This includes documentation of the return of all state property issued to the employee, such as keys, badges, parking passes, laptops, cell phones and network authentication devices, such as RSA tokens.

Voluntary Separation

- 1) Submit a personnel action form to AHS HR.
 - a) Actions must be received in a timely manner in order to be processed within the payroll deadlines. Contact the HR unit if there are any questions or concerns about the timeframe for submitting this paperwork.
 - b) Unless the employee is on an approved medical leave of absence, the date of separation will be that of the last day actually worked. An employee may not be on annual leave, personal leave or compensatory time off for a full day on the last day of work.
 - c) *Special Note:* When the separation is due to retirement, this must be noted on the HR action form.
 - d) For any termination of employment, the employee must enter the appropriate earnings code(s) on his/her timesheet in order to receive correct payoff of any leave benefits owed under the collective bargaining agreement.
- 2) Determine what, if any, files or documents (electronic or hard copy) in the employee's possession are public records or otherwise must be maintained and save them accordingly, consistent with any relevant record retention practices (federal or state).
- 3) Submit a work order to the AHS IT Help Desk to initiate the closure of the employee's IT accounts.
- 4) Complete the separation checklist and send it to HR for inclusion in the personnel file.

Involuntary Separation

The reason for the involuntary separation will impact the process.

- 1) Dismissal
 - a) A decision to terminate an employee due to performance or misconduct must be reviewed with the AHS HR office prior to implementation.
 - b) The manager must coordinate with the IT Help Desk Supervisor to arrange for the employee's account access to be closed. In most cases, IT accounts will be closed concurrent with, or soon after, the notice to the employee that termination is contemplated. Termination actions are confidential and the reasons for closing an employee's accounts must be kept private.
 - i) Often, the employee will be on "relief from duty", in which case IT accounts should already be suspended.
 - ii) Occasionally, as in the case of some terminations for unsatisfactory performance, the

Procedures – Appendix A

termination notice to the employee may be prospective. In all instances, the decision about ongoing access to IT accounts must be based on the overall security of the system(s).

- c) Complete the separation checklist and send it to HR.
- 2) Reduction in Force – may be handled in the same manner as a voluntary separation.
- 3) Death
 - a) Notify AHS HR immediately when it is learned that an employee in active status has died.
 - i) HR will coordinate with management to communicate with the employee's family regarding the employee's benefits, return of the employee's personal property that may be in the workplace, and retrieval of any state property in the employee's possession.
 - ii) HR will also provide instructions on the completion of the employee's timesheet.
 - b) Submit a work order to the AHS IT Help Desk to initiate the closure of the employee's IT accounts.
 - c) Complete the separation checklist and send it to HR.

ABSENCE

Time off, paid or unpaid, is a condition of employment that is subject to collective bargaining and/or state policy or legal provisions. Supervisors and managers do not have the discretion to offer paid or unpaid leave benefits except as provided within these frameworks.

Voluntary Leave of Absence

An employee may be on an approved leave of absence (paid or unpaid) for several reasons, including Family/Medical Leave, Educational Leave, Military Leave, etc. Each of these leave statuses requires approval and documentation under the provisions of law, the collective bargaining agreements, and/or state policy. When an employee is to be placed on leave of absence status, whether unpaid or using accrued leave balances, it is the manager's responsibility to:

- 1) Submit a personnel action form to AHS HR. This is required for any leave of absence, regardless of the reason or duration.
- 2) Review the employee's IT accounts and determine if the employee's access to any or all of these accounts should be suspended during the leave of absence. This decision may be based on factors that include the anticipated duration of the absence, the management level of the employee, the need or expectation for the employee to have IT access to work intermittently during the absence and/or the sensitivity of the data accessed by the employee.
- 3) Submit a work order to suspend IT access as needed.
- 4) Document the temporary return of any state-owned property in the employee's possession, including keys, phones, files, etc, which shall be secured in the employee's workplace during the leave of absence. Such documentation must be submitted to the HR Unit for inclusion in the employee's official personnel file.

Involuntary Absence: Relief from Duty or Suspension

An employee may be suspended for up to thirty (30) days for misconduct or placed on relief from duty with pay pending the outcome of an investigation or assessment of fitness for duty.

Procedures – Appendix A

1. A decision to involuntarily remove an employee from the workplace, for any reason, must first be reviewed with AHS HR in order to ensure that the action is appropriate and correctly documented.
2. **Relief from Duty:** Immediately prior to, or concurrent with, notice to the employee, the manager must coordinate with the IT Help Desk Supervisor to arrange for the employee's account access to be "frozen."
3. **Suspension:** Before an employee is suspended (or concurrently), the manager must review an employee's IT accounts and determine if the employee's access to any or all of these accounts should be "frozen" during the leave of absence. This decision may be based on the duration of the suspension and/or the sensitivity of the database(s) accessed by the employee.
4. Submit a work order to suspend IT access as needed.
5. In many cases resulting in suspension, the employee will already be on "relief from duty" and no further action is required except to submit a work order to reinstate IT access upon the employee's return to work.

HIRE, TRANSFER, PROMOTE

When a position is filled or an employee's status is changed, the hiring manager must operationalize the changes.

- 1) When hiring a new employee or transferring an employee from one position to another:
 - a) Submit a personnel action form to AHS HR. To be implemented in a timely manner, the action must be received by the second Monday of the pay period in which the employee begins the new position.
 - i) An employee ID number cannot be provided for a new hire until the employee has begun work and the action has been entered in the HR system.
 - b) Determine the IT access the employee will need in the new position and submit a work order to the AHS IT Help Desk.
 - i) Note: If transferring an employee from one AHS position to another, or otherwise changing an employee's job role, review the employee's IT accounts to determine whether or not the employee's access needs to be updated based on the requirements of the current assignment.
 - c) Notify the department business office and/or timekeeper.
 - i) **IN DCF** – contact the business office for the correct program code to assign to the employee's position.
 - ii) Obtain the department's orientation checklist and ensure that the systems are in place for the employee's start date in the new position.
 - iii) Arrange for attendance at orientation training and the distribution of orientation materials.
- 2) When making a change that affects the organizational chart, such as moving positions or changing an employee's work location or supervisory assignment, notify the department business office. The business office will determine if it is necessary to submit a personnel action form.
- 3) When preparing to submit a request to review the classification of a group of employees:
 - a) Coordinate with the HR Administrator for the department.
 - b) Inform the department business office to plan for any potential budget impact.