




EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



July, 1984



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
LYRASIS Members and Sloan Foundation

<http://archive.org/details/southcarolinadep00unse>



Dear New Employee:

I am pleased to welcome you as a member of the staff of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

This "Employee Handbook" contains some basic information about the Department that should be useful to you. The handbook describes some of your benefits, privileges and responsibilities as an employee of PRT and the State of South Carolina. All personnel are responsible for becoming acquainted with this information and for observing the rules and procedures.

If you need clarification or additional information on any particular item, your supervisor or the Personnel Section of our Department's Administrative Services Division will gladly assist you.

My best wishes to you. I hope your association with PRT will be a long, enjoyable and rewarding one.

Sincerely,


Fred P. Brinkman
Executive Director

	<u>Pages</u>
I. THE DEPARTMENT:	1-2
II. EMPLOYMENT:	
New Employees	3-4
State Ethics Law	4
Outside Employment	4
Reduction-in-Force	4-5
Classification and Opportunity for Advancement	5-6
III. PAY AND TRAVEL POLICIES:	
Pay Periods	6
Payroll Deductions	7
Travel	7
Salary Increases	7
IV. BENEFITS:	
Group Insurance	7
Optional Life Insurance	8
Social Security	8
Retirement	8
Other Insurance	9
Workmen's Compensation	9
Safety Regulations	9
Liability Insurance	9
Deferred Compensation Plan	9
Credit Union	10
Holidays	10-11
Leave Policies:	
Annual Leave	11-12
Sick Leave	12-13
Court Leave	14
Military Leave	14
Election Leave	14
Death In Immediate Family	14
Hazardous Weather and Emergency Leave	15
Compensatory Leave	15
Leave Without Pay	15
Training	16
V. WORK STANDARDS AND RULES:	
Hours of Work	16
Unauthorized Leave	16
Break Periods	17
Use of Telephones	17
Personal Attire and Uniform Code	17
Solicitation and Distribution	18
Performance Appraisal	18-19
Disciplinary Action	19
Grievance and Appeal	19
Records and Personal Data	20
VI. HANDBOOK LIMITATIONS:	20

I. THE DEPARTMENT

The General Assembly created the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism in 1967 so as to better serve the state's rapidly expanding tourism industry and to provide greater leisure-time opportunities for South Carolinians.

The Department is governed by a Commission which has ten (10) members who meet monthly to review the operations of the Department, establish policies and set priorities. Members of the PRT Commission serve without pay.

Just as the name implies, the Department has three (3) operating Divisions - the Division of State Parks, the Division of Recreation and the Division of Tourism.

The Department also has two (2) administrative divisions which work in support of the operating divisions. They are Administrative Services and Engineering and Planning.

From time to time, the Department provides staff assistance to special state functions, such as a Governor's Conference or similar activities.

The basic responsibilities of the work units within the Department are as follows:

THE DIRECTORATE:

The executive director and the deputy executive directors are referred to collectively as the Directorate. They oversee the Department's day-to-day operations.

PARKS DIVISION:

PRT operates and maintains more than 50 state parks and historic sites from the mountains to the sea, and they are used each year by more than eleven (11) million visitors. Many of the parks have vacation cottages and campgrounds, and two have resort accommodations. The parks contain many significant historic sites.

RECREATION DIVISION:

PRT's recreation staff provides technical assistance to county and city recreation departments across the state, as well as to churches, military units and hospitals.

The Division furnishes staff leadership to the South Carolina Community Improvement Board and to the Family of the Year program. The Division administers matching grants from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund to state agencies and localities for outdoor recreation projects.

TOURISM DIVISION:

Tourism is the second largest industry in South Carolina, bringing more than two billion dollars into the state each year. The PRT tourism advertising campaign and State Welcome Centers work to maintain the momentum of this vital part of the state's economy. The Division also assists communities by providing matching grants and technical assistance for local festivals and events.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION:

The Administrative Services Division provides administrative support services for the entire Department. Specific responsibilities include: budget and fiscal control, receipt and disbursement of funds and payroll; personnel recruiting, records, training and administration, coordination of central purchasing, and federal and state grant coordination. The Division maintains a system of internal analysis and audit with independent review authority for all activities of the Department.

ENGINEERING AND PLANNING:

Responsibilities of the Engineering and Planning Division include: Continuous updating of the South Carolina Overall Recreation Plan (SCORP) annually with major revisions every five years; acquisition of new lands for future state parks; management of the State Recreation Land Trust Fund for land acquisitions; studies to determine feasibility of proposed new park acquisitions; master planning for state parks; and supervision of state park construction projects.

II. EMPLOYMENT

It is the practice of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to recruit, hire, train, and promote employees without discrimination because of race, religion, color, political affiliation, physical disability, national origin, sex, or age; except where sex or age is a bona fide occupational qualification. This practice applies to all levels and phases of personnel administration within the Agency.

The South Carolina Nepotism Act makes it unlawful for the head of an agency to hire his relatives for positions in the agency. PRT's Nepotism Policy, in addition to complying with State statute, also prohibits the employment within the agency of two or more individuals who are closely related to each other by blood or marriage. While exceptions to this policy may be made under certain extraordinary circumstances, in no event will members of the same family be placed in positions in which one will supervise the other or be able to exercise any influence over administrative considerations affecting the other. Because of this, related employees must realize that their future promotional opportunities within the agency may be affected by their relationship. Please refer to Department Policy 310 for more details.

All permanent personnel of PRT are State employees and are entitled to all rights and benefits provided by the State of South Carolina.

NEW EMPLOYEES:

Initial appointments to permanent positions are made for a probationary period of six (6) months, at the end of which, if work performance has been satisfactory, the employee will automatically be placed in permanent status.

During those first six (6) months, if work performance is considered by the supervisor to be less than satisfactory, the employee will be so notified. If performance does not improve sufficiently prior to the end of the probationary period, the agency may terminate the employee's services. The supervisor may request an extension of the probationary period up to ninety (90) days if it is determined that, with continuing effort and counseling, the employee may bring the level of performance up to expectations in that time. In any event, the supervisor will evaluate the employee's job performance, complete an appraisal form, and discuss the appraisal with the employee prior to that employee being placed in permanent status.

Upon employment, you become not only a state employee, but also a representative of PRT, with a responsibility to the agency as well as the public. Your actions, both on and off the job, should reflect an awareness of that responsibility. Politeness and consideration are necessary at all times in relations with the public and fellow employees. PRT employees are expected to observe all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and conditions of employment, including safety rules, time and attendance, punctuality, appearance, and specific job requirements.

STATE ETHICS LAW:

As a state employee, you may not solicit or receive compensation in addition to regular salary for advice or assistance given in the course of your work, nor may you have business dealings representing a conflict of interest. Public employees and officials may not use the agency's purchasing process for personal articles or in any way use public employment for personal financial gain.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT:

Employment outside PRT is allowed, provided it does not represent a conflict of interest or contribute to reduced job efficiency or productivity. If either situation occurs, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

If employment is to be with another state agency, a Dual Employment Application Form must be completed and approved by the agency. Additional compensation will be allowed only when the services rendered are clearly not a part of the employee's regular job.

If in doubt concerning employment or possible conflict of interest, you should request an opinion from the agency.

REDUCTION-IN-FORCE:

Unless otherwise stated at the time of your employment, the position to which you are assigned is considered permanent, i.e., funded from one year to the next. Every effort is made by the agency to ensure that no unexpected or major fluctuations occur in either funding or positions. However, reduction in staff may become necessary because of conditions inside or outside the agency. Reductions in federal, state, or other funds, changes in programs or work loads, or other factors, may require that positions be shifted or eliminated. Depending upon the conditions surrounding the reduction, all or part of the agency's employees may be affected. Some may be reassigned, others may be separated. Some reductions may not require involuntary separations if they can be accomplished through transfer, reorganization or normal attrition.

The agency's RIF Policy details the manner in which employees will be released in a positive and equitable manner should a reduction-in-force become necessary.

Before a RIF actually occurs, any affected employee will be informed, as early as possible, of the following:

1. The reason for the layoff.
2. The benefits to which the employee is entitled.
3. The effects upon state benefits.
4. The employee's recall rights and how notification will be made when a position is available. Each employee will be given an estimate, if possible, of how long the layoff will be and the opportunities for re-employment. Effort will be made to assist the affected employees in finding other work when the layoff is to be for an indefinite or extended period.

CLASSIFICATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT:

Each position to which an appointment is made has been evaluated in relation to all other positions having similar or related duties, responsibilities and skills, including training and experience. The position is then placed in a classification which has been assigned to a specific grade and pay range. This process is designed to assure equal pay for equal work. Generally, the starting salary for a new employee is the minimum of the pay range prescribed for the grade to which the class of position is allocated. In some circumstances, and with the approval of the State Personnel Division, special recognition may be given to an employee's advanced education and prior related experience to the extent that he may be appointed to a position at a higher salary in the range.

You were selected for your initial position based upon your education, training and work experience relative to the requirements of the position, and your perceived ability to satisfactorily perform all duties and responsibilities of the job.

During your employment here, positions may become available which interest you in terms of career development or other considerations. Employees are encouraged to apply for any vacancy in which they are interested and possess the required minimum qualifications.

All permanent position vacancies will be posted at least five (5) working days prior to a commitment being made. The "Position Vacancy" announcement will be distributed from the Personnel Office and posted at all work locations. Interested employees must make application in writing to the Personnel Section. Normally, an application form should be submitted. Supervisors will allow time for employees to interview for positions.

The agency's chief concern in filling vacancies is to select the applicant best suited to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position. Agency personnel will be given priority consideration when their qualifications are approximately the same as applicants from outside the agency. When two or more employees are equally qualified, including performance ratings and work history, the one with seniority will be given preference. Note, however, that applicants protected by federal and state laws may take precedent over agency considerations and guidelines.

In most cases, employees in probationary status in any position will not be considered for vacancies.

III. PAY AND TRAVEL POLICIES

PAY PERIODS:

Paychecks are issued on the first (1st) and sixteenth (16th) day of each month, for a total of twenty-four (24) pay periods. Pay is for hours worked during the previous pay period. Checks are delivered to employees in the central office on the first (1st) and sixteenth (16th) and mailed to employees outside Columbia by 5 p.m. on those dates.

When the first (1st) or sixteenth (16th) falls on a weekend or holiday, checks will usually be issued on the last work day prior to that day.

If you are absent from work when checks are issued, either your supervisor or the payroll section will hold your check, unless previous arrangements have been made. Your check will be issued to another person or mailed to another address only if you notify the Personnel Section in writing, prior to payday.

Employees with over six months' service, who utilize a financial institution within the state, may select direct deposit (fund-transfer), in which case their account is usually credited on the morning of the first (1st) and sixteenth (16th).

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS:

The State authorizes several types of withholdings which may be deducted from your salary. These include:

Federal Withholding Tax	Mandatory
State Withholding Tax	Mandatory
Social Security	Mandatory
State Retirement	Mandatory
U. S. Savings Bonds	Optional
State Health Insurance Plan	Optional
Insurance (as may be offered to employee)	Optional
State Employees' Credit Union	Optional
Charitable Fund Drives	Optional
Parking	Optional
Deferred Compensation	Optional

TRAVEL:

Employees required to travel in performance of their duties will be reimbursed by the agency according to State regulations. Employees may be directed to operate agency vehicles, or may be authorized to use their personal vehicles. Any travel must be approved in advance by the supervisor. Departmental Policies DP101 "PRT Motor Pool" and DP102 "General Travel Policies" detail specific guidelines to follow.

SALARY INCREASES:

Cost-of-living and merit (performance) increases for State employees are determined yearly by the Legislature. Notice of policies regarding increases will be transmitted to employees as soon as possible during the new fiscal year.

IV. BENEFITS

GROUP INSURANCE:

The State of South Carolina offers a group insurance program which provides health, life and disability coverage at no cost to the employee. Expanded coverage, as well as dependent coverage, is available at nominal cost. All employees who work more than thirty (30) hours per week for more than six (6) months a year are eligible. Coverage begins in the first full month worked, but employees must enroll, within thirty-one (31) days of hire, completing a "Notice of Election". This same form must be completed to effect any changes in coverage. Employees are responsible for requesting changes in coverage.

For details on these coverages, please refer to the group health and group life - disability booklets issued to you.

OPTIONAL LIFE INSURANCE:

The State, in addition to the coverages listed above, also offers a term life insurance policy. Amounts of coverage are indexed to your salary level. If interested, contact your supervisor or the Personnel Section.

SOCIAL SECURITY:

All state employees contribute to the Federal Social Security Program. Employee contributions are matched by the state.

Detailed information about Social Security benefits are available from local offices of the Social Security Administration.

RETIREMENT:

All permanent employees of PRT are automatically members of the South Carolina Retirement System. The employee is enrolled as of the effective date of appointment to state service. The employee and the State share in the cost of retirement benefits, with the employee's contributions fixed at 4% of the first \$4,800 of earnings and 6% on all earnings over \$4,800 each calendar year. The employee's contributions are payroll deducted. While on leave without pay, an employee retains an active retirement account so long as the accumulated contributions are left intact.

The employee retains the same retirement account number when moving from one agency to another and the rate of contribution through payroll deduction remains constant unless changed by legislative amendments to the Retirement Act.

Upon separation from state service, accumulated contributions may be withdrawn plus whatever interest may be authorized by the Retirement System. If the employee leaves state service after five (5) years of creditable service in the State Retirement System, instead of taking a refund, the employee may choose to leave the money in the System and start receiving a deferred retirement allowance upon reaching age sixty (60).

State employees are eligible for disability retirement benefits after five (5) years of creditable service.

Refunds will be made no less than ninety (90) days from the date of termination.

OTHER INSURANCE:

In addition to a state sponsored insurance plan, there are a number of private companies authorized to offer plans through payroll deduction. Life, accident, and cancer are some of the types of coverage offered. Additional information concerning these plans is available from your supervisor or the Personnel Section.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION:

PRT employees are covered by the South Carolina Workmen's Compensation Law and are entitled to medical attention at State expense for injury or illness arising out of and in the course of employment. In addition, employees are paid for lost time as provided by the Workmen's Compensation Act. All work-related accidents or injuries, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to the supervisor. The supervisor, in turn, shall notify the safety officer and assist in completing any necessary forms.

SAFETY REGULATIONS:

PRT complies with all applicable federal regulations pertaining to the Occupational Safety and Health Act, as well as specific standards issued by the South Carolina Department of Labor, in order to insure a safe working environment. Employees of the Agency are expected to adhere to all safety rules and procedures. Willful violation of procedures may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

LIABILITY INSURANCE:

Professional tort liability coverage of up to \$1,500,000 is provided to all employees of the agency for actions resulting from the performance of their duties.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN:

This plan, effective July 1, 1980, allows public employees to set aside up to 25% or \$7,500 (whichever is less) of their before-tax income for retirement purposes. Deferred tax dollars are used along with employee contributions to earn interest.

Additional information may be obtained from the Personnel Section.

CREDIT UNION:

PRT employees are eligible to become members of the South Carolina State Employees' Credit Union. Various savings, checking, and loan services, with the convenience of payroll deduction, are available at the Credit Union, with offices currently in Columbia, Charleston, Clemson and Aiken. Literature and additional information may be obtained from the Personnel Section.

HOLIDAYS:

Legal holidays are set by state statute, and are observed, with pay, by all employees of state government other than temporary hourly paid personnel and contract employees.

LEGAL HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day	January 1
George Washington's Birthday	Third Monday in February
National Memorial Day	May 28
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veteran's Day	November 11
General Election Day	First Tuesday Following First Monday in November In Even Years
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Day After Thanksgiving	
Christmas Day	December 25
Day After Christmas	December 26

Employees shall select one (1) additional holiday of their choice each year.

The Governor is empowered to declare Christmas Eve of each year a holiday for state employees.

When a legal holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it shall be observed on the preceding Friday or the following Monday, respectively.

Those PRT employees who do not work the Monday through Friday workweek shall receive the same number of holidays as the Monday through Friday employees by being given special compensatory time within ninety (90) days of the occurrence of the holiday.

Because of the nature of PRT's service, which requires many facilities to remain open on holidays, it is often necessary for some of the Agency's employees to work on legal holidays. Employees working on official holidays shall be given compensatory time off within ninety (90) days of the occurrence of the holiday.

When a legal holiday falls during a period of sick or annual leave, that day will not be counted as a sick or annual leave day.

LEAVE POLICIES

Determination of leave, which is defined as excused absence from scheduled work, is based upon State Regulations or Agency Policy. Listed below are leave benefits and conditions of use. Leave requests must be directed to your supervisor, and approval granted before leave is taken.

ANNUAL LEAVE:

Probationary and permanent full-time employees, and permanent part-time employees who are scheduled to work the equivalent of one-half the agency workweek on a twelve month basis, are entitled to annual leave benefits.

Full-time employees earn annual leave according to the following schedule:

1-10 year State service 1½ working days per month.

After 10 years' State service 1½ working days per month
plus 1½ working days for
each year of continuous
service above 10 years,
up to a maximum of 30
working days per year.

Full credit is given for any month in which the employee is in pay status for one-half (½) or more of the work days of the month. This includes any period of authorized leave with pay. No credit is given if in pay status for less than one-half (½) of the work days.

Unused annual leave may be carried over from year to year up to a maximum of forty-five (45) days. The maximum amount that may be used in any one year is thirty (30) days.

Qualifying part-time employees shall earn annual leave on a pro-rata basis that produces the equivalent earnings of full-time employees (40 hour week), and all accumulations and limitations of the leave policy shall be on the pro-rata basis.

Upon termination from PRT, an employee shall be paid in lump sum for unused annual leave. However, the number of days paid in lump sum and the total number of days used by the employee in that calendar year shall not exceed forty-five (45) days. In the event of retirement or death, the lump sum of forty-five (45) days' accumulation may be paid without regard to days taken during the calendar year.

If the employee transfers to another state agency, without a break in service, all accumulated annual leave may be transferred to the gaining agency.

Annual leave is to be used for vacation time, personal reasons, or emergency situations which prevent the employee from working assigned schedules. Requests for annual leave should be submitted as far in advance as possible, on the agency Leave Request Form. While every effort is made to accommodate employees' requests for specific leave, this is not always possible. Work loads, staffing, or other factors may affect granting of leave requests. The Agency may advance or delay annual leave in order to insure the proper level of operation in the work unit.

SICK LEAVE:

Probationary and permanent full-time employees, and permanent part-time employees who are scheduled to work the equivalent of one-half of the agency workweek on a twelve month basis, are entitled to sick leave benefits.

Full-time employees earn $1\frac{1}{2}$ days of sick leave per month for each month in which they are in pay status for one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) or more of the work days of the month. This includes any period of authorized leave with pay. No credit is given if in pay status for less than one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the work days.

Unused sick leave may be carried over from year to year up to a maximum of 180 days.

Qualifying part-time employees shall earn sick leave on a pro-rata basis that produces the equivalent earnings of full-time employees (40 hour week) and all accumulations and limitations of the leave policy shall be on that pro-rata basis.

Upon termination from PRT, an employee shall forfeit all accumulated sick leave. If the employee transfers to another State agency, without a break in service, all accumulated sick leave may be transferred to the gaining agency.

Sick leave is to be used when the employee is unable to perform his/her duties due to illness (including pregnancy), when exposed to a contagious disease such that presence on duty could endanger the health of co-workers, and medical or dental appointments which cannot reasonably be scheduled during non-working hours.

In the event of prolonged illness or disability, including pregnancy, which exceeds the amount of accrued sick leave, permanent employees may apply for leave without pay which, along with any paid leave that has been taken, shall not exceed 180 calendar days. The leave without pay shall be granted with reinstatement privileges to the same position or one of comparable grade for which the employee is qualified. A written request, specifying inclusive dates, should be made to your supervisor who will forward it to the Personnel Officer for approval. A physician's certificate or other acceptable documentation describing the disability and giving the projected inclusive dates of disability is required prior to approval.

Sick leave requests for medical or dental appointments should be made as far in advance as possible. In the event sudden illness prevents you from being at your assigned work station, you must notify your supervisor or other appropriate authority as soon as possible either before the start of the shift or within thirty minutes thereafter. A Leave Request Form should be completed as soon as you are able to return to work.

Sick leave requests are approved by your supervisor. If there is reason to believe that sick leave is being abused, the agency may require the certification of a physician or other acceptable documentation before granting the leave request.

LEAVE DURING PREGNANCY:

As described above, sick leave requests for pregnancy shall be treated the same as illness or disability leave requests. This means that a physician's statement is required certifying the last day allowed to work before delivery, as well as certification to return to work after delivery. The individual employee's health status and job duties will be determining factors in establishing inclusive dates.

After medical certification to return to work, any requests for additional time off shall be treated as a personal leave request, requiring the use of annual leave, or leave without pay.

COURT LEAVE:

An employee who is summoned as a member of a jury or as a witness shall be granted leave with pay. Any jury fees and travel payment shall be retained by the employee. A copy of the summons is to be given to the supervisor at the time of such leave request, and shall be placed in the employee's permanent personnel folder. Whenever the employee is excused from such duty, he is expected to return to work for the remainder of his normal workday, or take annual leave. If ill, sick leave should be used.

An employee subpoenaed in the line of duty to represent PRT, as a witness or defendant, shall be considered to be performing his job duties. All applicable regulations covering travel and reimbursement that may be incurred while serving in this capacity shall apply.

An employee attending court due to personal litigation will be required to use annual leave, with a request for such leave made to your supervisor.

MILITARY LEAVE:

Employees who are members of the Reserve or National Guard may be granted up to fifteen (15) calendar days per year of leave with pay for annual field training or other active duty. Such requests must be accompanied by a copy of the employee's official orders, which shall be placed in the employee's permanent personnel folder.

In the event such employees are called upon to serve during an emergency, up to thirty (30) additional days shall be granted.

ELECTION LEAVE:

An employee who resides at such distance from his work station as to preclude voting outside working hours may be authorized a maximum of two (2) hours of leave with pay for this purpose. No employee may be granted such leave to work at the polls during elections.

DEATH IN IMMEDIATE FAMILY:

An employee, upon request, shall be granted up to three (3) consecutive work days of leave with pay on the death of any member of the employee's immediate family. Immediate family is defined as the spouse, great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of either the employee or spouse.

Such requests shall be made to the supervisor using the agency Leave Request form.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER AND EMERGENCY LEAVE:

In the event of extreme weather or other specified emergency conditions, the Governor shall issue a "Declaration of Emergency" stating that state employees not report to work. Unless such an order has been issued, all employees are expected to report to work as usual. The declaration may be applicable to all employees in the entire state, or only those employees in specified geographical regions.

Notification to leave work during work hours will be made by the agency.

Notification between the hours of 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. will be handled as follows:

All "Declarations of Emergency" will be transmitted by the Governor's Office to radio and television stations.

Agency personnel will assume an individual responsibility to be informed of their work reporting status.

Employees who lose time from work due to such conditions shall be given the option of:

1. Making up the time lost from work, to be scheduled by the agency.
2. Using accrued annual leave or compensatory leave.
3. Taking leave without pay.

COMPENSATORY LEAVE:

Occasional extra time may be required of any position within PRT, depending upon work loads, schedules, emergencies, etc., and is considered a part of the employee's normal job responsibility. However, under certain conditions, compensatory leave may be granted to employees for excessive extra work time or travel involved in performance of their duties.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY:

Any requests for leave without pay for personal reasons should be forwarded to the Personnel Officer for review. All such requests must be approved by the Executive Director or his designee.

TRAINING

The Agency may require certain employees to take specific training for performance improvement or certification as required by law. Additional training may be offered to the employee as a way of improving skills for other positions within the agency. The employee will be allowed time to attend such authorized training and all costs incurred shall be paid for by the agency. However, payment is not authorized for courses to maintain any type of professional certification, unless that certification is a job requirement, as designated by the agency.

Employees wishing to further their education are encouraged to schedule classes during off-duty hours. When this is not possible, the agency will make reasonable adjustments in the employee's work schedule in order to allow class attendance. When neither is possible, permanent full-time employees may be allowed to use accrued annual leave for this purpose.

V. WORK STANDARDS AND RULES

HOURS OF WORK:

Central Office standard hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, with one hour for lunch. Lunch hours shall be observed between the hours of 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Variable work schedules may be approved for certain positions at the discretion of the Division Director. The hours of work may vary during the year at state parks and welcome centers because of the seasonal change of daylight hours and fluctuation in public usage of those facilities. The workweek and conditions are specified and explained for each position at the time of employment.

Work loads or schedules may require employees to work occasional overtime or otherwise adjust their normal workweek.

UNAUTHORIZED LEAVE:

Employees are expected to observe daily work hours. Failure to report to work or to notify your supervisor promptly, repeated tardiness, extended lunch periods, leaving work stations without authorization, or early departures will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

An employee on unauthorized leave will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. An employee on unauthorized leave for three (3) consecutive workdays will be presumed to have abandoned the position and to have resigned.

BREAK PERIODS:

Breaks of up to fifteen (15) minutes may be granted in the morning and afternoon. The scheduling of such breaks is controlled by the supervisor in such a manner as to insure adequate coverage of the section.

Employees may be asked to skip a break period if the work load dictates. Break periods are not to be used in conjunction with leave or lunch hours. Unused break periods do not accumulate.

USE OF TELEPHONES:

The telephones in the facilities operated by PRT have been installed for the purpose of conducting official business. It is important, therefore, that use of the telephone for personal local calls be restricted to an absolute minimum. Personal long distance calls are prohibited.

When using the telephone on official business, the impression an employee gives by tone of voice and the manner of speaking will leave a lasting impression upon the caller. This may be the only contact the caller will have with PRT, and it is vital to create a good impression. An employee answering the telephone should identify the section and/or give their name as directed by the supervisor. Be friendly, polite and businesslike.

If receiving an inquiry that should be referred to another member of the staff, so notify the caller and transfer the call to the appropriate person. If the person is not available, take a message that will include the name of the caller, time of day, telephone number, and any other pertinent information.

PERSONAL ATTIRE AND UNIFORM CODE:

As representatives of the agency, employees are expected to present a neat, well-groomed and businesslike appearance. The nature of a position will often determine the type of dress required. While the agency has no desire to dictate specific attire standards, it does reserve the right to insure that a proper businesslike appearance is maintained by all employees, and that individual attire preferences do not disrupt or affect the work environment.

Many positions within PRT require the employee to wear a uniform. Specific, detailed guidelines, in the form of a Uniform Code, govern such positions, and will be discussed with affected employees.

SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION:

1. Solicitation or distribution by persons other than employees of the agency who are on official state business in those areas of the agency which are not open to the public is prohibited. Solicitation and distribution by persons other than employees of the agency in those areas of the agency which are open to the public is prohibited to the extent that such solicitation or distribution results in substantial disruption of or material interference with administrative or agency activities.
2. Solicitation by employees of an agency on agency property during working time is prohibited. Working time is the time an employee is expected to be engaged in the official duties of a position.
3. Distribution of literature by employees of an agency on agency property in non-working areas during working time, as defined above, is prohibited.
4. Distribution of literature by employees of an agency on agency property in working areas is prohibited.

Solicitation by public charities, certified by the Secretary of State, may be conducted with approval of the Executive Director.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL:

At the time of your initial employment with PRT, the "planning" stage of the agency's Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) will be completed by you and your supervisor. Your responsibilities and general duties and objectives for your position will be listed on the form. The EPMS is designed to both evaluate your job performance and assist you in carrying out your duties satisfactorily. The supervisor is responsible not only for evaluating work performance but also for consulting with the employee on a continuing basis to keep the employee apprised of progress, encourage efforts to advance and give assistance if needed.

Prior to the end of your probationary period, the EPMS will be completed and discussed with you. Thereafter, appraisals will be made at least once a year, normally on the anniversary date of the last appraisal. An exception is made to this procedure whenever the employee receives a promotion, demotion or reassignment to a new class, in which case the next appraisal will be six (6) months from the date of the action, regardless of length of service in the agency.

Additionally, an appraisal may be made at any time, when in the view of the agency, performance does not meet performance requirements. Such appraisals are designed to make the employee aware of specific work deficiencies and to give the employee an opportunity to improve. However, continued failure to perform satisfactorily will result in either demotion, transfer or termination.

Performance appraisals become a part of the employee's permanent personnel folder, and may affect such things as merit salary increases, promotions, and reduction-in-force status.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

Employees of PRT are expected to comply with all applicable agency rules, regulations and procedures, and, in addition, conduct themselves in a proper businesslike manner at all times.

All situations that require disciplinary action will be administered in accordance with DP303 "Standards of Disciplinary Actions". All new employees are required to review this policy; any questions should be directed to your supervisor.

GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL:

All permanent PRT employees may present and seek answers to complaints or grievances without fear of restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal. Such matters normally are resolved by discussion at the section or division level; however, if this is not possible, employees may seek redress through the Agency's formal grievance procedures, specified in DP301 "Grievance Policy and Appeal Procedures".

All new employees are required to review this policy; any questions should be directed to your supervisor.

RECORDS AND PERSONAL DATA:

An official permanent personnel folder is retained on every employee by the Personnel Officer, and is available for review by the employee at any time, as outlined in DP307 "Personnel Information Request". Except for those items specified in the Freedom of Information Act, no employee data is divulged to outside sources without written permission of the employee.

Employees are obligated to keep personal data in their folder up to date. The Personnel Section should be advised as soon as possible of changes in name, address, marital status, dependents, insurance or retirement beneficiary, etc.

VI. HANDBOOK LIMITATIONS

The wording of the several applicable state laws, contracts, and regulations is official, and to the extent that the wording of any parts of this handbook is at variance, that of the state laws, contracts, regulations, etc. take precedence. Further, opinions, interpretations, or new legislation may add to, modify, or delete sections of this handbook.

This handbook is not meant to be all inclusive; additional details on any subject, or clarification may be obtained from specific agency policies, your supervisor, or the Personnel Section.

