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State of Maine Employee Handbook 2013

Maine Human Resources

Administrative and Financial Services

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As a new employee of the State of Maine, you join many dedicated individuals who have chosen to serve the citizens of the State of Maine through a career in public service. State Employees provide valuable and important services that impact the quality of the lives of citizens across this great state.

The State of Maine Employee Handbook will provide you with an overview of the history and structure of Maine State Government, give a general description of the benefits you are eligible to receive as a State Employee, and outline the policies and procedures that are the rules of employment. Many of the topics covered in the Handbook will be covered during your New Employee Orientation training or the Department Orientation with your supervisor and Human Resources Representative.

If you have any questions regarding these materials, please feel free to contact your supervisor, your Human Resources representative, or the Bureau of Human Resources.

State Employees are motivated by a desire to do well, to make a difference and to preserve and improve the quality of life for the people of Maine. Maine is a wonderful place to live; thank you for choosing a career in public service.
The present government of the State of Maine was organized in 1820 upon the general political principles of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

On March 3, 1820, the Congress of the United States passed an act that completed the separation and declared Maine to be an independent state.

In 1827, after seven years of heated debate, the State legislature agreed to place the government buildings on Weston's Hill in Augusta where they stand today.

Through the passing of the years, the general outlines of the government have remained, although the State has passed through periods of reorganization and expansion to meet the increased demands upon the governing agencies.

The system of government, set up in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, provides for the protection of individual citizens and minority groups through a continuing cycle of checks and balances.

The Legislature is composed of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives, each having a restrictive influence over the other. The Governor, through power given to him by the Constitution, can veto the legislation of the Senate and the House of Representatives; however, it is provided that a two-thirds vote of the elected membership of both houses may enact a law notwithstanding the veto of the Governor.

The Governor and the members of the Legislature are elected by the people. The Governor is elected for a four-year term, and the members of the Legislature for two-year terms. The Secretary of State, the Treasurer of the State and the Attorney General are elected by the Legislature for terms of two years. The State Auditor is elected by the Legislature for a term of four years.

The Senate is composed of 31-35 Senators who choose one of their members to act as President. The House of Representatives, composed of 151 members, chooses a member as Speaker.

The heads of Departments, Commissions and Boards are appointed by the Governor subject to confirmation by the Legislature. The judicial power of the State is vested in the Supreme Judicial Court, the Superior Court, the Probate Court and the District Courts. All Justices and Judges (except Probate Court) are appointed by the Governor and are subject to confirmation by the Legislature.

The Legislature meets every two years and appropriates funds for the operation of State Government. Approximately 45% of the State’s activities are financed by the General Fund. Revenues for General Fund appropriations are derived primarily from personal and corporate income taxes, inheritance and estate taxes, cigarette taxes, taxes on public utilities, taxes on insurance companies, net income from lottery sales and sales and use taxes.

Department expenditures are limited to authorized allotment. All departments must submit budgets to the State Budget Office. The Governor-elect, or the Governor, reviews the budget estimates and makes necessary revisions. The resulting budget document is presented by the Governor to the Legislature for final approval.
The Maine State Constitution created our government system with three co-equal branches - the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches. The State of Maine also has three Constitutional Officers: the Secretary of State, the State Treasurer and the State Attorney General and one Statutory Officer—the State Auditor.

The Executive Branch
The Executive Branch is responsible for the execution of the laws enacted by the Legislature and is headed by the Governor. The Governor is elected every four years and no individual may serve more than two consecutive terms in this office. Some Executive Branch agencies/departments include:

- Administrative & Financial Services
- Agriculture Food & Rural Resources
- Conservation
- Corrections
- Defense, Veterans & Emergency Mgmt.
- Economic & Community Development
- Education
- Environmental Protection
- Health & Human Services
- Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- Labor
- Marine Resources
- Professional & Financial Regulation
- Public Safety
- Transportation

Some Boards and Commissions under the Executive Branch include:

- Maine Human Rights Commission
- Maine Arts Commission
- Workers’ Compensation Board
- Public Utilities Commission
- Maine Historical Preservation Commission
- State Lottery Commission
- Maine Labor Relations Board

The Judicial Branch
The Judicial Branch is responsible for interpreting the laws and is headed by the Supreme Judicial Court. All Judicial Officers are appointed by the Governor and serve a term of seven years. Some Judicial Branch agencies/departments include:

- Supreme Judicial Court
- Superior Court
- District Court
- Small Claims Court
- Administrative Office of the Courts

Some State Agencies which are independent of the three Branches include:

- Finance Authority of Maine
- Governor Baxter School for the Deaf
- Maine Community College System
- Maine Governmental Facilities Authority
- Maine Maritime Academy
- Maine Municipal Bank
- Maine Port Authority
- Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation
- Maine Public Employees Retirement System
- Maine State Housing Authority
- Maine Turnpike Authority
- University of Maine System

The Legislative Branch
The Legislative Branch is responsible for making the laws and is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate has 35 member who are elected every two years and the House has 151 members who are also elected every two years.
Introduction

As employees of the State of Maine, you and your dependents are offered health and dental insurance towards which the State pays a percentage of the premium for most employees. Most State Employees contribute a percentage of their total earnable compensation to the Maine Public Employees Retirement System (MainePERS). The State, on behalf of all State Employees, contributes an additional amount as a percentage of employees’ total earnings.

All Maine PERS materials must be completed within the first fourteen (14) days of your employment

All State Employees are eligible for insurance coverage though the State Group Life Insurance Program and are automatically insured for the amount of applicable coverage unless they refuse this coverage.

Insurance forms must be completed within the first seven (7) days of your employment

Deferred Compensation is a tax deferred, long-term savings plan. This plan is useful as a supplement to retirement. Additional information will be included in your New Employee Orientation packet. Questions should be directed to Employee Health & Benefits or visit the website at www.maine.gov/deh for more information.

Child Care Reimbursement is available as a benefit to some employees. Check with your HR representative or collective bargaining agreement.

To ensure that you are well informed of your benefits and the eligibility criteria, do not hesitate to ask your HR representative or your supervisor. Additional information is directly available through departments or agencies that oversee the specific benefit.
• Health & Dental Insurance

The following information is a brief explanation about your health and dental insurance benefits available through the State of Maine Health Insurance Program. **Please be aware there are several key enrollment deadlines that you must meet within the first fourteen days of employment with the State of Maine.**

As a new employee, your health and dental insurance becomes effective on the first of the month following the completion of one month of employment, provided that application for enrollment is completed and submitted to Employee Health & Benefits in a timely manner.

Example: Start Date (April 4) = Insurance Start Date (June 1)

• Health Insurance

The State’s health insurance is administered by Aetna. Split contracts are available for husband and wife and domestic partners who work for the state. Contact Employee Health and Benefits for more information at 287-6780.

• Annual Deductibles

A summary of various out of pocket expenses you may expect under the State of Maine’s Point of Service health plan can be found online; visit [www.maine.gov/deh](http://www.maine.gov/deh) for additional information.

• Pharmacy Benefit

Benefits are provided for prescription drugs through retail pharmacies and/or mail service. You may obtain prescriptions by utilizing your health insurance I.D. card. For each prescription, there is a tiered co-payment for both brand name and generic drugs.

• Preferred Hospitals and Primary Care Physicians


• Dental Insurance

The State pays for dental coverage through Northeast Delta Dental and their network of providers for full-time employees, but the cost of dependent premiums is the responsibility of the subscriber. As the periods for enrolling dependents are limited, you should refer to your insurance handbooks for additional information.

If you choose to receive services from an out-of-network dentist, the level of reimbursement, including the calendar year/lifetime maximums will be lower. Visit [www.maine.gov/deh](http://www.maine.gov/deh) for a link to Delta Dental.

• Making Changes

Changes can be made to Health and Dental Policies within 60 days of hire, during an annual Open Enrollment period and within 60 days of a “life event.” Open enrollment is typically held in May or June for a July 1st effective date.

For further information and questions, contact Employee Health and Benefits at 287-6780 or visit [www.maine.gov/deh](http://www.maine.gov/deh) for information links.
When you retire, you may choose between receiving full benefits or receiving one of the several options that provide you with a reduced benefit and your beneficiary with a benefit as well. If you have chosen an option which includes concurrent payment to you and your beneficiary during your lifetime, a benefit will continue to be paid to your beneficiary after your death.

If you terminate covered employment, you may request a refund of your contributions plus any accrued interest. The contributions made on your behalf by the State are not refundable to you. If you terminate covered employment, withdraw your contributions, and subsequently re-join the System, you must accrue two continuous years of creditable service before you become eligible to purchase past creditable service. If your termination is the result of a layoff, the two year requirement is waived.

The Maine Public Employees Retirement System (MainePERS) was established to administer certain benefits that are available to employees of the State of Maine who are members of the MainePERS. These benefits include:

- Service retirement benefits, which provide income to a member after the member retires;
- Disability retirement benefits which provide income to a member who becomes disabled (as defined by MainePERS law) while in service and before the member retires; and
- Death benefits, which are paid to a member’s designated beneficiary (or family or estate, if no designation has been made) if the member dies before he/she retires. (The designated beneficiary is the person or persons a member has named to receive a benefit in such circumstances).

The following information is intended to familiarize you with the Maine Public Employees Retirement System. The contents cannot be taken as the basis for any contractual rights between the State and/or the System and its members. If there is a question of interpretation, the governing law is the final authority. Periodically, there are changes to the statutes and rules relating to MainePERS.

**Service Retirement Benefit**

Most State Employees contribute 7.65% of their total earnable compensation into MainePERS. The State, on behalf of all State Employees, contributes an additional amount as a percentage of employees’ total earnings.

You may retire at what is your ‘normal’ retirement age. This is age 60 for those who have had ten years of service or were age 60 with one year of service as of July 1, 1993. Those who did not have ten years of service on that date may retire at age 62, provided they either have 10 years of service when they reach that age or have been employed by the State for at least one year immediately preceding retirement. You may also retire after you have twenty-five years of service and have not reached your normal retirement age; in this case, your retirement benefit will be reduced.
:: Section I :: Employee Benefits :: MainePERS ::

For more information about the following topics, visit [www.MainePERS.org](http://www.MainePERS.org), or call 512.3100 or 800.451.9800 and a representative will discuss your case with you.

- Basic Life Insurance and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Coverage
- Beneficiaries
- Dependent Life Insurance
- Disability Benefits
- Disabled Dependent Children
- Supplemental Insurance
- Survivor Benefits
**Deferred Compensation**

Deferred Compensation (IRS Section 457b) Plans are available to all State Employees. You may enroll at any time to authorize a portion of your salary to be tax deferred into a plan annually. This option is a powerful adjunct to retirement plans, social security and other savings.

You, the employee, work with an approved financial services vendor to determine how to invest your tax deferred funds.

You may defer a minimum of $20 per pay period. The annual limits are set by the IRS and typically change every January 1st. The current 2013 annual limits are $17,500-$35,000.

For more information about specifics contact any of the local representatives of the financial services organizations found at [maine.gov/deh](http://maine.gov/deh). This is not a benefit administered by the State of Maine.

**Flexible Spending Reimbursement Accounts**

Flexible spending accounts allow you to have funds deducted pre-tax from your bi-weekly paycheck to pay for either out-of-pocket medical expenses or dependent/elder care expenses. You should plan carefully, for this is a plan governed by IRS rules where you must use what you set aside within the annual time period.

Dependent Care Accounts have a $5,000 annual limit and Medical Spending Accounts have a $2,500 annual limit. Both accounts require a small pre-tax. For more information, visit HR Support & Consulting at [www.hrscflex.com](http://www.hrscflex.com), call 1.866.655.5397, or visit [www.maine.gov/deh](http://www.maine.gov/deh) (click the Flexible Spending Accounts link).

**Blue View Vision**

A voluntary vision plan, Blue View Vision offers savings on frames, lenses or contact lenses with choices of network optometrists, ophthalmologists, opticians and retail providers. You may enroll within 60 days of hire, during the Open Enrollment period held every October or within 60 days of a life event.
Various types of leaves or approved time away from work are available to State employees. Please see your HR representative, or check the collective bargaining agreement pertaining to your position for more specific information. If you are a part-time employee, your HR representative can advise you regarding applicable pro-rated benefits.

**Vacation Leave**

Vacation leave is based on an employee’s length of service and is accrued as follows:

- 0 — 5 years = 1 day per month
- 6 — 10 years = 1¼ days per month
- 11 — 15 years = 1½ days per month
- 16 — 20 years = 1¾ days per month
- Over 20 years = 2 days per month

Vacation leave is approved by your immediate supervisor. For organizational planning, when possible, leave should be requested as far in advance as possible. Vacation leave may not be unreasonably denied.

If you transfer to another appointing authority without interruption of service to the State, you have options for keeping and/or “cashing in” your unused accumulated vacation time. Contact your HR representative for more information.

**Sick Leave**

Sick leave credit is earned at the rate of one day per month regardless of your length of service.

Sick leave may be used for valid illness, necessary medical or dental care or other disability of the employee or a member of the employee’s immediate family which requires the attention of the employee or the presence of the employee.

A medical examination or doctor’s certificate may be required on account of use of sick leave for five (5) or more consecutive workdays, or because of repeated absences on days preceding or days following a holiday or weekend.

An employee who transfers to another appointing authority without interruption of service to the State shall retain their accumulated unused sick leave credits.

**Childbearing and Adoption Leave**

Leave shall be granted to an employee without salary for a period not to exceed one year inclusive of any period of disability. Employees shall have the option of using accumulated compensating time and vacation leave during such period. Employees shall be allowed to retain insurance benefits at their expense during such a leave.
:: Section II :: Leaves ::

• **Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)**

  The State of Maine is covered by the State and Federal Family and Medical Leave Act laws. In accordance with these laws, eligible State Employees are provided up to twelve (12) weeks of Family and Medical Leave each year. Family and Medical Leave may be used for the birth and first-year care of a child, adoption/foster care placements, a serious health condition of the employee and the serious health condition of a spouse, parent or child of the employee.

  If the Family and Medical Leave use is based on a serious health condition, the employee must use any accrued sick leave before being placed on unpaid leave. During the unpaid portion of a Family and Medical Leave, the State continues to pay its share of the cost of Health and Dental Insurance. Employees who have or foresee a need to use Family and Medical Leave should contact their HR representative for eligibility and program details.

• **Holidays**


• **Bereavement Leave**

  Employees are allowed bereavement leave with full pay for absences resulting from the death of certain members of the employee’s immediate family. Check with your HR representative for more details.

• **Jury Duty**

  Employees of the State are entitled to leave with pay when called for jury service. Please contact your HR representative concerning jury service fees.
**Military Leave**
Employees who are members of the National Guard or other authorized State military or naval forces and those employees who are members of the Army, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard or Naval Reserve shall be entitled to a leave of absence from their respective duties without loss of pay. They shall accrue sick and annual leave and seniority during periods of annual training not to exceed seventeen (17) calendar days in any federal fiscal year.

**Personal Days**
Personal Leave Days are authorized for employees in certain employment classifications. Your HR representative can advise you if you are entitled to Personal Leave Days.

**Educational Leave**
The State of Maine is interested in its employees increasing their knowledge and skills and improving work techniques and procedures. Educational leave requests are subject to the review and approval of your Department. Contact your HR representative to learn of your department’s polices for participation.

**Voluntary Employee Incentive Programs**
Voluntary Employee Incentive Programs (also known as Voluntary Cost Savings Programs) include Reduced Workweek, Sporadic Leave, Unpaid Leave and Flexible Position Staffing. For more information visit www.maine.gov/bhr and follow the links to Rules & Policies and Policy & Practices Manual (www.maine.gov/bhr/rules_policies/policy.htm). You may also contact your HR representative for more information.
Your rights and benefits as an employee of the State of Maine are governed by Civil Service Law, the Civil Service Rules and the collective bargaining agreement for the bargaining unit to which your position may be assigned, in addition to other employment laws that affect all employees in Maine.

For information about services offered by the union, contact your workplace union representative or your Human Resources Representative. A list of HR Representatives can be found on the BHR Website at www.maine.gov/bhr and follow links to Employee Center and Personnel Officers (www.maine.gov/bhr/employee_center/personnel.htm).

- **Collective Bargaining**
  If you are in a classified position assigned to the Administrative Services, Professional & Technical Services, Law Enforcement, Operations, Maintenance and Support Services, Supervisory Services, Maine State Trooper or Institutional Services bargaining units, you are exclusively represented for purposes of collective bargaining by either the Maine State Employees Association (MSEA), the Maine State Troopers Association (MTA), the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), or the Maine State Law Enforcement Association (MSLEA). This is true whether or not you become a member of the applicable union.

If you are a **classified employee** who is excluded from being in a bargaining unit (a ‘confidential’ employee), your rights and benefits are governed by Civil Service Law and the Civil Service Rules. A Benefits Package for Confidential Employees can be found on the Employee Relations webpage at www.maine.gov/oer.

If you are an **unclassified employee** in a position assigned to a bargaining unit, your benefits are governed by law and the contract for your bargaining unit.

If you are an **unclassified ‘confidential’ employee**, your rights and benefits are governed only by law. Should you have any questions about your rights and benefits, contact your Human Resources Representative.
Performance Management System & Performance Appraisal

The State’s performance management and evaluation system is designed to help individuals and units meet their work goals. Feedback on performance is provided on an annual and ongoing basis.

The intent of performance management is to enable all employees to fully understand their job responsibilities and performance expectations, to understand how their contributions help their organization meet its goals and objectives, and to identify employee development needs. Performance management is not an annual event but an ongoing process. There should never be any surprises at the end of a performance rating period as managers provide continual feedback, both formally and informally, throughout the rating period.

Performance management is based on the premise that clarity of what is to be accomplished on the job and the supporting behaviors (to support work performance), plus ongoing support from management will lead to individual and organizational performance improvement.

There should never be any surprises at the end of a performance rating period, as managers provide continual feedback, both formally and informally.

All employees must receive a performance rating of 'MET EXPECTATIONS' or higher to receive a merit increase. Performance evaluations must be completed for all classified and unclassified employees at the following times:

- Prior to completion of a probationary period (additionally, supervisors must review job performance with all new employees after three months of employment)
- At least once annually when not serving a probationary period
- Within 30 days for all employees who transfer or change raters, providing more than 90 days have elapsed since their last evaluation.

Performance evaluations are based on valid job descriptions, performance expectations, and competencies as described on the State Performance Management Form. Your supervisor keeps a performance file that contains information about your performance during the year. This file serves as an important source of information for the performance evaluation.
§ Notification of Absenteeism/Tardiness

It is the responsibility of an employee to notify their supervisor in advance if they are going to be absent from or late for work on any given day. In cases where it is impossible to give notice in advance, the supervisor should be notified as soon as possible. A reasonable explanation will always be required for an unexpected absence or lateness. You should be aware of the process for notification of your absence or lateness within your department.

§ Travel and Expense Procedure

For some employees who travel in the course of their jobs, reasonable and equitable reimbursement of expenses incurred will be provided. To view the Travel Policy, requirements for travel (in-state as well as out-of-state), mileage reimbursement, meals and incidental expenses (MI&E), lodging and travel advances, visit www.maine.gov/osc/travel/index.htm.
The Maine State Civil Service System which governs the selection and advancement of employees within the Executive Branch of Maine State Government is based upon merit principles without regard to sex, age, race, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, and/or physical or mental disability. The State’s Civil Service Law may be found in the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated (M.R.S.A.) Title 5, Chapters 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, and 372.

All positions within the Executive Branch of Maine State Government are classified using the State Classification Plan. Classified competitive and classified direct hire positions fall within civil service requirements. In general, the requirements do not apply to unclassified positions, although certain sections of the Civil Service Law do apply.

**Open Competitive Positions**
All classified competitive positions are filled from Employment Registers as vacancies in these classifications occur. The Bureau of Human Resources publishes Career Opportunity Bulletins for jobs open to application. These bulletins contain important information about the duties and responsibilities of the job, minimum qualifications required, and the process for placement on the registers. You should review the bulletins for any job title which interests you prior to completing the application form.

Bulletins and applications are available at the Bureau of Human Resources in Augusta or at [www.maine.gov/bhr](http://www.maine.gov/bhr).

Placement on an employment or promotional register can be a direct result of how carefully and thoroughly an application is prepared. One application must be completed for each job title of interest and submitted to the Bureau of Human Resources. Visit [www.maine.gov/bhr](http://www.maine.gov/bhr) to view and apply.

Eligibility lists called **Employment Registers** are maintained for each classification which has been recruited and consist of all applicants who have met the qualifications required.

Register lengths vary from 3-6 months for special recruitment to a maximum of 36 months for some agency promotional classifications. Contact the Bureau of Human Resources if you have any questions at 624-7761.
The final part of the selection process is a **probationary period** which is used to observe an employee’s work closely before gaining permanent status. This is usually six (6) months in duration but may be extended by the appointing authority for up to an additional (6) months.

**Salary Progression** from one step to the next is based on the award of a merit increase. Other salary changes may be the result of a change in classification or an increase in base pay negotiated by labor and management. To learn more about your jobs and salary, see your supervisor or department Human Resources Representative.

The recruitment and filling of classified **direct hire** positions is accomplished by individual departments and agencies on an ‘as needed’ basis. The applications used for these positions are submitted to the recruiting agency directly. Direct Hire employment applications and instructions can be found at [www.maine.gov/bhr](http://www.maine.gov/bhr).

Visit [www.maine.gov/bhr](http://www.maine.gov/bhr) to review open positions, locate application forms and other information to manage your career in State Government. Your HR representative can also answer specific questions.
Maine State Government is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer which means that its employees’ civil rights are protected under a variety of state and federal laws. Each agency has an EEO representative who is available to provide technical assistance to both employees and supervisors in the interpretation and application of these laws and to investigate complaints of illegal discrimination. There is also a State EEO Coordinator in the Bureau of Human Resources who has overall responsibility for EEO in the State’s civil service system.

- **Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA)**
  Each agency in State Government has an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Plan that reflects the circumstances that are unique to that agency. All employees with supervisory responsibility are required to receive training in EEO and harassment. Your department plan is modeled on the Department of Administrative and Financial Services policy which can be viewed at the BHR website ([EEO/AA Policy Statement](#)). A copy will be provided to you for review and questions in your agency.

- **Workplace Harassment**
  The State of Maine recognizes the dignity of the individual employee and the right of employees to work in an environment which is free of intimidation and harassment. Such intimidation or harassment based on race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, whistleblower activity, previous assertion of a claim or right under the Maine Workers’ Compensation Act, or marital status is a violation of State policy. All employees with supervisory responsibility are required to receive training.

  All employees are required to attend a Workplace Harassment session within their first year of employment with a refresher every two years. The State of Maine Policy Statement Against Harassment can be found at the BHR website ([Policy Statement Against Harassment](#)). Any questions or concerns can be addressed to your HR representative or your EEO Officer.

- **Domestic Violence and the Workplace**
  An Executive Order issued in October 2004 ordered that all agencies develop a Domestic Violence policy, review personnel policies to ensure that no victims of Domestic Violence were being discriminated against and provide employees with training to ensure a coordinated response in the workplace. All employees are required to attend a training session. Questions for available training sessions can be directed to your supervisor, your HR representative or the Bureau of Human Resources ([www.maine.gov/bhr](http://www.maine.gov/bhr)).

- **Americans with Disabilities Act**
  The State of Maine recognizes that all citizens have the right to fully participate in leading productive and active lives without regard to their disabilities, and actively works to ensure compliance with applicable Federal and State requirements governing employment practices. Questions can be directed to your HR representative or the State EEO Coordinator at 287.4651 or TTY 888.577.6690.
:: Section VI :: Legal Requirements ::

- **Political Activity (Hatch Act)**
  Political activities of State Employees in the Executive Branch are regulated by State and/or Federal laws. Generally, State and Federal political activity laws are enacted to prohibit covered State Employees in the Executive Branch from becoming candidates for elective office in a partisan public election while employed by the State, and allow covered State Employees in the Executive Branch the freedom to express and practice their individual political opinions and ideas, subject to limitations.

  Classified and unclassified employees of the Executive Branch are subject to Maine’s Political Activity Law (Title 5, Section 7056A). This law allows an employee of the Executive Branch to solicit funds for a political purpose as long as that employee does not use the property or facilities of the State for this purpose or misuse his or her position of authority with the State and as long as other stated conflicts of interest and acts of coercion are avoided. Even so, employees may be limited in this activity by the Federal Law that governs the political activity of State and Local Government employees. For further details, please see your HR representative, the law and Civil Service Bulletin 13.1K.

- **Seat Belt Rule**
  The State’s Seat Belt Rule was promulgated to protect and allow for all State Employees to be safe when in the course of travel, either in a State-owned or non-State owned vehicle, while on business for the State.

  Whenever a State Employee operates or rides in a State-owned vehicle or non-State-owned Vehicle while on business for the State, that employee shall use the seat belt when the vehicle is in motion. Passengers riding with State Employees on business for the State shall also use the seat belt when the vehicle is in motion. Enforcement of this rule shall be by counseling first, followed by progressive discipline, consistent with the terms of applicable collective bargaining agreements or Personnel Rules.

- **Smoking Policy**
  Smoking is prohibited in the public areas of publicly owned buildings. “Public areas” is defined in the law as those areas in which members of the public are allowed. This includes any areas which are open to the public or where the public can reasonably be expected to be present. The prohibition also applies to any areas contiguous to public areas and which are not fully enclosed, in order to protect people in public areas from smoke coming from other areas. For further details on the smoking policy of your department, see your supervisor or HR representative.
Drug-Free Workplace

While the State of Maine has no intention of intruding into the private lives of State employees, it does retain the right and responsibility to expect each employee to report for work and to perform their duties in a manner which does not jeopardize the health and safety of coworkers and the public. Work performance impaired by alcohol or drugs poses a threat to the well-being of employees and the public. The state recognizes that an employee's consumption of drugs and alcohol, on and/or off the job, can have a detrimental impact in the workplace.

It is the goal of the State of Maine to achieve an alcohol and drug-free work environment. Therefore, any employee who is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or who possesses or consumes alcohol on the job or in the workplace has the potential for disruption of his or her own, as well as coworkers’, safe and efficient performance of duties. Such employees shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

For further details on the Drug-Free Workplace policy, see your supervisor or view the policy at the BHR website (Drug-Free Workplace Policy).

The State is committed to maintaining a Drug-Free Workplace. The consumption, sale, possession or impairment due to the consumption of any alcohol or illegal substances in the workplace will not be tolerated.

Employees violating this rule shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
As an employer, the State of Maine has the responsibility and is committed to ensuring that employees have a safe and healthy environment in which to carry out their assignments and tasks. The establishment and maintenance of a healthy and injury free environment requires a continuous, concerted effort by all managers, supervisors and employees to address all aspects of health and safety.

More can be accomplished in preventing accidents by involving people from all levels in the workplace in the health and safety effort. As an employee, it is your responsibility, and that of your supervisor, to familiarize yourself with many of the following items:

- Health & Safety in Your Workplace

  Emergency Procedures

  You should be familiar with the location of the nearest fire exit; the evacuation plan for your area (where you are to convene after vacating your building and who you should report to); the telephone number to call and what to do if there is a fire, medical emergency, natural disaster or any other emergency.

  Safety Policies, Rules and Regulations

  You should be aware of your department’s safety policy and its general rules and regulations on safety and the safety rules for your specific job, if any, such as personal protective equipment, industrial hygiene, ergonomics, machine safeguarding and proper use of equipment, handling and storage of materials and housekeeping.

  Reporting Accidents, Injuries and Unsafe Conditions

  You should know the process for reporting all workplace and work-related injuries and accidents, unsafe conditions and vehicle accidents. You should know whom you should make your report to and the timeline for making the reports.

  Video Display Terminal Training (VDT)

  Currently, any employee whose primary task is to operate a computer for more than four (4) consecutive hours, exclusive of breaks, on a daily basis is to be provided VDT training. New employees meeting this criteria shall be provided training within their first month of employment. Current employees shall be provided training annually. Training is available through your department. See your supervisor or HR representative.
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

EAP was created with the aim to help State Employees and their families maintain their health and well-being. The State of Maine and the unions representing State Employees recognize that a wide range of problems not directly associated with an employee’s work may have an adverse effect on an employee’s job performance and health.

The State of Maine EAP offers assistance on a broad range of issues—marital or family discord, illness, financial difficulties, mental or emotional distress, alcohol or drug abuse, legal problems or other concerns. Administrative Leave time (up to eight (8) visits) is granted to participate in EAP services. The service will also provide assistance for additional services through Aetna health insurance plan in the event further treatment is needed.

Participation in the EAP is on a voluntary basis. Although supervisors, union officials and coworkers may encourage an employee to seek help, the decision to seek and accept assistance is the responsibility of the employee.

Participation in the EAP is strictly confidential. All records and information regarding referral, diagnosis and treatment will be maintained by the EAP and treated as confidential. The program ensures that participant names and the nature of the problem are not available to supervisors, coworkers or anyone else.

The EAP is a service provided at no cost to participants. If an employee is referred by the EAP to other professional services, the EAP will review the health insurance benefit plan to determine what, if any, costs must be assumed by the employee. Every effort will be made to refer employees to the least costly, highest quality resources available.

Contact Health Resources at 1-800-451-1834.
The Workers’ Compensation system exists to assist employees who are injured on the job. The State of Maine Program is a self-insured program. This means that no insurance company is involved.

If you are injured on the job, you must inform your employer within 24 hours. You should be given an ‘Employee’s Report of Injury’ form and the ‘Certificate Authorizing Release of Medical, Health Information’ by your supervisor. This paperwork should be completed regardless of the severity of the injury—it provides the foundation for your future action for accessing assistance (Worker’s Compensation Claims), identifies workplace hazards and ensures that the State of Maine remains in compliance with the Worker’s Compensation Board guidelines.

Additional information can be found on the Employee Health & Benefits website (www.maine.gov/deh), or check with your supervisor, your Workers’ Compensation designee or HR representative. You may also contact Workers’ Compensation at 287.6780.

Workers’ Compensation Return to Work Program

Under this program, the State’s Return to Work Coordinator and the Workers’ Compensation designees work together as a team to find positions in State Government that can be used by injured employees to regain their work capacity, to learn new skills or build on existing skills. The team’s ultimate goal is to help injured employees to return to their pre-injury capacity or as close to that capacity as is medically possible. Please refer to Civil Service Bulletin 8.20B for further information.
Maine State Government exists to serve its citizens. As a State Employee, you will play a part in serving the public, and the way that you treat the public will greatly influence the public's perception of its State Government. As a public servant, courtesy is one of the most important parts of your job. Think of yourself as an ambassador. Everything you say and do affects how Maine citizens feel about their government.

Always keep in mind that the people you are serving do not always have the same knowledge that you do about a State program or service and very often need to be guided in their dealing with government. Every phone call you receive and every question that you are asked deserves a polite and prompt response. All questions are important, and very often, it is the small things that you do or say that will make people feel good about their government.

**Confidentiality**

In the course of doing the State’s business, the information that you have access to may be protected by confidentiality laws or security factors. Your access to confidential information may never be used for your personal gain or benefit. Further, you should never discuss confidential information with other people except those who are entitled to this information by virtue of their office or position.

If you work with confidential information, your employing department will have particular regulations or expectations for the way you treat this information. Learn these regulations and expectations and follow them carefully.

**Conflict of Interest**

A fundamental principle of Maine State Government is that State Employees are trustees for all the people. The public demands and deserves to be treated fairly, honestly and with integrity. It is very important, therefore, that you avoid any task, circumstance or outside employment that is in conflict with, or could be viewed to be in conflict with your State job.

The basic State guideline that governs 'conflict of interest' is: You may not ask for or accept any good or service that has a monetary value from any person or business that does business or expects to do business with the State of Maine (advertising items of nominal value such as calendars and pens are not deemed to be gifts).

In addition, your employing department may have particular regulations or expectations that deal with or identify more specific concerns for your State job. As you might imagine, there are many gray areas in dealing with possible conflicts of interest. If you are ever in doubt concerning an activity at work or away from work, you should contact your supervisor or department head for advice.
Privacy of Records

The Civil Service Law protects some information that relates to your employment in State Government. This protected information is confidential and not open to public inspection. Once you are employed by the State, personal information that is maintained in your individual personnel file (whether at your agency or the Bureau of Human Resources) such as your sex, age, race, home address, telephone number and your individual choices for life and health insurance plan options, payroll deductions and pension coverage is protected.

Other protected information that may be maintained in your personnel file includes: medical information, performance evaluations and personal references that were submitted in confidence, information relating to your credit worthiness and information pertaining to the personal history, general character or conduct of members of your immediate family.

You will always have access to your own protected records and may sign a release form to authorize the release of your confidential records to another named person (e.g., a lawyer or physician).

Under authority of law, the Director of Human Resources may, upon request, authorize the controlled release of protected information when this information needs to be accessed by a department head, the department head’s designee or the Office of Employee Relations in order to adequately represent the State as an employer. As an example, the Director of Human Resources may authorize controlled access of confidential records for contract negotiation proceedings, fact-finding proceedings, grievance proceedings and other proceedings in which the State’s legal interests are at stake.

Similarly, employee union organizations may be provided controlled access to protected information when these organizations need access to this information to adequately represent their employee members in grievance and other proceedings that are required by contractual agreements and the State’s collective bargaining law.
:: Section IX :: Payroll Information ::

**Maine State Time and Attendance Management System (MS-TAMS)**
The MS-TAMS system has been designed to allow you to track your time and provide you with information about your pay and benefits in an easy to read format. Using your assigned MS-TAMS identification number, you can access your information to update and review your earnings at any time. Questions can be directed to your supervisor or your HR representative.

**Direct Deposit**
The State requires that all employees use Direct Deposit. It is the safest way to get your pay into your financial institution without having to worry about lost, stolen or damaged checks. It is possible to direct one’s pay into as many as three different banks and up to four different accounts among those three banks. Two of the accounts can be savings accounts and two can be checking accounts.

You can specify either a specific amount or 100 percent of your pay go into an account. The amount that may be direct deposited is the amount of net pay due to you after all taxes and deductions have been withheld from your gross pay. If 100 percent is specified for direct deposit into a particular account, all of your net pay will be deposited into that account.