



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

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WELCOME TO THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

We would like to welcome you as a new employee of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA). We are honored you have chosen us as your employer. Unfortunately, too many Oklahomans are unaware of the tremendous military history associated with our state. When WWII service members came home in 1945, many states were giving our veterans bonuses. Oklahoma's veterans declined the bonus and instead asked state leaders to provide a place to go when they were old and unable to take care of themselves. This request represents the beginnings of what is today. The Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs consists of seven Veteran Homes and the Claims and Benefits Division. Our ultimate mission is to take care of Oklahoma's Veterans.

ODVA has achieved its high reputation of respect in aiding the honorably discharged Oklahoma veterans, not only because of excellent leadership of our governing board, the Oklahoma Veterans Commission, but in large measure because of the cooperation and teamwork among all employees in offering the highest quality of assistance to our Oklahoma Veterans.

The policies and procedures within this guide will become an important part of your daily working life. We encourage you to become familiar with the contents of this handbook. Its purpose is to remind you of the importance of your job, opportunities for your personal happiness within the agency as well as growth and financial security in your future years. This handbook is intended as a supplement to provisions of laws and rules, not to replace them.

ODVA is an equal opportunity employer. It is our policy to provide equal employment and economic opportunity without regard to race, gender, creed, color or national origin, physical handicap, age, political affiliation, or religious preference. Hiring special disabled veterans pursuant to Oklahoma state law shall not constitute favoritism as herein is prohibited.

Again, thank you for choosing ODVA to be your employer.

OUR ORGANIZATION

The Oklahoma Veterans Commission is the controlling board of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs. It is composed of nine (9) members all of whom shall be honorably discharged veterans; provided, one of the members shall be a veteran of the Vietnam Conflict and two shall be veterans of the Persian Gulf Wars.

OKLAHOMA VETERANS HOMES

An Oklahoma Veterans Home is a long-term, skilled nursing care facility for Veterans that is operated by the State of Oklahoma and approved by the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs. Oklahoma Veterans Homes are inspected and licensed by the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

Central Office

2132 N.E. 36th Street Oklahoma City, OK
73111
Phone: 405-523-4000; Fax: 405-523-4008

Ardmore Veterans Home

1015 S. Commerce /PO Box 489
Ardmore, Ok 73402
Phone: 580-223-2266; Fax: 580-221-5606

Claremore Veterans Home

3001 W Blue Starr Dr./PO Box 988
Claremore, OK 74018
Phone: 918-342-5432; Fax: 918-342-2696

Clinton Veterans Home

1701 S. US Hwy 183/ PO Box 1209
4 Miles S. of I-40 on Hwy 183 Clinton, OK
73601
Phone: 580-331-2200; Fax: 580-323-3752

Lawton Veterans Home

501 Flower Mound Rd Lawton, OK 73502
Phone: 580-351-6511/6524; Fax: 580-351-6526

Norman Veterans Home

1776 E. Robinson Ave/ PO Box 1668
Norman, OK 73070
Phone: 405-360-5600; Fax: 405-360-4963

Sulphur Veterans Home

304 East Fairlane
Sulphur, OK 73086
Phone: 580-331-6400; Fax: 580-622-5881

Talihina Veterans Home

10014 SE 1138th Ave/ PO Box 1168
4 miles NW of Talihina on Hwy 63A Talihina,
OK 74571
Phone: 918-567-2251; Fax: 918-567-2950

ABOUT ODVA

The Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs provides resources and services to military veterans residing in the state of Oklahoma. This includes assistance with state and federal benefits, disability claims, burial and survivor benefits, healthcare, employment, education, mental health/suicide prevention, entrepreneurship, veteran-owned businesses, women veteran services and veterans in agriculture. ODVA also operates seven long-term care facilities for veterans throughout Oklahoma.

Mission

Our mission is to support, honor and care for Oklahoma veterans. We create and sustain programming that:

- Facilitates personal and financial independence for veterans in all phases of life.
- Advocates for veteran interests in state and federal law and regulations.
- Cultivates community support for veterans and veterans' programs.
- Assists eligible veterans and dependents with State and Federal claims and benefits.

- Embraces training and connection opportunities in areas of mental health and suicide prevention.
- Promotes enterprise, entrepreneurship, and employment opportunities for veterans.
- Guarantees high quality of care and a home-like environment in State Veterans Homes.
- Supports military personnel in transitioning to civilian life as Oklahoma veterans.
- Maximizes GI Bill accessibility and use in Oklahoma.
- Partners with public and private entities to support broadest access for veterans to resources; and
- Helps Oklahoma veterans flourish in all areas of human endeavor

Vision

Empowering veterans and service members in their pursuit of quality of life and quality of opportunity in the great State of Oklahoma.

Policy Changes

Revisions in policy are necessary to ensure compliance with changes in the laws, rules and regulations governing our operations. Whenever a policy is changed, it is for the purpose of building a better organization. If changes to the policies referred to herein become necessary, notice of such changes will be provided to all employees.

Our Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the agency to provide equal employment opportunity to all applicants and employees without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), religion, age, disability or genetic information, or veteran status. Equal employment opportunity will be provided in all aspects of employment, including but not limited to hiring, promotion, work assignments, training, compensation, discipline, and termination. It is the agency's objective to employ individuals who are qualified for their positions under job-related standards of education, training, experience, and other job requirements which are set forth in the position description for the job.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Code of Conduct

As a state employee and employee representing this agency, you are expected to comply with the agency's established policies and Rules that affect your employment. Every employee shall fulfill to the best of his or her ability the duties of the office or position conferred them and shall always behave in a manner befitting the office or position he or she holds. Employees are required to devote full time and attention to their duties during their assigned work schedule. Every employee shall support, obey, and defend the Constitution and laws of the State of Oklahoma. It is your responsibility

and duty to report any illegal activity to your supervisor, department head, or Appointing Authority.

You are expected to be courteous and helpful in your contacts with veterans, family members, visitors, co-workers, and the general public. Employees are expected to act in a professional manner, avoid boisterous activity or loud talk and refrain from any idle talk or gossip. Cursing and foul language will not be tolerated. The success of this agency is due in large measure to the behavior and cooperation of people like you, who contribute so much. It is up to each of us to maintain and improve our agency's quality of service to the veterans we serve. In doing this, each of us will grow with our agency.

Progressive Discipline

Progressive discipline is a system of escalated penalties made known to employees in advance and imposed with increasing severity for repeated incidents or policy violations. Such a system relies on the recognition that repetition of infractions with escalating penalties will ultimately lead to discharge. It also rests on the employee's willingness to exercise self-discipline in reforming his or her conduct so that violations will not be repeated and that a heavier penalty will be avoided. Based on relevant circumstances, a single incident may justify a higher step of discipline without proceeding through the lower steps.

The steps in which a supervisor may impose discipline are: 1) Verbal Warning to the employee that they have committed an infraction and it will not be tolerated again; 2) Informal discussion if the employee continues the unacceptable behavior; 3) Corrective Counseling; 4) Letter of Reprimand is similar to the 'Corrective Counseling' document

only it will be in a letter form and signed by the department head or next level supervisor and placed in your personnel file. This is the last opportunity an employee must correct their behavior before more severe discipline is imposed either through involuntary demotion, suspension without pay, or discharge from employment. This requires permanent documentation reflecting the infraction and rules or policies violated and of the agreement made by the employee to correct their behavior.

Complaints and Investigations

The agency has established a complaint procedure to ensure that all employees receive prompt review, impartial consideration, and equitable resolution of their complaints. Any employee who reports a complaint in good faith and in a reasonable manner, shall be free from restraint, interference, discrimination, or retaliation.

For complaints that encompass problems, misunderstandings and frustrations that may arise in the workplace, employees may file an internal complaint with their Human Resources department after appropriate steps have been taken to attempt to resolve the issue between involved parties. Additionally, all discriminatory and harassing complaints

shall be reported, as soon as possible, to a supervisor, manager, or the Human Resources department.

ODVA will promptly investigate and resolve complaints and reports of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation. ODVA promotes an environment where employees and applicants for employment may raise discrimination or harassment complaints without fear of reprisal. It is against state and federal civil rights laws and ODVA policy to retaliate against any person for asserting his or her civil rights, which includes filing a claim of discrimination or participating as a witness in an investigation. Retaliation and reprisals are not tolerated by ODVA. It is against ODVA policy to falsely accuse an employee, vendor, visitor or resident of harassment or discrimination. If proven to be a false claim through the investigation process, the complainant will be disciplined up to and including termination.

It is the policy of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs to provide the highest quality patient care possible and to respond to questions or complaints in an effective manner. Therefore, ODVA has established a hotline so that individuals may ask questions or register complaints. All calls will be treated in a confidential manner and the caller may retain anonymity. The hotline phone number is (855) 701-6382 or (405) 523-4014. Individuals can also go to [About ODVA \(oklahoma.gov\)](http://About ODVA (oklahoma.gov)) and leave a message with their email address, if they wish to have their identity known.

Filing Complaints with the Civil Service Division

State employees have the right to file a complaint with the Civil Service Department for disciplinary actions such as written reprimands, punitive transfers, suspension without pay, involuntary demotion and termination within ten (10) business days from the event. ODVA employees designated as executive management as determined by the agency director do not have complaint rights. Additionally, employees may be terminated at any time during their trial period without the right of complaint. Written reprimands and punitive transfers will be settled through mediation. Punitive transfers not settled in mediation shall be assigned to an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). Employees may request mediation for suspensions without pay, involuntary demotions, and terminations. If these complaints are not resolved in mediation, the complaint will be sent to an ALJ. If no mediation is requested for suspensions without pay, involuntary demotions, and terminations, the complaint will be sent to an ALJ. Hearings and mediation must take place within thirty (30) business days of the action. Employees also have the right to file a confidential whistleblower claim to report issues related to agency or employee mismanagement and misuse of state funds or property. These complaints will be filed through the [Civil Service Department](#).

Employee Relationships/Prohibited Activities/Anti-Nepotism

It is realized that as an employee working in a facility offering long term care, you may find yourself becoming attached to the residents. Becoming accustomed to the residents' behavior and mental attitudes is expected, and in some cases is part of recommended

treatment. However, fraternizing with residents to the degree of becoming personally involved is prohibited. If an employee is found to have developed an unacceptable relationship with any resident, disciplinary action may be taken.

Employees in a supervisor role are prohibited from participating in hiring, promoting, or conducting disciplinary decisions of a family member. Supervisory positions should not have a family member under their direction/supervision or in their line of supervision. This is to prohibit any employment related activity that would compromise professional relationships.

Employees in an intimate, romantic, or personal relationship shall not report to the same supervisor or within the same chain of command. Nursing employees shall not work the same shift or unit.

Financial Transactions – Employee/Resident

It is department policy that there will be no financial transactions between residents and employees. Employees are strictly prohibited from entering into and participating in a financial transaction with any resident. This includes accepting gifts, tips, purchasing from or selling any items to a resident, borrowing money from or loaning money to a resident.

Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace

The safety of residents, employees, and the visitors of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) is of paramount concern. The absence of illegal drugs or alcohol from the state work force is a basic requirement to assure the highest standards of

performance with the state service. The ODVA is committed to providing an alcohol and drug free workplace prohibiting the illegal manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of any alcoholic beverage (to the point of intoxication/impairment) or use of controlled substance (to include the inappropriate use of prescription drugs) for all employees, volunteers, and contractors. These standards will apply whenever anyone is representing or conducting business for ODVA. Therefore, this policy applies during all working hours, whenever conducting business or representing the organization, while on-call, while on ODVA property and at ODVA sponsored events.

This policy will apply to all employees of ODVA regardless of their position, title, or seniority. Employees may be tested in the following circumstances: (1) for cause, (2) return to work/ fitness for duty, or (3) post-rehabilitation testing. All drug and alcohol testing will be performed by an independent contractor 10 that meets the requirements of a testing facility in accordance with 40 O.S. § 558. Employees who are in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action including and up to termination.

If an employee refuses to take an alcohol or drug test and the employee appears to be under the influence, law enforcement shall be notified if the employee attempts to leave

the Veterans Center. An employee's refusal to submit to a drug or alcohol test constitutes a positive result.

Each employee is required to notify their division's Appointing Authority of any drug conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction. The ODVA must provide written notice of all workplace related drug convictions to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs within ten (10) days after receipt of notice from employee.

Workplace Violence

Violence, harassment, intimidation, bullying or other prohibited behavior will not be tolerated regardless of the location or whether it occurs before, during or after their normal work schedule. Employees have a duty and responsibility to immediately make a verbal report notifying their Supervisor, Administrator/Appointing Authority and/or Human Resources of any suspicious individuals or activities, or any witnessed or overheard action threat, behavior, or communication that could result in workplace violence or endangerment. The employee engaging in workplace violence or having knowledge of such but not acting consistently with the procedure will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Prohibiting Sexual Harassment

It is against the policy of this agency for any employee, male or female, to harass another employee or to create a hostile working environment. Sexual comments or actions of an employee will not be tolerated and are cause for disciplinary action including up to possible discharge.

Sexual harassment and harassment based on factors such as race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability or marital or veteran status, as well as any other categories or status protected by state or federal laws is prohibited and will not be tolerated. You are encouraged to use the complaint procedure outlined in ODVA Policy 266.1, Complaints and Investigations if you experience harassment. It is your duty and responsibility to report any incident of harassment by any employee or any other person and report it promptly to your Supervisor, Center Administrator, or the facility Human Resources department.

Resident Incident Reporting

It is the policy of the agency to ensure that the residents are protected from exploitation, abuse, or neglect. If resident exploitation, neglect, or abuse is reported, state law requires that reports of abuse be reported to the Oklahoma State Department of Health and an investigation will be conducted to determine if the report is true. If it is determined that the employee is guilty of these charges, he/she is subject to disciplinary action and possible discharge. Also, failure to report and/or assist in an investigation involving resident abuse, neglect, or exploitation is cause for disciplinary action up to and including possible discharge.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Appointments, Reappointments and Employment Status Changes

The employment application, created online using the system provided by the Office of Management Enterprise Services/ Human Capital Management (OMES/HCM) or paper application, is an important phase of the hiring procedure and becomes a part of the employee's permanent personnel record. All information submitted on the application form is subject to verification. The agency reserves the right to take disciplinary action upon finding falsification of facts on the employee's application or upon discovery of unfavorable information as a result of such investigation.

Current employees applying for promotion or transfer to another position must apply through the online system to be reviewed to ensure the employee meets the minimum qualifications for the job. ODVA will give preference to promote from within when the merit ability and capacity of incumbent employee applicants are relatively equal to that of outside applicants.

State Employees

Employees are no longer classified or unclassified in accordance with Oklahoma State Statute, §62-34.301. All employees except temporary and contract employees are now called state employees and are governed by the Civil Service Rules. All state employees are expected to perform to the best of his or her ability the duties of the office or position conferred upon them and shall always behave in a manner befitting the office or

position the employee holds. All state employees shall comply with all agency policies and procedures, including applicable Civil Service Division rules.

Trial Period

Appointing Authorities may require an employee to be in a trial period for up to one year for individuals who have been initially hired as a state employee, employees who are transferring from one state agency to another state agency, or employees returning to state service following a break in service. The Appointing Authority may not extend the trial period but may adjust the trial period due to extended absence. The length of the trial period shall be made known to the employee at the time of entry on duty and at the time of any adjustment or waiver of the trial period.

Temporary Employees

Temporary employees employed to work less than one thousand (1,000) hours in any twelve-month period are an "at-will employee" and are not subject to any of the provisions of the Personnel Administration Rules or rules and regulations of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services Human Capital Management Division. The appointing authority may terminate temporary employees at any time with or without cause. Employees hired in a temporary position have no benefits or rights to continued employment.

COMPENSATION

Placement of Employees on Payroll

On the first day of work, all new hires must present their social security card for verification of number and exact employee name for withholding and reporting purposes. If an employee does not present a social security card (SSC) on the first day of work, ODVA can record social security number (SSN) and name as presented by employee on paperwork. Employee must bring in their SSC within two (2) weeks of hire. If the employee provides a receipt of acknowledging an application for a social security number, the Human Resources Department must record the employees name and address, the expiration date of the receipt and the issuing SSA office. All ODVA employees' wages earned will be paid on a bi-weekly pay period. All payroll warrants (checks) will be distributed on the actual pay date. Pay slips can be viewed and printed from the Workday system.

Direct-Deposit and Paycard Program

All full-time state (excluding temporary) employees are required to participate in the direct deposit or paycard system within 30 days of hire. Employees must designate a financial institution to serve as a personal depository agent. Any changes to your direct deposit information must be immediately entered into the Workday system or reported to the HR Department.

Overtime, Compensatory Time, Travel Time

On occasion, employees may be required to work overtime. The agency operates 24 hours a day with a 40- hour work week. When overtime (physically working in excess of 40 hours in same work week) is required, the employee will receive overtime pay or compensatory time in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and the established agency policy. Overtime will be paid to employees on the check for the pay period the overtime was earned.

ODVA employees who are required to travel in the course of their employment are reimbursed under the provisions of the Oklahoma Travel Reimbursement Act. Central Office can answer any questions that you may have regarding reimbursement for travel incurred. All travel pay will be direct deposited in accordance with the direct deposit information you have through payroll.

Longevity Pay Plan

The state provides a longevity pay system for employees who have been continuously employed with the state for two (2) years in a full-time status or in a part- time status working more than one hundred fifty (150) hours per month at the time of receipt of longevity pay. If you have prior service with the state, you may be eligible for prior years' service credit towards longevity payments after working two years.

Eligible employees working over one hundred fifty (150) hours per month will receive the amount due, less applicable payroll deductions on the paycheck for the pay period their longevity date falls in.

Employees must be employed by a state agency on their anniversary date in order to receive longevity payment. Longevity payments will not be prorated unless separation is due to retirement or death.

You may contact the Human Resources department to notify them of prior state service or for information on the schedule of amounts paid for years of service.

| YEARS OF SERVICE | AMOUNT |
|---|---------|
| 2-3 | \$250 |
| 4-5 | \$426 |
| 6-7 | \$626 |
| 8-9 | \$850 |
| 10-11 | \$1,062 |
| 12-13 | \$1,250 |
| 14-15 | \$1,500 |
| 16-17 | \$1,688 |
| 18-19 | \$1,900 |
| 20-21 | \$2,000 |
| For each additional two years of service after the first 20 years, an additional \$200 shall be added to the amount stated for 20 years of service. | |

Wage Assignments (Garnishments)

The agency dislikes the unpleasant business of garnishing your wages for personal debts. However, state law compels us to make deductions should proceedings be ordered against you. In many cases, garnishments may result in a delay in your pay warrant.

TIME AND LEAVE

State (excluding temporary) employees are eligible for annual leave and sick leave with full pay according to law beginning date of hire. Accrual of annual and sick leave will be based on cumulative periods of employment in a paid status (excluding overtime), paid leave status and holidays, not to exceed the total possible hours for the pay period.

Annual Leave

Annual leave is granted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Human Capital Management Division of OMES and agency policy. Annual leave must be requested by the employee and may be used only when it would least interfere with the efficient operation of the department. Holidays and regular days off falling within a

period of annual leave will not be charged against accrued annual leave. The Director and/or Appointing Authority may require an employee to take annual leave whenever in their judgment such action would be in the best interest of the agency. Any employee who is separated from state service shall be paid maximum of 480 hours or have payment made to their estate for any accumulated annual leave.

Annual leave should be approved prior to beginning the leave. It is the responsibility of each employee to assure approval has been obtained prior to the beginning of leave. The lack of approval prior to the use of annual leave could cause such absence to be unauthorized and can be leave without pay.

| ANNUAL LEAVE ACCUMULATION LIMITS AND YEARLY ACCURALS | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Annual Leave | | | | | |
| Years of Cumulative Service | Yearly Accrual | Accumulation Limit | | *Accrual above limit per 74:840-2.20(1) | |
| | | Number of Days | Hourly Equivalent | One Additional Year of Accrual | Maximum Accrual Limit |
| Less than 5 years | 15 days/year | 30 | 240 | 120 | 360 |
| 5 to 10 years | 18 days/year | 60 | 480 | 144 | 624 |
| 10 to 20 years | 20 days/year | 60 | 480 | 160 | 640 |
| Over 20 years | 25 days/year | 60 | 480 | 200 | 680 |

Sick Leave

Sick leave is a period in which the employee is incapacitated from the performance of their duties by sickness or injury, or for medical, surgical, dental, or optical exams or contagious disease or when their presence at their post of duty would jeopardize the health of others.

When an employee has been absent on unscheduled sick leave, they shall immediately upon returning to work, submit a leave request (if required) stating that such absence was due to illness or other reasons defined. Any time an employee is absent from work for more than three consecutive working days on sick leave as described in Personnel Administration Rule 260:25-15-12, the following will be required before the employee can be allowed to return to full duty:

- 1) A "Physician's Statement" verifying the period of time the employee will be or has been under a Physician's care.
- 2) A "Physician's Statement" reflecting the date on which the employee will be released and able to return to full duty with no limitations.

These statements must be supplied as soon as the employee is released to return to work. Under certain circumstances and with some positions the Appointing Authority may allow an employee to return to work while under a partial medical release. In the event of an extended illness, the Appointing Authority or designee may request physician's statements during the period of time the employee is absent from work. The lack of obtaining and submitting statements upon request of the Appointing Authority may lead to the employee not being granted sick leave and being placed in a leave without pay status for unauthorized absence. The Appointing Authority may require a physician's statement after one day of sick leave before such leave will be granted. Refer to [Policy 235.2, Abuse of Leave - Medical Certification](#) for other requirements and information on leave abuse. In all cases sick leave shall not be granted until approved by the Appointing Authority or designee. Sick leave shall be denied when the Appointing Authority has facts to show that an employee is abusing sick leave privileges. Holidays falling within a period of sick leave shall not be charged against sick leave. No employee shall be reimbursed for sick leave at the time of termination of service. Up to six months of unused sick leave may be applied to participating service credit for retirement purposes. If you left state employment on or after October 1, 1992, and are reemployed within a period of 2 years from the date of separation, the Appointing Authority may reinstate all or part of unused sick leave accumulated during the previous period of continuous employment with the state.

Enforced Leave

State employees may be granted time off from regular duties, with compensation for absence necessary when some member of his or her immediate family require the employee's care because of illness or injury or in the case of death in the immediate family or household or in the case of personal disaster.

A member of the immediate family or household would include wife, husband, brother, sister, child, parent, stepchild, step- parent, step-grandparent, grandparent, grandchild, step-grandchild, parent-in- law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, domestic partner, or anyone residing as a member of the employee's household.

When state services are temporarily reduced due to hazardous weather, enforced leave may be approved. Such absences are not automatically authorized for employees staffing essential agency functions.

The number of days granted will be governed by the circumstance of the case, not to exceed ten (10) working days in any calendar year. Enforced leave is deducted from accrued sick leave.

Employee Holiday Leave

Holidays shall be granted in accordance with state law, and the Governor's proclamation as they are observed by the individual agencies in accordance with their workload and policies.

Due to the nature of the operation of the Veterans Centers, it is not possible to grant all eligible employees paid time off on the actual day designated for observance of each holiday. When an eligible employee works on a scheduled holiday or is on a regular day off, the employee will be granted time off within the same month it was accrued if possible. If the schedule cannot be arranged to allow the time off within the month accrued, the holiday leave should be taken no later than 180 days from the date it was accrued. However, if staffing does not allow holiday to be taken within 180 days, it shall be paid at straight time. Supervisors will be responsible for scheduling these days off so that appropriate staffing levels are maintained. Accrued holidays will be used prior to granting annual leave. For full-time employees, each holiday is equivalent to 8 hours

Family and Medical Leave

Employees that have been employed by the state at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the preceding 12-month period are entitled to family and medical leave for up to a total of 12 weeks during any 12-month period for the birth of a child and to care for newborn, placement of adoption or foster care child, to care for employee's immediate family member with a serious health condition, a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of their job, or any qualifying exigency (as defined by the US Department of Labor Regulations) arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.

Refer to Personnel Administration Rule 260:25-15-45 for more information or contact Human Resources.

Leave Sharing

The state leave sharing program permits state employees to donate sick or annual leave to other state employees. Eligible Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) employees may receive donated sick or annual leave when they have exhausted or will exhaust all types of paid leave due to severe or extraordinary circumstances. To be eligible to receive shared leave the employee has to have at least one year or more of continuous service with the state, have no prior discipline for abuse of leave or time and attendance policy violations in the preceding year, cannot be in the line of supervision of the donating employee, and must have at least 40 hours of accrued leave (to include

annual, sick, holiday, and compensatory time) at or after the onset of the illness of injury for which shared leave is being requested.

Military Leave

Employees, whether temporary, seasonal, part-time, trial period or full-time state employees are entitled to leave of absence when ordered by proper authority to active service in accordance with state law and Personnel Administration Rule 260:25-15-44. Military Leave is defined as paid absences from work for members of all branches of the United States Military and its reserve components, whether active or inactive, for training, drills, and assessment for fitness for service, duty performed by intermittent disaster response personnel for the Public Health Service, and related training for members of the Oklahoma National Guard or Air National Guard under orders to active services only, or for funeral honors duty for Guard or Reserve members. Military leave with pay is limited to thirty (30) days, specifically two hundred forty (240) hours of pay within a federal fiscal year, beginning October 1 and ending September 30. The employee must furnish the Appointing Authority the appropriate "military orders" which instructs the employee to report for active duty.

Court/Jury Duty

When, in obedience to a subpoena or other direction by proper authority, an employee appears as a witness for the Federal government, State of Oklahoma or a political subdivision thereof, or serves as a jury member they shall be entitled to leave of absence with pay for such time as stated on the subpoena or jury duty request. Absence is not to be charged against the employee's accrued annual or sick leave. If jury/court duty is completed prior to the date on the subpoena or legal direction to appear, an employee is requested to return to their normal work as scheduled.

All absences involving personal legal involvement will be charged to annual leave or leave without pay if all annual leave is exhausted, provided leave without pay has been requested and approved by the Director and/or Appointing Authority prior to the leave being used.

Voting

You are encouraged to vote in all municipal, county, state, and federal elections. The agency shall grant time off to employees who are registered voters of up to two (2) hours during the date and time of the election voting polls with exceptions, see policy.

Leave of Absence without pay

Upon written request to the Appointing Authority, an employee may for various reasons apply for a leave of absence without pay. Leave without pay may be granted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Human Capital Management. Approval will be given only as the workload of the department permits.

BENEFIT PROGRAMS

Employee/Volunteer Health Services

As a health care facility, it is a requirement of the Oklahoma State Health Department that all employees who are hired to work at a Veterans Center must have a health evaluation once an offer of employment has been made by the agency and accepted by the applicant, which also includes a TB skin test and Hepatitis B test (if available). An annual TB skin test will be required for active employees and volunteers on an annual basis each year thereafter.

Health, Dental, Disability and Life Insurance

As a full-time employee, a complete insurance program is available for the benefit of you and your dependents. Your coverage is paid for through a benefit allowance and additional optional life insurance may be purchased. If dependent health, life, or dental coverage is desired, there will be an additional premium deduction. You also receive a dependent benefit allowance for dependent health, which usually covers about half the premium. All premiums are deducted from your paycheck bi-weekly. Premiums will vary according to the type of coverage desired. Contact the Benefits Coordinator at your Center for more information.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP provides confidential services to employees and/or employee family members whose personal problems may have a negative impact on job performance. The EAP aids employees and their family members who are seeking corrective help with medical or mental health problems, including alcohol or drug abuse, and emotional, marital, familial, financial, or other personal problems. Any employee or family member may contact the EAP Office at 405-248-9007 or through email at EAP@ODMHSAS.ORG for a confidential discussion of services available to help with the individual or family's needs.

RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS)

OPERS is the mandatory defined benefit retirement plan for eligible state employees who became employed by a participating employer before November 1, 2015. A defined benefit plan promises its members a lifetime retirement benefit when the member meets certain eligibility requirements. Under this plan members are mandated to contribute 3.5% of their annual compensation. The employer will contribute 16.5% of the employee's compensation.

Pathfinder

Pathfinder is the mandatory defined contribution plan for eligible state employees who first become employed by a participating employer on or after November 1, 2015 and have no prior participation in OPERS. Under this plan, members will choose a

contribution rate which will be matched by their employer up to 7%, and members have the freedom to select and change their investments.

A defined contribution plan like Pathfinder does not provide a guaranteed, lifetime source of income. The amount a participant has at retirement under a defined contribution plan is dependent upon how much was contributed over his/her career, how well those investments performed, and how quickly distributions are taken in retirement.

SoonerSave

OPERS also administers the voluntary SoonerSave defined contribution plan in which certain Oklahoma state employees are eligible to participate. SoonerSave is comprised of two parts: the Oklahoma State Employees Deferred Compensation Plan (457 Plan) and the Oklahoma State Employees Deferred Savings Incentive Plan (401(a) Plan). SoonerSave is only available to those employees who are eligible to participate in the OPERS defined benefit plan.

TRAINING

ODVA is fully committed to ensuring that all staff have the necessary knowledge, skills, and expertise to perform their work to consistently high standards and to achieve their full potential.

Licensure, Certification, and Membership Fee Payment

There are numerous employees who must possess a current license or certification to work in the position for which they were hired. Federal and state regulations require that licensed personnel have current certification or licensure. It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that his/her license or certification is kept up to date. ODVA may allow reimbursement for the cost of a license, certification, or a professional membership

for eligible employees. An employee is eligible for reimbursement only if the license/certification is a requirement of the position held at the time of payment. If you need further information, please reference Attachment (1) in the policy.

Tuition Pay/Education

The ODVA administers the Quality Workforce for Oklahoma's Heroes program. This program is to provide current full-time employees of ODVA paid tuition and fees for approved education towards a degree or certification in clinical areas. Employees must have at least 12 months of continuous employment with the agency to be eligible.

Performance Management Process

The Performance management Process within the agency shall provide an objective evaluation of the employee by the immediate supervisor of the performance of the employee within the assigned duties of the job. It will also provide the identification of the strengths and deficiencies of the employee and corrective actions necessary to correct deficiencies, provide an interview with the employee, by the immediate

supervisor, who shall provide the employee with a copy of the performance rating, and provide the opportunity for the employee to submit written comments regarding the performance rating.

Each state employee shall be reviewed at the mid-point of the evaluation period and rated thirty (30) days prior to the end of the probationary period. Thereafter, employees will be rated no less than once each year with a mid-point review.

The agency shall use the performance ratings and reviews in decisions regarding promotions, demotions, salary adjustments and discipline. The PMP will be maintained by the agency in the employee's permanent personnel record.

Relias Learning

Relias is an online training tool to assist employees in meeting training requirements for state, agency, or licensure. Employees will be assigned courses as part of their new hire orientation and annual training programs. Policy revisions will also be assigned through Relias for employee acknowledgement.

WORKPLACE GROUND RULES

Time and Attendance Policy

Your time record is very important since it is the record on which your pay is figured. Each employee is provided with an identification/timekeeping badge that must be always worn while on duty or grounds and each employee must utilize it in accordance with policies of the Agency. Employees are prohibited from clocking each other in or out. It is your responsibility to verify and approve the weekly time record in Workday.

The agency has the authority and responsibility to monitor employees leave usage and take appropriate action when facts show an employee has abused leave or used leave fraudulently. Attendance will be considered in decisions regarding promotions, pay increases and discipline. Abuse of leave benefits or failure to maintain regular attendance may be grounds for termination. Employees will devote full time, attention and efforts to the duties and responsibilities of their position during assigned hours of duty. ODVA has a no tolerance for no call/no show absences. All willful no call/no show absences will be addressed through the discipline process up to and including termination. Per Personnel Administration Rule 260:25-11-132. Method of Resignation (c) "An employee who is absent from work without prior approval and who has not contacted his/her supervisor or agency representative within five working days is deemed to have resigned from state service."

Due to the nature of the work performed in caring for residents in the Veterans Homes, work schedules are established to provide sufficient staffing to care for the residents and perform the duties assigned. Shift schedules are made in advance and in accordance with federal and state requirements for resident to employee ratios.

All employees are expected to work their assigned schedule, including weekends and holidays. However, the Appointing Authority may authorize a change in the work schedule for an employee to ensure continuous operations of the work unit or service to residents. The department heads will determine the working hours of their respective departments, as required by and in accordance with department policy.

Rest/Break Time

Employees assigned to work an 8 or 10 hour shift, may be allowed one 15-minute break during the first half of their shift and one 15-minute break during the last half of their shift. Employees assigned to work a 12-hour shift may be allowed one 20-minute break during the first half of their shift and one 20-minute break during the last half of their shift. Break periods are considered work time; therefore, employees must remain at the facility and be available to work. If you need to leave the facility, you will be required to request prior approval to use accrued leave and clock out and back in upon your return.

Meal Periods

Thirty (30) minute lunch periods may be observed according to the policy set forth by each center and Central Office. Employees are expected to strictly observe this time limit. No office or unit should be left without a responsible person in charge. Centers provide meals to residents and their family members and employees while on duty. Center employees may purchase meal tickets in the Accounting/Business Office if they desire to eat in the Center's dining room. Multi-meal tickets (red) are \$40 for 10 meals and a single meal ticket (white) is \$4 for 1 meal. The meal period must be uninterrupted, and employees are to be completely relieved and not expected to perform work duties. A 'bona fide' meal period is taken while the employee is clocked out and must be taken away from the employee's workstation or area if the employee does not leave the grounds. Employees must clock out for each meal period and clock back in upon return from the meal period.

Personnel Records – Human Resources

The Human Resources Department keeps an employment record on each employee. These records are reviewed when employees are considered for salary adjustments, promotions, demotions, transfers, or discipline. The records include, but are not limited to, performance, evaluations, personnel actions, time and attendance records, and discipline.

You must report any change of personal information, i.e., changes of address, telephone number, marital status, or number of dependents immediately in Workday and/or to the Human Resources Office.

Employee Ethics (Policy 263.1)

It is a requirement that all agency personnel, during working and non-working hours, will ensure that their actions, activities, and conduct are in accordance with ethical conduct requirements of all laws, rules and regulations and policies applicable to the agency which governs the ethical conduct of state employees.

No employee shall solicit, agree to accept, or accept any bribe, gift, gratuity, favor, loan, entertainment, service, compensation, special privileges or exemptions, or anything of value given, offered, or promised because of their status as an ODVA employee.

No personal business is to be conducted by any employee during working hours or at any other time in the ODVA offices. State telephones, vehicles, calculators, computers, copiers, supplies, office space or any other equipment or facilities provided by the State for the business of the ODVA shall not be used for personal business by employees, relatives, friends, or associates of employees; or shall said property, equipment, or facilities be removed from the work area following working hours, except with specific written authorization from the appointing authority.

All ODVA employees shall pursue the common good in performing their official duties, be impartial, and avoid conflict of interest.

Personal Telephone Calls / Email / Mail

The agency's telephone system is primarily for business use. Personal calls will be handled in accordance with each facility's internal policy. Personal calls will be kept to a minimum. If the privilege of receiving and placing personal calls on the agency's phone system, which includes cellular phones, is abused, the privilege will be taken away. If an emergency call is received, every effort will be made to locate you. No personal long-distance calls will be charged on any agency telephone. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Personal mail should not be handled through the agency's mail system. Any need for such activity must be approved by the Appointing Authority.

Employees with access to the agency's Internet and e-mail system shall follow rules and regulations as set forth by agency. Information transmitted and/or maintained on the computer system is considered property of the agency and may be reviewed if necessary.

Personal Cell Phone, Other Electronic Data/Media Devices, and Social Media

Cell Phone, Other Electronic Data/Media Devices

To ensure productive work environment limiting distractions and disruptions during business operations and to ensure resident confidentiality, ODVA is limiting the use of personal cell phones and other electronic data/media devices by employees during working hours. Employees may use these devices during lunch or break periods or with authorization from supervisor for special circumstances. Other use, including text

messaging, accessing social media pages or other apps, and listening to music with earphones is prohibited during the workday.

Social Media

If you use any personal websites, such as but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and blogs and identify yourself as an employee of ODVA, you must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Make it clear to the readers that the view expressed is yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of ODVA.
- Confine social networking to matters unrelated to ODVA, if necessary, to ensure compliance with security regulations and other laws.

Employees are prohibited from using or disclosing confidential and/or proprietary information, including personal health information about residents, and from discussing in any forum on social media information pertaining to release dates and pending reorganizations.

Employees of ODVA are prohibited from posting, displaying comments about co-workers or supervisors or the employer that are vulgar, obscene, threatening, intimidating, harassing or a violation of ODVA policies against discrimination, bullying, harassment, retaliation, or hostile work environment regarding age, race, religion, sex, ethnicity, nationality, disability or other protected class, status, or characteristic.

Employees should try to confine social networking to matters unrelated to ODVA, if necessary, to ensure compliance with security regulations and other laws.

Confidential and Proprietary Information

Revealing confidential and/or proprietary information without proper authorization is cause for disciplinary action. This violation is sufficient for suspension without pay or possible discharge. All requests for information should be directed to the Appointing Authority or Administrative Officer in charge of public records.

Agency Dress Code

Employees should project a professional and business-like image to the general public and clients we serve. Good taste, common sense, and cleanliness should be considered when selecting the proper attire to wear to work. If uniforms are required for a specific department, then you will be required to dress accordingly. Occasions which may allow a deviation from the daily dress code requirements may be for special activities, specified casual days, or in some cases to perform physical tasks unsuitable for normal work attire.









Under no circumstances may employees wear halter tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, tank tops, cropped tops without a cover; clothing with offensive wording, clothing that shows undergarments (sheer), torn clothing, clothing with holes in it, or tight-fitting, revealing, or oversized clothing are prohibited. All offensive tattoos must be

covered while on duty. All clothing must be clean, neat, and fit properly. Provocative clothing is prohibited. Safe, neat, and clean shoes should be always worn.

For all employees, professional appearance also means that ODVA expects you to maintain good hygiene and grooming while at work. Facial hair is permitted if it is neat and well-trimmed. Earrings are acceptable, rings through the nose, eyebrow, tongue, or body parts other than the ear lobe that are visible to the public may not be worn while working. Employees are expected to be conservative in the wearing of makeup, scented products, and hairstyles. Dress (or shorts when appropriate) must be at least no shorter than one (1) inch above knee.

Standardized Emergency Codes

In the event of an emergency, an emergency code will be used to notify the appropriate individuals to initiate an immediate and appropriate response based on the division's emergency operations plan. The codes are as follows:

| Event | Color | Code | Alert Type |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------|--|
| Cardiac Arrest |  | Blue | Medical Emergency |
| Fire |  | Red | National standard recommended by the Fire Marshall's Association & it's membership |
| Bomb Threat |  | Black | Bomb Threat |
| Disruptive Individual/Active Shooter |  | Gray | Applies to any incident where security personnel are needed. This may include, but not be limited to: a violent/combatative person or other situations where enhanced security is required |
| Severe Weather |  | Brown | Severe weather |
| Missing Resident |  | Yellow | Applies to any incident where security personnel are needed. This may include, but not be limited to: a missing resident |
| External/Internal Disaster |  | Green | This code applies to any incident (e.g., natural disaster, mass causality incident where an emergency operations plan is activated. |
| Hazard Material Incident |  | Orange | Used for incidents involving hazardous material spills and/or exposure |

Fire is a rare occurrence but an ever-present hazard. We have developed a routine – first to prevent fires and second to combat quickly and effectively any fires that do get started. Fire extinguishers are strategically placed for use in case of fire. Fire sprinkler systems are also in place for use during a major fire.

All employees will be provided access to a copy of the Disaster Plan that includes Fire Safety, and each employee is responsible for becoming familiar with the contents. All employees are given in- service training on the use of Fire Extinguishers. Periodic fire drills will be conducted to ensure that all employees know their responsibilities should there be a fire or other disaster.

State employees' political activity

Political activity is governed by state law and rules and regulations of the OK Ethics Commission. It is your responsibility to be aware of those rights.

Safety and Health

The Appointing Authority is responsible for developing and maintaining a safe and productive work environment. You can prevent accidents and injuries by obeying safety rules and department policies on the job by remaining alert and reporting unsafe conditions and practices to your supervisor immediately.

Due to the amount of time that you spend at your place of work, we recognize the importance of making your surroundings as comfortable and convenient as possible to better help you do your job. Each employee should always keep their work area neat and clean and clear of obstructions and health hazards.

Workplace Injuries and Illnesses Policy and Procedure

Employees of the agency are covered by Workers Compensation Insurance. If at any time you have been involved in an incident on the job resulting in an injury or illness, it is your responsibility to report it to your supervisor or designee prior to the end of the work shift. The supervisor, or designee, will complete an Employee's Report of Injury Form (ODVA Form #1200) and turn it into the Human Resources department or the Workers Compensation Coordinator. The Facility Administrator, Facility Worker's Compensation Coordinator or appointed designee will ensure that prompt medical treatment is authorized when you require more than the first aid available at the ODVA facility. They will also ensure that the correct forms are completed for you to seek treatment at a pre-determined medical facility. If you are injured but deny medical treatment, you are still required to complete an incident report and submit the report to your supervisor before the end of your assigned shift.

Tobacco Free/ E-Cigarette / Vaping Device Policy (Employees and Visitors)

The agency has established designated smoking areas for residents only. All employees and visitors are not allowed to use tobacco products (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, pipes, smokeless tobacco, and other tobacco products) and electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), electronic vaping device, personal vaporizer, or electronic nicotine delivery system on state grounds. You must clock out and leave grounds to smoke.

Parking

Parking areas are designated at each agency location for employees. All employees are to observe posted speed limits on agency property, park properly inside parking lines, have regard for your co-worker's vehicle and space and respect the reserved or prohibited parking zones.

Vehicles Operated on Behalf of the State

Official Risk Management rules state that to operate a vehicle of any type on behalf of the state (either state-owned or private vehicle used in the performance of duties) individual must have a valid driver's license. Proof of same shall be required.

Subsequently, every employee who operates a state or other covered entity vehicle regularly or occasionally is required to report to the agency any change in his/her license

status, including suspension or revocation. Additionally, seat belts must be worn while driving or as a passenger.

Transporting passengers in a state vehicle or a personal vehicle used on official state business is a violation of state law. All insurance coverage is void if a passenger other than an agency employee, volunteer, client, or resident is transported while on state business.

Solicitation

Solicitation of or by employees, residents, volunteers, or visitors in or on agency premises is prohibited.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Compliance to State Income Tax Laws

If the Tax Commission notifies a state employee who is not in compliance with the income tax laws of this state as required in this section and such state employee does not respond to such notification or fails to come into compliance with the income tax laws of this state or after the Tax Commission determines that every reasonable effort has been made to assist the state employee to come into compliance with the income tax laws of this state, the Tax Commission, notwithstanding the provisions of [Section 205](#) of this title [68 O.S. § 205](#), shall so notify the appointing authority, which shall commence disciplinary action with the respect to the state employee shall notify the state employee of the reason for such action. Such employee may have a certain percentage of wages garnished by the Tax Commission until such time as the employee is in compliance with the income tax laws of this state pursuant to the provisions of [Section 254](#) of this title [68 O.S. § 254](#). If a state employee who has been previously reported by the Tax Commission to a state agency as being out of compliance comes into compliance, the Tax Commission shall immediately notify the appointing authority. Neither a state agency nor an appointing authority shall be held liable for any action with respect to a state employee pursuant to the provisions of this section.

Resignation of Employment

To resign in good standing, you must give at least 14 days prior written notice.

Discharge from Employment

Discharge from employment of state employees may result from the following causes: misconduct, insubordination, inefficiency, violation(s) of the employee drug and alcohol policy, inability to perform the duties of the position in which employed, violation of the Oklahoma Personnel Act or rules prescribed by the Office of Management and Enterprise Services, violation of state or federal laws or agency policies, conduct unbecoming a public employee, conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude, abuse of leave benefits, failure to maintain regular attendance, or other just cause.

HANDBOOK RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read the following statements and sign at the bottom of this page.

This handbook will outline the organization of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs, the benefits you will receive as an employee of the agency, the services the agency provides for employees and also outlines the Human Resources practices that may affect you. It will review your responsibilities as an employee of the State of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with the agency and its policies and practices, rather than to give you all the answers that cover situations and circumstances of your employment. Your supervisor or the Human Resources Department is available to discuss any matter relating to your employment.

The policies described in this handbook are guidelines to be used during employment and are not intended to be contractual conditions of employment nor is the language intended to create a contract between the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs and its employees.

I have received a copy of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs Employee Handbook and am responsible for reading it.

I acknowledge that all ODVA policies can be found on the [ODVA SharePoint](#) site for my review.

SharePoint Site:

<https://officemgmtentserv.sharepoint.com/sites/ODVAHomePage/policy/SitePages/ODVA-Policy.aspx>

Printed Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

POLICY ACCESS INSTRUCTION RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read the following statements and sign you are acknowledging instructions to access the Oklahoma Department of Veterans (ODVA) policies. These policies described within are subject to change at the sole discretion of ODVA at any time. This receipt will be maintained as part of your personnel file located at the facility you are assigned.

- I have received instructions to access all ODVA policies in electronic format and I agree that I am responsible to read. I understand that these policies are for informational purposes and are not intended to replace the Merit Rules, State Statutes, or Federal law. I will comply with the policies and any revisions, am bound by the provisions contained therein, and that my continued employment is contingent on following these policies.
- I am responsible for requesting leave and obtaining approval from my immediate supervisor in advance. If I am unable to report to work, I am required to use my departments call-in procedures. Failure to call-in may result in disciplinary action.
- I understand that our residents and employees entrust us with confidential information pertaining to their medical and employment information. It is imperative that I maintain confidentiality of specific information and understand that employment with ODVA assumes I am obligated to maintain that confidentiality, even after I leave the agency.

The link to ODVA policies are located on the ODVA SharePoint site:

<https://officemgmtentserv.sharepoint.com/sites/ODVAHomePage/policy/SitePages/ODVA-Policy.aspx>

Employee Handbook

ODVA Mission / Values / Goals

Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace

Anti-Harassment / Prohibiting Sexual Harassment

Anti-Violence/Bullying/Workplace Violence

Code of Ethics / Employee Political Activity

Complaint and Investigation Process

Computer Usage

Direct Deposit

Dress Code

Drug & Alcohol-Free Workplace / Testing

Electronic Access / Distribution of Policies

Education Assistance Program

Employee Relationships / Prohibited Activities

Financial Transactions Employee / Resident

Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA)

Leave and Attendance Plans

HIPPA Compliance / Healthcare Provider Responsibility & Rights

Complaint Procedures

Multi-state Nurse Aide & Abuse Registry Verification

Payroll – Earning Statements, Pay dates

Policy Development

Progressive Discipline & Adverse Actions

Recruitment

Resident Incident Reporting

Social Security Verification

Tobacco Free Agency

Time and Attendance

Theft / Illegal Activity

Workers' Compensation

Printed Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____