

HR Update

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FY 06, Issue 8

April 16, 2006

HR Update Feedback

Thank you for the feedback on the HR Update. If you have any suggestions about how to improve the HR Update or topics you think should be addressed, please contact (Mila_Cosgrove@admin.state.ak.us) or (Carol_Mcleod@admin.state.ak.us).

Contact Information

Employee Call Center: Please remember to direct employees to the Employee Call Center when they have general questions about their employment. The Call Center phone number is (907) 465-3009 or email employeeccallcenter@admin.state.ak.us.

Quick Links

[DOP Home Page:](#)

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Communication Tree

In an effort to improve communication on important human resource topics, a communication tree has been established. Contacts have been selected by their departments to ensure that pertinent staff disseminates information. Those designated as contacts have been notified by email. Please contact Kathy Nava at kathleen.nava@admin.state.ak.us or 465-5053 or Julie Russo at julie_russo@admin.state.ak.us or 465-8429 with questions.

Alaska Administrative Manual Updates

On April 1, 2006, policies on Employee Recognition Awards and Early Permanent Status were published in the Alaska Administrative Manual (AAM). Please take a moment to read these policies at: http://fin.admin.state.ak.us/dof/ak_admin_manual/aam_toc.jsp as they may represent a change from your agency's current practice. A brief overview of these policies is provided below.

Employee Recognition Awards (AAM 100.090)

Employee recognition awards must meet the criteria for exclusion from taxable income under IRS

guidelines. In order to qualify under this threshold, awards should be property or service that is small in value, infrequent and simple to administer. Acceptable awards include items with a limited cash value such as coffee cups or tote bags with agency insignia, certificates or plaques of achievement, or designated parking places. Examples of prohibited awards include, but are not limited to, gift certificates or cards, cash awards, or time off.

There are three award categories: performance recognition, service recognition, and retirement. All awards must be equally available to each employee in the employing agency that offers the program. Therefore, prior to issuing awards, the agency must have a plan in place. Plans that include awards for performance recognition must be submitted to the Director of the Division of Personnel for review and approval prior to implementation.

Early Permanent Status (AAM 100.100)

If contractual provisions allow, an employee in the classified service may be granted early permanent status if the employer has satisfied all the requirements for completing the probationary period and the employee has received specific and overall ratings of "outstanding" on the performance evaluation report. The performance evaluation narrative

must clearly document the achievement of outstanding performance in each rating area.

Early permanent status will be effective on the first day of the pay period in which a formal performance evaluation granting early permanent status is received by the Division of Personnel, Management Services Section, unless the collective bargaining agreement that covers the employee provides otherwise.

Note: Some agencies have an internal approval process that must be adhered to. Prior to recommending early permanent status for a direct report, be sure to verify if your agency has such a policy.

For additional information regarding these policies you may contact your assigned Management Services Consultant.

FMLA Update

The Division of Personnel has streamlined the family leave process. Provided below are some of the highlights of the new process. *Forms Update:*

- The Supervisor's Checklist will be replaced with the **Conditional Family Leave Notification** form. This new form is only one page and has been simplified for ease of use.

- The **Certification of Health Care Provider** form has been re-

Division of Personnel P&P's

vised. The form itself has been reduced to one page. The second page provides the definition of "serious health condition" for the health care provider's reference. These forms are included in the Family Leave Packet and are available on the Division of Personnel's website at: <http://dop.state.ak.us/index.php?id=156>

Supervisors must complete the Conditional Family Leave Notification form when they have reason to believe an employee is taking leave for a qualifying condition. Upon completion, the original is provided to the employee with a copy to Technical Services for further processing. Technical Services will begin the eligibility determination process upon receipt.

Notification: The employee and supervisor will be notified by Technical Services of the official determination regarding the employee's eligibility for family leave. The notification to the supervisor will include the expected duration of the absence, and when the employee's entitlements will expire/exhaust. The employee's notification will include important information regarding his/her rights under the Acts.

Confidentiality: Supervisors are reminded that an employee's medical information, including family leave records are confidential and must be maintained in a secure location separate from the employee's performance records. The Division of Personnel is responsible for maintaining employees' official medical files.

The Technical Services web page has a "Family Leave" link which provides easy access to the new Family Leave Packet and additional information and resources regarding family leave. Please visit us at: <http://dop.state.ak.us/index.php?id=1107>

Employee Recognition Day

Alaska is privileged to join other states across the nation on May 3, 2006, to express special appreciation and gratitude to state employees for their hard work, sacrifices, and un-

selfish spirit of dedication to the citizens of our state. Your employees strive daily to perform their jobs with professionalism and integrity and to make government services more accessible and responsive to the needs of our citizens. Please take this opportunity to commend your employees for their hard work and commitment, and for their professionalism in safeguarding the quality of life of our citizens. All of our hard-working state employees deserve special recognition for helping to make Alaska a great place to live.

Using Minimum Qualifications and Desired Qualifications

Hiring managers, as they struggle to fill vacancies with qualified, interested, and eligible candidates, sometimes confuse the purpose of **minimum qualifications** (MQs) in class specifications and **desired qualifications** (DQs) in recruitment bulletins. Understanding the role of these two functions in recruiting and hiring decisions is important for effective recruitment.

Minimum qualifications (MQs) are the *minimum* threshold of education and experience a candidate must have to be considered for a vacancy. Minimum qualifications are developed from the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) in the class specification. KSAs are developed during classification studies and reflect what is needed to enter into the work of the job class, not what is required for full performance. The MQs ensure a new employee can be expected to perform the position's work after a period of orientation or familiarity (typically the 6 months or 1 year probationary period). MQs are carefully crafted to ensure they do not create artificial barriers to employment.

Hiring managers and others sometimes confuse a job class's

MQs with their desired qualifications for a new employee. Managers often look for applicants who can meet a much higher set of "plug-n-play" criteria to enable them to sit a new hire at a desk and walk away with a reasonable certainty that the new employee will begin functioning effectively, immediately. **That is not the function of MQs.**

There are two recruitment tools that hiring managers *do* have to evaluate a pool of applicants: desired qualifications (DQs), and tiered interview selection criteria. DQs are objective, work-related qualifications used to identify the most-qualified applicants. Tiered interview selection criteria are objective, ratable standards for advancing through the recruitment process established prior to advertising the vacancy. These tools assist hiring managers in winnowing the pool of applicants, making the recruitment process easier and providing consistently better results.

Hiring qualified employees can be a frustrating experience at times Employee Services staff in the Division of Personnel are available to assist hiring managers in developing their desired qualifications and interview selection criteria for Workplace Alaska that will allow them some flexibility in restricting or broadening the applicant pool. Please feel free to contact Employee Services at http://dop.state.ak.us/fileadmin/Employee_Services/pdf/EmployeeServicesStaff.pdf. If you have questions about developing DQs and interview selection criteria, and Classification if you have any questions about the appropriate use of MQs, and KSAs at <http://dop.state.ak.us/fileadmin/Classification/pdf/ClassificationStaff.pdf>

Division of Personnel
P&P's are published on
the division's web site at
<http://dop.state.ak.us/ppdb/index.cfm>

The Alaska Department of Administration complies with Title II of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. This publication is available in alternative communication formats upon request. To make necessary arrangements, contact the Statewide Planning and Research for the Division of Personnel at (907) 465-4434 or the TDD for the hearing impaired at (907) 465-3888.