

# What Every State Employee Needs to Know



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# A Message From the Governor



**Governor Doug Burgum**

Olympic sailor Buddy Melges said, “You never have to recover from a good start.”

Congratulations on joining a committed team of employees worthy of our deepest gratitude for their exceptional public service to North Dakota and its residents.

Whether in time of prosperity or adversity, our state employees work tirelessly to maximize the efficiency and responsiveness of state government, and together we continuously strive to innovate and improve customer service.

<https://www.governor.nd.gov>

# WELCOME!

You have now joined a team of about 15,000 employees that work to provide a variety of services to the citizens in North Dakota. Within state government, there are over 70 individual state agencies, each with their own specialty of services.

Whether you are employed with one of the larger agencies with over 2,000 employees or one of the smaller ones with just a few employees, we know you will find your employment enjoyable, challenging, and rewarding.

Within the broad category of “state employment” there are two primary position types:

**Classified employees** are covered under ND’s civil service and are subject to administrative rules adopted by the Human Resource Management Services (HRMS) division of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The rules guide equitable pay, open competitive selection, and protection from arbitrary personnel actions and are designed to provide consistent employment conditions. There are just over 7,200 state employees in positions classified by HRMS. Newly hired or reinstated employees in classified positions must serve a probationary period of at least six months prior to obtaining “regular” status.

**Unclassified employees** do not have employment rights under HRMS. The terms and conditions of employment vary by agency, category of employee, or by individual employee. There are about 2,000 employees in appointed, elected, temporary, or otherwise designated as “unclassified” positions.

NOTE: Employees of the University System are covered by and subject to the policies adopted by the State Board of Higher Education. There are about 6,700 employees with the University System.

## **Political Activity (NDCC 34-11.1)**

Employees have the right to vote as they please without any attempt from their employer to influence their political decisions. No public employee can engage in political activities while on duty or in uniform. Some State employees whose principal employment is in an activity financed in whole or in part by federal funds are covered by the federal Hatch Act. State agencies and political subdivisions cannot restrict employees from speaking on their own behalf to any member or committee of the legislative assembly.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Employees should not hold a position or serve on a board that would conflict with their employment duties with the State. Any secondary employment should be discussed with their supervisor prior to accepting in order to avoid any possible conflict. State employees may not receive remuneration in any form from an individual, business, or corporation for services rendered while acting as an agent or employee of the State.

## **Computer Security**

The State of ND actively monitors all employees' computer activity. Employees should review their agency's policy manual for more information.

## **Personnel Records**

North Dakota is an open records state and, therefore, most personnel files can be viewed by the public. Some information, such as social security numbers and medical information, is confidential and will not be released to the public.

## **Payroll**

Most state agencies pay their employees on the first working day of the month. The amount of payment is subject to various deductions or withholdings including state and federal income tax, FICA, Medicare, and other voluntary optional deductions.

# EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The State of North Dakota is proud to provide a comprehensive benefits package to our employees. Many of the benefits are available at no cost, while some are available at a cost if employees wish to participate.

The primary benefit offerings are summarized below, along with the legal authority for each. All regular State employees receive the following benefits.

## **Annual Leave** (NDAC 4-07-12)

Full-time employees accrue leave monthly based on the following schedule:

Years of Service	Hours Per Month of Annual Leave	Days Per Year of Annual Leave
0-3	8	12
4-7	10	15
8-12	12	18
13-18	14	21
Over 18	16	24

Employees begin to accrue annual leave from the first day of hire. Annual leave must be earned before it can be taken. An employee can carry over a maximum of 240 hours of accrued annual leave beyond April 30 of each year.

## **Sick Leave** (NDAC 4-07-13)

Full-time employees begin to earn eight hours of sick leave each month with no maximum accumulations from the first day of employment. Sick leave must be earned before it can be taken. Employees may use accrued sick leave when ill or in need of medical care or to care for an eligible family member.

## **Leave Sharing Program** (NDCC 54-06-14.1 & 54-06-14.2)

Employees may be eligible to give or receive donations of annual or sick leave in case of severe illness, injury, impairment, or

physical or mental condition if the employee has exhausted all available accrued leave.

### **Funeral Leave (NDAC 4-07-14)**

Funeral leave is an approved leave of absence with pay for up to 24 working hours to attend or make arrangements for a funeral, as a result of a death in the employee's family or in the family of an employee's spouse.

### **Military Leave (NDCC 37-01-25)**

Employees who are members of the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve subject to call to service by the President of the United States, or are volunteers for service when ordered by proper authority to active non-civilian employment, are entitled to a leave of absence from such civil service for the period of such active service without loss of status or efficiency rating.

### **Family & Medical Leave (NDCC 54-52.4)**

Employees are eligible for family and medical leave under the State and Federal Family and Medical Leave Acts (FMLA) if they have been employed with the State of North Dakota for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period.

### **Holiday Pay (NDCC 1-03-01, NDAC 4-07-07)**

Regular and probationary employees receive ten paid holidays per year: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. State offices close at noon on Christmas Eve day when it falls on Monday through Thursday. A holiday occurring on Saturday or Sunday is observed the preceding Friday or succeeding Monday (does not apply to Christmas Eve closure).

### **Employee Assistance Program**

Provides short-term counseling services to assist employees and eligible dependents in dealing with alcoholism, drug abuse and personal problems. All information in this program is CONFIDENTIAL.

**Training (NDAC 4-07-36)**

All employees receive training provided by the state for a variety of training types, dependent on the employee's position.

**Suggestion Incentive Program (NDCC 54-06-24)**

Employees submitting cost-saving suggestions are eligible to receive 20% of the first year's realized savings, up to a maximum of \$4000. All state employees are eligible except agency heads, administrators, or supervisors considered management level.

**Service Awards (NDAC 4-07-18)**

Employees are eligible to receive service awards based on years of service, beginning at three years.

**Retirement Awards (NDAC 4-07-18)**

A retirement award is provided to an employee who has a minimum of 15 years of state service and who has not been previously recognized by the State.

Many agencies also offer the following programs to their employees:

- Employee Recognition
- Career Development Opportunities
- Promotional Opportunities
- Flexible Scheduling
- Telecommuting
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Infant-to-Work
- Employee Wellness

## **GROUP BENEFIT PROGRAMS**

All group benefit programs are administered by the North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS). Additional information about each of the benefit plans can be obtained from the NDPERS website. Benefit enrollments are done through the NDPERS Member Self Service website.

## **Health Insurance**

Employees may participate in a group health insurance program with the full premium paid for by the State if they work at least 20 hours per week for at least 20 weeks per year in a regularly funded position. Coverage for new employees begins the month following the month employment began.

## **Life Insurance**

Employees can participate in a group life insurance plan if they are 18 years of age and working at least 20 hours per week for at least 20 weeks per year. The State pays for a basic insurance benefit per employee. Employees can buy additional insurance coverage for themselves and dependents through a payroll deduction.

## **Retirement**

Employees are eligible to become members of the NDPERS retirement plan if at the time of initial employment they are at least 18 years of age and work 20 hours per week for 20 or more weeks per year. A total of 14.12% is contributed towards the employee's retirement: The State contributes 11.12%, and the employee contributes the remaining 3%. Employees are vested after 36 months of employment. In addition, the State contributes 1.14% towards the retiree health insurance credit program.

## **Deferred Compensation**

Employees may defer tax free a portion of their income in a voluntary deferred compensation supplementary retirement plan. The amount of income deferred plus any earnings are subject to income tax only when the employee or beneficiary receive a distribution at the time of death, retirement, disability, or termination of employment.

## **FlexComp**

Employees may pay for eligible insurance payments, medical expenses, and dependent care expenses with pre-tax dollars through payroll deductions.



## **Dental Insurance**

Employees can choose to participate in a group dental insurance plan for themselves and dependents if they are at least 18 years of age and work 20 hours per week for 20 or more weeks per year. The coverage is effective the first of the month following the employment date.

## **Vision Insurance**

Employees can choose to participate in a group vision insurance plan for themselves and dependents if they are at least 18 years of age and work 20 hours per week for 20 or more weeks per year. The coverage is effective the first of the month following the employment date.

Visit <https://www.nd.gov/> for more information about North Dakota:

- Business
- Education
- Government
- Living
- State Facts
- Tourism



## What Are Employees Saying About Working for State Government?

“Working for the State of North Dakota is a rewarding experience because every employee can and does make a difference.”

“After 25 years, I find there to be challenges every day that make it a joy to come to work.”

“I like that what I am doing results in saving lives. It’s more than just a job. It’s a profession, which offers the opportunity for a satisfying life of service.”

“I am proud that in a rural state like North Dakota, we can provide a level of service that is as good or better than larger states.”

“The State has been good to me. I have been promoted within my agency several times.”

“The State provides me with the latest technology and training to perform my job.”



*This brochure is intended to provide a general overview of important aspects about employment with the State of North Dakota. Nothing in this brochure represents a firm condition of employment, nor does it imply an employment contract between you and the State of North Dakota. Your employing agency’s employee handbook and policies will provide specific information relative to your employment, the benefits you will receive, and their expectations of you as an employee.*

## *Notes*

