

**STATE OF MAINE**  
**CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

**I. Introduction**

Welcome to a career in Maine State government!

Confidential employees are important and valued members of management, carrying out the mission and vision of Maine State government. As a confidential employee, you are not subject to the collective bargaining agreements that the State has with the five unions representing most state employees. The State of Maine offers excellent benefits for all employees. Many of the benefits for confidential employees are outlined in this handbook. Please reach out to Human Resources with any questions.

As you settle into your new role, please take time to familiarize yourself with the State's [Code of Ethics](#). These principles provide a solid foundation from which to build your rewarding career.

Wishing you many wonderful and fulfilling years in Maine State government!

**II. Paid Leave**

**A. Vacation**

Vacation accrual rates and maximum time accrual are as follows:

Hire to < 5 years	10 hours per month	<b>Maximum Accrual 320 hours</b>
5 to < 10 years	11 hours per month	
10 to < 15 years	12 hours per month	<b>Maximum Accrual  400 hours</b>
15 to < 20 years	14 hours per month	
20 or more years	16 hours per month	

Effective in January of each year, vacation hours which will be earned by a confidential employee for the coming year will be advanced and combined with unused vacation hours from the previous year.

For employees hired to confidential positions after the January posting of vacation, the vacation hours to be earned for the balance of the year will be advanced for use

from the date of hire, with full credit for the month hired. On the next January vacation posting date, the employee will be advanced all vacation hours that would be earned for the new full year.

The calculation of advanced vacation hours will include any increase to the employee's vacation accrual rate which occurs during the year for which the calculation is made (see accrual chart above).

At the end of each calendar year, vacation hours in excess of the maximum limit of 320 or 400 hours (see maximum accruals on chart above) will be forfeited and removed. When the advanced hours for the new year are added to those carried over into the new year, the amount may go over the maximum accrual limit to be used in the new calendar year; however, at the end of the calendar year, any vacation hours over the maximum accrual limit of 320 or 400 will again be removed/forfeited.

Employees who separate before the end of a year for which vacation hours have been advanced will be compensated for all such advanced hours which have actually been earned and are unused at the time of separation up to the maximum accrual limit of 320 or 400 hours. Vacation hours which had been advanced for the months after separation will not be paid out at separation.

Vacation accrual rates for confidential employees are based on total service years in State Government, regardless of whether such service is continuous or non-continuous. State service includes service as a legislator or legislative staff, and service in the Judicial Branch, but does not include project or non-status acting capacity employment.

**NOTE:** The Governor's staff, members of the Cabinet, the Public Advocate, and direct appointees (as designated in statute) of the Cabinet and Public Advocate are eligible for augmented vacation leave benefits consistent with the Bureau of Human Resources' Guidelines for Appointee Augmented Vacation Leave Benefits. See Attached Memo

## B. Personal Leave

Confidential employees also receive 24 hours of personal leave at the beginning of each calendar year (or at the time of hire, if hired anytime during the year). Unused personal leave hours at the end of the calendar year will be carried over and applied toward an employee's vacation accrual balance. These hours will be transferred to vacation after any hours that exceed the employee's maximum vacation accrual limit have been removed.

Example: a 20+ year employee with a maximum accrual limit of 400 hours has a balance of 415 hours of vacation leave and 16 hours of personal leave at the end of calendar year 2024. The 15 hours of vacation over the 400 maximum accrual limit is removed, and then the remaining balance of 16 hours of personal leave is added to the 400 hours of vacation for a total of 416 hours of vacation prior to the addition of the advancement of the 2025 vacation leave. Once the 192 hours of vacation leave for 2025 (16 hours per month) is advanced, the employee begins 2025 with 608 hours of vacation (400 + 16 + 192) and an additional 24 hours of personal leave for 2025.

#### C. Holidays

The State provides thirteen (13) paid holidays as follows:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King	Indigenous Peoples Day
Presidents Day	Veterans Day
Patriots Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Friday
Juneteenth	Christmas Day
Independence Day	

#### D. Sick Leave

Sick leave credits accrue at the rate of 3.7 hours every two weeks of completed service; 960 hours may be accrued with the excess being placed into lapsed credits.

In the event of an extended illness requiring the continued absence of the employee, lapsed credits may be requested to be reinstated by the appointing authority with the request subject to the approval of the State Human Resources Officer, consistent with Civil Service Rules.

#### E. Management Leave

Appointing authorities may provide confidential employees with paid management leave as necessary and reasonable upon consideration of job requirements and other special circumstances.

#### F. Parental Leave

Paid parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child(ren) shall be granted to an employee for their regularly scheduled hours during a period of time not to exceed forty-two (42) calendar days (six weeks), taken continuously, beginning no later than twelve (12) weeks directly following the birth or adoption of the child or children.

Paid parental leave is not available to a surrogate or gestational carrier; however, it is available to the intended parent(s) of the child(ren).

Consult with Human Resources to determine eligibility for Family and Medical Leave.

Employees may take up to a total of one year off for the birth or adoption of a child(ren), inclusive of paid parental leave, FML, and use of any other paid or unpaid leave. During an unpaid leave, retention of insurance benefits will be at the employee's expense.

#### G. Bereavement Leave

Full-time employees shall be allowed up to forty (40) hours leave with full pay (part-time employees shall receive paid leave on a prorated basis based on budgeted position hours) for absences resulting from the death of the following relatives:

<b>Relatives of the employee</b>	<b>Relatives of the spouse or significant other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spouse / Domestic Partner / Significant Other</li><li>• Child / Stepchild / Grandchild / Ward</li><li>• Sibling / Stepsibling</li><li>• Parent / Stepparent / Guardian / Grandparent</li><li>• Co-Parent of shared minor child(ren)<sup>1</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child / Grandchild</li><li>• Parent / Stepparent</li><li>• Sibling</li></ul>

1. Means a former spouse or significant other of the employee who, with the employee, shares the duties of raising their biological or adopted minor child or children.

#### H. 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 United

States Army, Air Force, Marine, Coast Guard or Naval Reserve, shall be entitled to a leave of absence from their respective duties without loss of pay, and shall accrue sick and vacation leave and seniority during periods of military training that do not exceed seventeen (17) workdays in any calendar year.

### **III. Unpaid Leave**

Unpaid leave is generally governed by [Civil Service Rules, Chapter 11, Section 3](#) and applicable state and federal laws.

### **IV. Compensation and Reimbursement**

#### **A. Temporary Compensation**

A confidential employee assigned to perform all of the duties of a higher position for more than five (5) days or the employee's normal workweek will be paid as if promoted to the higher position for the length of the assignment. This increase in pay does not change retirement contribution options. Temporary compensation does not cover senior employees whose job classifications include occasional or periodic responsibility for the duties of a higher position.

#### **B. Uniform Maintenance Allowance**

An employee who supervises employees receiving uniform allowance and who is also required to wear and maintain a uniform for work shall receive the same allowance.

#### **C. Interest on Reclassification**

With regard to an employee-initiated reclassification or range change approved by the Bureau of Human Resources, the State will pay interest of one-sixth of one percent (1/6 of 1%) per month on all monies due from the date of BHR approval until payment. Management-initiated reclassifications, reallocations, and reorganizations shall be implemented prospectively with no back pay or interest due.

#### **D. Longevity**

Confidential employees may receive additional longevity pay based on the length of state service, defined as total service years in State Government, whether continuous or non-continuous; and also includes service as a legislator or legislative staff and service in the Judicial Branch but does not include project or

non-status acting capacity employment. The longevity pay is broken down as follows:

Start	End	Longevity Amount
5 Years	Less than 10 Years	\$0.10 / Hour
10 Years	Less than 15 Years	\$0.20 / Hour
15 Years	Less than 20 Years	\$0.30 / Hour
20 Years	Less than 25 Years	\$0.40 / Hour
25 Years	Less than 30 Years	\$0.60 / Hour
30 Years	(No Upper Limit)	\$0.70 / Hour

E. Overtime

Confidential employees through Range 21 shall be eligible for one and one-half (1½) times the hourly rate of pay after actually working eight (8) hours in a day, or after their regularly scheduled hours if greater, or forty (40) hours of actual work in any workweek. Confidential employees above Range 21 may be eligible to receive overtime compensation consistent with state wage and hour laws and the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

F. Childcare Reimbursement

Confidential employees may be eligible for reimbursement related to childcare expenses consistent with the criteria sent out each year by the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Employee Relations. The application period for this benefit is from March 1 to April 15 of each calendar year. Contact your HR Representative for additional information. In families with both parents working for the State, each qualifying parent may apply for the Childcare Reimbursement provided that in no event will both parents be reimbursed for the same expense.

For 2024, employees with adjusted gross family income from IRS 2023 Tax Return making less than \$60,000 may receive up to \$2,000 in reimbursement for qualifying expenses. This amount is subject to change in subsequent years. Please contact HR for the most current guidelines.

G. Annual Eye Exam / Lens Reimbursement

A confidential employee who spends a significant number of hours each day operating a computer is eligible to be reimbursed for the portion of an annual eye exam not covered by insurance. Such employees shall also be eligible to receive reimbursement of either one hundred dollars (\$100.00) toward the cost of corrective lenses or glasses OR one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00) for bifocal, trifocal or progressive lenses or glasses. Contact your HR representative for additional

information and required paperwork, including paperwork to be completed by the provider conducting the eye exam.

## **V. Insurance and Wellness**

### **A. Health Plan**

The State provides employee health plan coverage pursuant to [Title 5 M.R.S. § 285](#). Dependent coverage is available; the State shall pay sixty percent (60%) of the cost of the dependent premium for eligible employees selecting dependent coverage. You may find more information about the State's health insurance benefits and premium rates [here](#). Remember to participate in the [Health Premium Credit Program](#) each year to save up to 5% on individual premiums.

The State provides employee dental insurance. Dependent coverage is available at the employee's own expense. You may find more information about the State's dental insurance coverage [here](#).

### **B. Vision Insurance**

Employees may purchase supplemental vision insurance separate from the State of Maine Health Plan. You may find more information about supplemental vision insurance [here](#).

### **C. Life Insurance**

The State pays the premium for basic life insurance which is equal to an employee's annual salary. Supplemental and dependent coverage are available at an employee's own expense. You may find more information about life insurance [here](#).

### **D. Temporary Disability Income Protection**

The State offers confidential employees a temporary disability income protection consistent with guidance issued by the Bureau of Human Resources. Under this benefit, a confidential employee, who, after six (6) months of continuous employment becomes temporarily disabled, becomes eligible to receive a benefit of 66 2/3% of their salary for a period not to exceed 365 total calendar days. The benefit shall commence on the day immediately following completion of the use of accumulated sick leave or thirty (30) days of continuous disability, whichever is greater. You may find the complete policy [here](#).

A physician's statement is necessary before payment of temporary disability income can be authorized. Likewise, a physician's statement may be necessary for the employee to return to work.

#### E. Living Resources / Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Living Resources Program provides confidential, short-term counseling services; legal and financial information, support and resources; work-life solutions; back-to-school support; wellness coaching; free online will preparation for employees and their families. Living Resources also offers free training for you and your work team. Click [here](#) for more information, including a link to the current training catalog.

### VI. Retirement Benefits

Confidential employees pay 1.15% and the State pays the remainder of the mandatory contribution to the Maine Public Employees Retirement System (MainePERS).

**NOTE:** Appointed employees, as designated in statute, who are appointed for a fixed term or serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority are not required by law to participate in the Maine Public Employees Retirement System (MainePERS). An appointed employee may opt for State payment of their individual retirement contribution, **or** they may opt for a five percent (5%) salary increase in lieu of the State payment, either paying their own contribution to MainePERS or participating in an option other than MainePERS. Selection of an option is exercised at the time of appointment. HR will provide information on applicable options at time of hire.

For a review of retirement and disability retirement requirements and benefits, click [here](#) to visit the Maine Public Employees Retirement System website.

### VII. Professional Education and Development

Participation in a Managing in State Government program is required by law for all new supervisors and managers in Maine State government. This program provides valuable insight, tools, and mandatory training requirements for enhancing a manager's skills, knowledge, and effectiveness in state government. Contact HR to register for the next available program.

Appointing authorities may also provide professional education and development opportunities for confidential employees, subject to the availability of funds.



## **VIII. Effective Date**

The effective date of this Handbook is January 1, 2025.