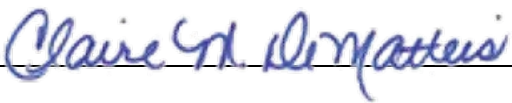




PAID VOLUNTEER LEAVE POLICY AND PROCEDURES - Statewide	
DHR-Policy #: DHR-STW-407.1	Authority: 29 Del. C Chapter 90D, EO 22 (2018), M.R. 5.5.3.2
Effective Date: December 12, 2023	Revised Date: December 12, 2023
Supersedes: July 25, 2022	Signature: 
Application: Executive Branch Agencies	

1. Policy Purpose Statement

The State of Delaware (State) encourages its employees to become involved in their communities, lending their voluntary support to organizations that positively impact the quality of life within these communities. This policy is developed to establish guidelines for employees who serve or would like to serve as an approved mentor at a State of Delaware public school or as a volunteer with charitable organizations that have been approved to participate in that year's State Employees' Charitable Campaign (SECC).

2. Scope

This policy applies to Executive Branch employees who are eligible for leave benefits. Elected Officials and Judiciary Members may elect to adopt and administer the policy at their offices and with their employees. The terms of this policy supersede any statewide or related Executive Branch Agency policy and procedure.

3. Definitions and Acronyms

- **Eligible Employee** – A benefit-eligible¹ full-time or part-time employee who has been employed with the state for at least six (6) months with a performance plan, who has no documented performance and/or attendance issues or has received a Meets Expectations or above in their latest performance review. Employees covered under § 5903(17)a. of Title 29 are not eligible for this leave.
- **Mentor** – An approved individual through the State of Delaware Student Mentoring Program who will be connected with a student to help increase student literacy while sharing knowledge, skills, and experience to help them grow academically and individually.
- **Public School** – An institution within the State of Delaware that is funded by local, state, and/or federal governments that offers educational opportunities to children from Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

¹ 19 DE Admin Code 2001. Employees who meet the definition of 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.1.3.

- **State Employees Charitable Campaign (SECC)** – An annual fundraising campaign reestablished by Governor Carney’s Executive Order #22.
- **SECC-Participating Charitable Organization** – Charities that have been approved to participate in the State Employees Charitable Campaign (SECC), a list which is posted on <https://secc.delaware.gov/state-employee-resources/>

4. Policy

- a. Eligible full-time employees may take 15 hours (for a 37.5-hour work schedule) or 16 hours (for a 40-hour work schedule) of Paid Volunteer Leave per calendar year to volunteer as an approved mentor at a State of Delaware public school or to volunteer at an SECC-participating charitable organization.
- b. To be eligible to volunteer as a mentor at a State of Delaware public school, an eligible employee must receive approval from the State of Delaware Student Mentoring Program.
- c. To be eligible to volunteer at an SECC-participating organization, the organization must be participating with SECC during the time the employee volunteers.
- d. Eligible part-time employees may take Paid Volunteer Leave per calendar year at a pro-rated schedule if their regularly scheduled hours are 30 or more per week.
- e. Eligible employees will be paid at their normal rate of pay for the volunteer hours taken.
- f. Paid Volunteer Leave may be taken in increments of no less than one (1) hour a workday at agency discretion.
- g. All full-time or part-time employees will be eligible to take Paid Volunteer Leave after six (6) months from the date of hire. The employee must have a Performance Plan or Meets Expectations or higher rating on their latest performance review or must have no documented performance issues.
- h. The employee must provide reasonable notice to their supervisor and HR representative. Volunteer time will not conflict with an agency’s peak work schedule and other work-related responsibilities, create the need for overtime, or cause conflicts with other employees’ schedules.
- i. Approval of Paid Volunteer Leave is at Agency Management’s discretion based upon the business and operational needs of the department.
- j. The Paid Volunteer Leave shall only be used to volunteer at an SECC-participating charitable organization or as an approved mentor at a State of Delaware public school.
- k. Paid Volunteer Leave is available at the beginning of each calendar year, and it cannot be accrued or carried over into the next calendar year. The leave may not be donated from one employee to another.

- l. Unused Paid Volunteer Leave will not be paid out at the time of separation from employment with the State.
- m. The use of Paid Volunteer Leave will not affect annual leave or sick leave accrual.
- n. Violations of this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal, pursuant to the standards set forth in the Merit Rules, any applicable collective bargaining agreements, or other relevant laws, rules, or policies.

5. Procedures

- a. Eligible employees requesting Paid Volunteer Leave must complete the Paid Volunteer Leave Request form and submit the form to their supervisor for approval with reasonable advance notice of the proposed leave.
- b. The decision to approve a request is within the discretion of the supervisor, based upon the business and operational needs of the department. If questions or concerns arise, agency HR can be consulted for additional guidance.
- c. In the event that the leave requested conflicts with business needs, the supervisor may suggest alternate times that the employee may use Paid Volunteer Leave. Agency management has the discretion to revoke or cancel a previously approved Paid Volunteer Leave if a business or operational need arises.
- d. After volunteering, the employee must provide verification of the volunteer service performed by obtaining the signature of an authorized representative of the participating organization as authorized in this Policy on the Paid Volunteer Leave Request form and return it to their supervisor within five (5) business days after they have volunteered in order to be considered in compliance for approval of this paid time. The employee must document this time as part of their timekeeping responsibilities.
- e. Failure to comply with the procedures listed in this section may result in a delay in the review of or denial of the Paid Volunteer Leave request, and/or appropriate disciplinary action.

6. Exclusions or Exceptions

- Positions or employees that do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this policy.
- Employees may not use Paid Volunteer Leave to volunteer in organizations that have not been approved to participate as outlined in this Policy.
- Employees covered under § 5903(17)a. of Title 29 are not eligible for this leave.

7. Dissemination And Training

- Employees are to acknowledge their review of this Policy within 30 days of receiving the request from the Delaware Learning Center.

8. Data Reporting

N/A

9. Associated Policy/Regulations/Information

- [SECC Resources for State Employees](#)
- [SECC Charitable Organizations](#)
- [State of Delaware Charter Schools](#)
- [State of Delaware District Schools](#)

10. Appendices and Forms Associated with this Policy

- [Paid Volunteer Leave Request Form](#)

11. Policy Owner

- Division Name: Division of Personnel (Talent) Management
- Policy Administrator: Director of Division of Talent Management
- Website: <https://dhr.delaware.gov/personnel/employee/>

This policy is not intended to create any individual right or cause of action not already existing and recognized under State or Federal law. If there is a conflict with, i.e., the law or regulation and this policy, the law and/or regulation govern.