

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 49th Legislature (2004)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR ENGROSSED
SENATE BILL NO. 1158

By: Lerblance of the Senate

and

Mass and Paulk of the
House

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

An Act relating to the Oklahoma Personnel Act; amending 74 O.S. 2001, Section 840-4.17, as amended by Section 18, Chapter 212, O.S.L. 2003 (74 O.S. Supp. 2003, Section 840-4.17), which relates to the employee service rating system; deleting obsolete language; modifying criteria for employee performance management system; modifying rating requirements; expanding jurisdiction of the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission; amending 74 O.S. 2001, Section 840-2.27C, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 353, O.S.L. 2003 (74 O.S. Supp. 2003, Section 840-2.27C), which relates to reduction-in-force plans; requiring a copy of reduction-in-force implementation plan be sent to certain associations; requiring certain list be provided to certain state employees; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 74 O.S. 2001, Section 840-4.17, as amended by Section 18, Chapter 212, O.S.L. 2003 (74 O.S. Supp. 2003, Section 840-4.17), is amended to read as follows:

Section 840-4.17 A. The Office of Personnel Management shall make available one standard performance management system to be used by all agencies for completing employee service ratings. ~~Agencies shall implement this new system on or before January 1, 2000. Until January 1, 2000, agencies may continue to use employee service rating systems which were approved or provided by the Administrator~~

~~prior to November 1, 1999.~~ The purpose of this employee performance management system is to evaluate the performance of each regular classified, unclassified and exempt employee in the executive branch of state government except those in the exempt unclassified service as specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of subsection A of Section 840-5.5 of this title and those employees employed by the institutions under the administrative authority of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

B. The employee performance management system shall provide for the following:

1. An objective evaluation of the employee, by the immediate supervisor, of the performance of the employee within the assigned duties of the job;

2. The identification of the strengths and deficiencies of the employee;

3. The identification by the immediate supervisor of accountabilities upon which the employee will be evaluated;

4. A midterm interview with the immediate supervisor for the purpose of discussing the progress of the employee in meeting the accountabilities upon which the employee will be evaluated;

5. Corrective actions, if necessary, to correct deficiencies;

~~4.~~ 6. A final interview with the employee by the immediate supervisor who shall provide the employee with a copy of the service ratings; and

~~5.~~ 7. The opportunity for the employee to submit written comments regarding the service rating.

C. Each probationary classified employee shall be rated at least thirty (30) days prior to the end of the probationary period. ~~Thereafter, each employee shall be rated no less than once each year~~ Unclassified and permanent classified employees shall be rated at least once every twelve (12) months.

D. Any permanent classified employee who disagrees with the employee's individual service rating may file a grievance pursuant to Section 840-6.2 of this title. Any employee, regardless of status, who is required to be rated pursuant to this section and who disagrees with the individual service rating of the employee may file a complaint through any other dispute resolution process made available through the employing agency or the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission. ~~The Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission shall not have jurisdiction to investigate or hear appeals of individual service ratings.~~

E. The agency shall use available service ratings of current or former state employees in decisions regarding promotions, appointments, demotions, performance pay increases and discharges. Reductions-in-force shall not be considered discharges.

F. The agency shall retain a copy of the service rating for each employee of the agency. A copy of the service rating shall be retained in the employee's personnel file.

G. Each appointing authority shall confirm in writing to the Administrator of the Office of Personnel Management on or before January 1 of each year that the appointing authority's agency is in compliance with the provisions of this section. The Administrator shall prescribe a form for such confirmation.

H. The Administrator of the Office of Personnel Management shall conduct an annual random audit of state agencies in compliance with this section.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 74 O.S. 2001, Section 840-2.27C, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 353, O.S.L. 2003 (74 O.S. Supp. 2003, Section 840-2.27C), is amended to read as follows:

Section 840-2.27C A. At least sixty (60) days before the scheduled beginning of reduction-in-force separations or as otherwise provided by law, the appointing authority shall post in each office of executive branch agencies affected by the proposed

reduction-in-force notice that a reduction-in-force will be conducted in accordance with the Oklahoma Personnel Act and Merit rules. The notice shall not be posted unless approved by the cabinet secretary for the agency conducting the reduction-in-force. If there is no incumbent cabinet secretary for the agency, the cabinet-secretary-notice-approval requirement shall not be applicable. The approved notice shall be posted in each office affected by the proposed plan for five (5) days. The appointing authority shall provide a copy of the notice to the Administrator. A reduction-in-force shall not be used as a disciplinary action.

B. The reduction-in-force implementation plan and subsequent personnel transactions directly related to the reduction-in-force in executive branch agencies shall be in compliance with rules adopted by the Administrator. The reduction-in-force implementation plan, including the description of and reasons for displacement limits and protections from displacement actions, and severance benefits that will be offered pursuant to Section 840-2.27D of this title shall be posted in each office affected by the plan within five (5) business days after posting of the reduction-in-force notice. The reduction-in-force implementation plan shall:

1. Provide for the appointing authority to determine the specific position or positions to be abolished within specified units, divisions, facilities, agency-wide or any parts thereof;

2. Provide for retention of affected employees based on type of appointment;

3. Require the separation of probationary classified affected employees in affected job family levels, except those affected employees on probationary status after reinstatement from permanent classified status without a break in service, prior to the separation or displacement of any permanent classified affected employee in an affected job family level;

4. Provide for retention of permanent classified affected employees in affected job family levels and those affected employees on probationary status after reinstatement from permanent classified status without a break in service based upon consideration of years of service;

5. Provide for exercise of displacement opportunities by permanent classified affected employees and those affected employees on probationary status after reinstatement from permanent classified status without a break in service if any displacement opportunities exist; and

6. Provide outplacement assistance and employment counseling from the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and any other outplacement assistance and employment counseling made available by the agency to affected employees regarding the options available pursuant to the State Government Reduction-in-Force and Severance Benefits Act prior to the date that a reduction-in-force is implemented.

C. The Director of the Office of State Finance shall review the fiscal components of the reduction-in-force implementation plan and within five (5) business days of receipt reject any plan that does not:

1. Demonstrate that funds are available to cover projected costs;

2. Contain an estimate of the number of affected employees likely to participate in the education voucher program established in Section 840-2.27D of this title; and

3. Contain an estimate of the cost savings or reduced expenditures likely to be achieved by the agency.

If the reduction-in-force is conducted pursuant to a reorganization, the fiscal components of the reduction-in-force implementation plan shall contain reasons for the reorganization,

which may include, but not be limited to, increased efficiency, improved service delivery, or enhanced quality of service.

The Administrator shall also provide a copy of any reduction-in-force implementation plans to the Oklahoma Public Employees Association and any other statewide association limited to state employee membership with a minimum membership of one thousand (1,000) dues-paying members.

D. The appointing authority may limit displacement of affected employees at the time of a reduction-in-force. Displacement limits shall not be subject to the approval of the Administrator. Any limitation shall be based upon reasonable, written, articulated criteria as certified by the appointing authority. If displacement is limited, the appointing authority shall take action to avoid or minimize any adverse impact on minorities or women.

1. The appointing authority may protect from displacement action up to twenty percent (20%) of projected post-reduction-in-force employees in affected positions within displacement limits; provided, that any fractional number resulting from the final mathematical calculation of the number of those positions shall be rounded to the next higher whole number. The appointing authority must explain why affected employees are being protected.

2. If the affected employee has not held within the last five (5) years a position in the job family level or predecessor class in which the affected employee is otherwise eligible for a displacement opportunity, the appointing authority may determine that the affected employee does not possess the recent relevant experience for the position and deny in writing the displacement opportunity.

3. An affected permanent classified employee may exercise a displacement privilege, if one exists, if the affected employee has received an overall rating of at least "satisfactory", or its equivalent, on the most recent annual service rating. If an affected employee has not been rated in accordance with the time

limits established in Section 840-4.17 of this title, the employee shall be deemed to have received an overall rating of at least "satisfactory" or its equivalent on the most recent service rating.

4. An affected employee who exercises a displacement privilege pursuant to this section shall:

- a. be required, as a condition of continued employment by the agency, to sign an agreement, in a form to be prescribed by the Administrator of the Office of Personnel Management, acknowledging that the employee had an opportunity to receive severance benefits and affirmatively elected to exercise a displacement privilege and to forego such benefits. An affected employee who signs the agreement required by this subparagraph waives any privilege which might otherwise have been available to the affected employee pursuant to the agreement for the provision of severance benefits, and
- b. not have the right to exercise any subsequent right to receive severance benefits from the agency for which the affected employee performs services on the date that the employee exercises a displacement privilege. The provisions of this section shall not prohibit any person from exercising a displacement privilege in, or accepting severance benefits from, more than one agency during employment with the State of Oklahoma or from the agency which the affected employee exercised a displacement privilege in any future reduction-in-force.

E. An affected employee who does not agree pursuant to Section 840-2.27E of this title to accept severance benefits and who does not have a displacement opportunity or does not accept a displacement opportunity shall be separated by the reduction-in-

force and shall not receive any severance benefits that would have otherwise been provided pursuant to Section 840-2.27D of this title.

F. Permanent classified affected employees and those affected employees on probationary status after reinstatement from permanent classified status without a break in service removed from a job family level by taking a position in another job family level through displacement or separated after foregoing severance benefits shall be recalled by the agency to the job family level from which removed in inverse order of removal before the agency may appoint other persons to the job family level, from the employment register, by internal action or from Priority Reemployment Consideration Rosters as provided by this section. Upon declination of an offer of reappointment to the job family level from which removed or eighteen (18) months after the date of removal from the job family level, whichever is first, this right to be recalled shall expire.

G. The names of permanent classified affected employees and those affected employees on probationary status after reinstatement from permanent classified status without a break in service who have been separated pursuant to the State Government Reduction-in-Force and Severance Benefits Act, who apply and meet all requirements for state jobs in the classified service shall be placed on Priority Reemployment Consideration Rosters in accordance with their individual final earned ratings for a maximum of eighteen (18) months after the date of separation. Before any vacant position is filled by any individual eligible for initial appointment from the employment register, individuals on the Priority Reemployment Consideration Rosters shall be given priority consideration for reemployment by any state agency within eighteen (18) months after the date of the reduction-in-force. Upon declination of an offer of reemployment to a job family level having the same or higher pay band than the job family level from which removed, or eighteen (18) months after the date of separation, whichever is first, this

priority consideration for reemployment shall expire. If an agency, including but not limited to the University Hospitals Authority, has posted a reduction-in-force plan and implementation schedule, all affected employees in positions covered by the plan and any within the displacement limits established by the appointing authority of the agency who have been separated shall be eligible for priority reemployment consideration.

H. If an agency or any part thereof is scheduled to be closed or abolished as a result of legislation or a court order, the affected employees, who would be eligible for Priority Reemployment Consideration after their separation in accordance with subsection G of this section, may apply and, if qualified and eligible, shall be accorded Priority Reemployment Consideration not to exceed twelve (12) months before the scheduled date of separation. If an agency, including but not limited to the University Hospitals Authority, has posted a reduction-in-force plan and implementation schedule, all affected employees in positions covered by the plan and any within the displacement limits established by the appointing authority of the agency shall be eligible for Priority Reemployment Consideration beginning with the date the schedule is posted, not to exceed twelve (12) months before the scheduled date of separation.

I. When the Legislature is not in session, the Contingency Review Board may, upon the request of the Governor, direct agencies, boards and commissions to reduce the number of employees working for said agency, board or commission whenever it is deemed necessary and proper. Such reduction shall be made pursuant to reduction-in-force plans as provided in this section.

J. 1. When the Legislature is not in session, the Contingency Review Board may, upon the request of the Governor, direct and require mandatory furloughs for all state employees whenever it is deemed necessary and proper. The Contingency Review Board shall specify the effective dates for furloughs and shall note any

exceptions to state employees affected by same. All classified, unclassified, exempt or nonmerit employees, including those employees of agencies or offices established by statute or the Constitution, shall be affected by such actions.

2. Mandatory furlough means the involuntary temporary reduction of work hours or the placement of an employee on involuntary leave without pay. Rules governing leave regulations, longevity pay and participation in the State Employees Group Health, Dental, Disability, and Life Insurance program shall not be affected by mandatory furloughs. Furlough, as provided for in this section or by rules adopted by the Administrator of the Office of Personnel Management, shall not be appealable under the provisions of the Oklahoma Personnel Act.

3. Notwithstanding existing laws or provisions to the contrary, members of state boards and commissions shall not receive per diem expenses during periods of mandatory furlough. The Contingency Review Board shall additionally call upon elected officials, members of the judiciary, and other public officers whose salary or emoluments cannot be altered during current terms of office, to voluntarily donate to the General Revenue Fund any portion of their salary which would otherwise have been affected by a mandatory furlough.

K. All agencies directed by the Contingency Review Board to terminate or furlough employees, shall report the cumulative cost savings achieved by the reductions-in-force or furloughs to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives on a quarterly basis for one (1) year following the effective date of the action.

L. The appointing authority of an agency which has an approved reduction-in-force plan pursuant to the State Government Reduction-in-Force and Severance Benefits Act may request the Administrator of the Office of Personnel Management to appoint an interagency

advisory task force for the purpose of assisting the agency and its employees with the implementation of the reduction-in-force. The appointing authority of state agencies requested by the Administrator to participate on a task force shall assign appropriate administrative personnel necessary to facilitate the necessary assistance required for the efficient implementation of the approved reduction-in-force.

M. Except as otherwise provided, the University Hospitals Authority shall not be subject to the provisions of this section. Beginning August 25, 1995, the provisions of subsection ~~E~~ F of this section regarding priority reemployment consideration shall apply to any employee of the University Hospitals Authority who was employed on or became employed after February 1, 1995, and who is separated from state service as a result of a reduction-in-force. The University Hospitals Authority shall conduct a reduction-in-force to terminate employees, regardless of status, whose positions are eliminated because of a contract with a private nongovernmental entity for the lease and operations of the University Hospitals pursuant to the University Hospitals Authority Act.

N. The Office of Personnel Management shall provide to all employees separated by a reduction-in-force a list of any available job openings with state agencies.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2004.

49-2-8830 SCE 03/24/04