

SECTION TWO

EMPLOYEE WAGES AND BENEFITS

2.1 WAGES AND SALARIES

A. EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARY DATE

All employees, with the exception of seasonal employees, will commence employment with the Commission on a minimum six (6) month probationary basis. After the employee has successfully completed the probationary period, and has complied with the Commission's other personnel requirements, the employee's anniversary date will retroactively become the date the employee was hired. Completion of the probationary employment period does not grant any employee contractual employment rights, nor does it alter an employee's at will employment. **The Commission also maintains the right to extend the length of an employee's probationary period, as may be deemed necessary due to performance concerns or due to an unpaid leave of absence.**

B. METHOD OF PAYMENT

Payment of wages and salaries shall be biweekly.

C. WAGE SCHEDULE

Biweekly salaries for full-time employees include Level 1, defined as being "New Hire Probationary." After the satisfactory completion of a minimum six (6) month period at this level, the probationary employee will be advanced to Level 2.

Level increases are not automatic but are based upon longevity (a minimum of one year between each level) and merit. No level increase will be granted unless the employee's immediate supervisor recommends the increase and the respective department head concurs with the recommendation, **and will be effective the first payroll period after reaching the appropriate step.**

D. LONGEVITY PAY

An employee, having more than five (5) years of service as a regular, full-time employee of the Ohio Turnpike Commission shall receive, in addition to the employee's base pay, a longevity increment as follows:

Years of Service	Longevity Percentage
Over five (5) but less than ten (10)	2% of base pay
Over ten (10) but less than fifteen (15)	4% of base pay
Over fifteen (15) but less than twenty (20)	6% of base pay
Over twenty (20) but less than twenty-five (25)	8% of base pay
Over twenty-five (25)	10% of base pay

E. TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT

If a non-bargaining unit employee is placed on temporary assignment to perform the majority of the job functions of an exempt employee in a higher classification who is absent due to an extended absence lasting more than one (1) month, the employee will receive the higher rate of pay retroactive to the first day of such work. All temporary assignments resulting in a higher classification for pay must be approved by the Executive Director.

F. PROMOTIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

If a non-bargaining unit employee is promoted to another position, that employee shall be compensated at the level closest to his/her current salary provided that the employee receives at least a 2.5 percent increase in pay, **unless the employee is currently at the maximum pay level.** Further, all promotional assignments or appointments will be required to serve a minimum of a six (6) month probationary period. Employees are eligible for promotional step increases on an annual basis beginning one year from their date of appointment. **Step increases will be effective the first payroll period after reaching the appropriate step.**

G. COMPENSATION DURING WEATHER EMERGENCIES/ADMINISTRATION BUILDING CLOSURE

A weather emergency is a formal declaration which may limit an employee's obligation to travel to and from work for a specific time due to severe weather conditions, not limited to snowstorms. A formal declaration can only be made by the Executive Director or his/her designee.

1. Employees who do not report for work or who are sent home as a result of a declared weather emergency, authorized by the Executive Director or his/her designee, shall be paid for their full scheduled shift(s) at their regular rate of pay.
2. Employees who volunteer to stay during a weather emergency and work their regularly scheduled hours, or a portion thereof, are not entitled to overtime compensation or compensatory time and shall be paid at their regular rate of pay.
3. Any employee who is on scheduled leave during a declared weather emergency shall be charged leave regardless of the declared weather emergency.
4. If the Administration Building is not formally closed by the Executive Director or his/her designee, and an employee is unable to make it in to work for his/her full or partial shift, then the employee will be required to use either vacation leave, personal time or request unpaid leave.
5. **In the event that a non-exempt employee is required to work during the weather emergency by the Department Head, the employee will receive one and one-half (1-1/2) times the regular hourly rate for the hours worked.**

2.2 OHIO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM (OPERS)

- A. By statute, enacted by the General Assembly of Ohio, all employees, including part-time employees of the Ohio Turnpike Commission, automatically become members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System of Ohio.
- B. Under the provisions of this law, the Ohio Turnpike Commission must pay into the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System an amount determined by the Retirement Board as provided by statute. Such contributions are required in order to insure the monthly benefits that are guaranteed to each **vested** employee upon retirement. The Ohio Turnpike Commission is required to deduct prescribed percentages from the employee's earnings and contribute an additional percent of the total amount earned by member employees which are paid into the fund.
- C. The benefits and operation of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System are more fully set forth and explained in detail in "Handbook for Members", published by the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System.
- D. PERS SALARY REDUCTION PICK-UP
 - 1. In accordance with the requirements of Section 414(h)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") and regulations and rulings thereunder, the Commission shall "pick-up" the employee contributions that are required to be deducted from the earnable salary or wages of employees who are members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS).
 - 2. Such pick-up shall not alter the amount of or character of contributions that are required to be made to OPERS by the Commission and by OPERS covered employees pursuant to Chapter 145 of the Ohio Revised Code, and shall, to the extent permitted by the Code, be treated as excludeable from the salary, wages or earnings of the covered employees. The Commission shall report to the Internal Revenue Service, the State of Ohio, and any other taxing authority as it is required to do so by law or regulation.

2.3 HOLIDAYS

- A. Eleven (11) holidays shall be recognized for full-time Commission employees. "Holiday Pay" shall be equivalent to the employee's straight-time compensation for an eight (8) hour day. When a holiday falls on Saturday, the Friday immediately preceding shall be observed as the holiday by employees whose work week is Monday through Friday. When a holiday falls on Sunday, the Monday immediately succeeding shall be observed as the holiday by such employees. The holidays are as follows:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
Presidents' Day	Third Monday in February
Good Friday	Friday before Easter
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Columbus Day	Second Monday in October
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25

- B. Under no circumstances will an employee receive holiday pay if the employee is on unpaid leave for any portion of the work day preceding or following the holiday.
- C. An employee receiving temporary total disability compensation as the result of an on the job injury shall receive the difference between the holiday pay and the temporary total disability compensation, if any, in addition to the said compensation, **unless the holiday occurs after one year of the date on which the injury first occurred. In which case, no additional payment will be made.**
- D. TOLL OPERATIONS AND SERVICE PLAZA MANAGERS
1. If the calendar holiday falls on one of the employee's scheduled days off, the employee will be entitled to an additional day off. **This additional day will be added to the employee's vacation leave balance.**
 2. **If a Toll Supervisor or Service Plaza Manager is scheduled for the holiday, the employee will be paid eight (8) hours for their scheduled work day and receive an additional day off for the holiday which will be added to the employee's vacation leave balance. All hours worked over eight (8) hours will be recorded as compensatory time.**

E. MAINTENANCE FIELD SUPERVISORS

Field supervisory personnel within the Maintenance Department will be paid hour for hour for all hours worked on a holiday at the straight-time rate, plus holiday pay; however, should a supervisor work eight (8) hours or more on the holiday, the supervisor may have the option of either converting eight (8) of the hours worked to one (1) vacation day and recording compensatory time for all remaining hours or recording compensatory time for all hours. **This additional day will be added to the employee's vacation leave balance.**

F. EMERGENCY HOLIDAY CALL OUT

In the event an emergency arises on a holiday and a full-time, non-exempt employee is called out to work, the employee shall receive in addition to holiday pay, one and one-half (1½) times the regular hourly rate for the overtime hours worked. In no case shall the employee receive less than three (3) hours pay at one and one-half (1½) times the regular hourly rate when called out for emergency duty.

G. RADIO OPERATORS.

1. In the event a non-exempt full-time radio **operator** is required to work on a calendar holiday which falls on the employee's regularly scheduled day **off**, said Radio **operator** shall receive one and one-half (1 ½) times the regular hourly rate for all hours worked on the holiday; and said employee will be entitled to an additional day off **for the holiday**. Since overtime is calculated after forty (40) hours have been worked in a work week, only those hours actually worked would count toward the purpose of overtime calculation. **This additional day will be added to the employee's vacation leave balance.**
2. **If the holiday is the radio operator's regularly scheduled work day, the employee will be paid eight (8) hours at time and one-half for their scheduled work day and receive an additional day off for the holiday which will be added to the employee's vacation leave balance.**

2.4 MEDICAL COVERAGE

- A. All regular, full-time employees of the Commission are eligible to receive medical benefits effective the first day of the month following completion of thirty (30) days of active service. Full-time employees who were employees of the State of Ohio or any of its political subdivisions immediately prior to their employment with the Commission shall receive medical benefits at the time their medical benefits with the state lapse upon providing documentation.
- B. Eligible employees may elect the offered plan design that best meets their needs from a financial and utilization basis annually during an open enrollment period. The monthly contribution by employees will be based upon an analysis of the Commission's defined contribution to healthcare cost and structured by the employee's choice of product offerings.
- C. All employees who are eligible for medical insurance may decide to opt out of the medical program and shall be paid seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per month in lieu of medical coverage. This option is available for any employee who provides proof of medical insurance through an alternate source. Employees in a leave no pay status for thirty (30) days or more will not receive the opt-out monthly amount.
- D. The medical coverage includes a cost containment provision and provides an open panel Preferred Provider Option (PPO). Included in this medical coverage are hospitalization, major medical, surgical, dental, vision, prescription, and hearing benefits. The benefits may be extended to family members as specified in the Certificate of Coverage booklets provided to employees.
- E. Details of medical coverage are explained in the Certificate of Coverage booklets provided to employees.
- F. **The Commission also makes available to employees the option of selecting from various supplemental insurance plans. These plans are voluntary and fully paid for by the employee through payroll deduction.**
- G. **Any changes in an employee's household resulting in a qualifying life event (i.e., divorce, marriage, birth, dependent losing dependent status) must be reported to the Human Resources Department within thirty-one (31) calendar days. Failure to report a qualifying event (i.e., divorce) may be considered employee dishonesty and/or result in denial or delay of coverage.**

2.5

GROUP LIFE AND ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE

- A. All full-time employees of the Commission are eligible to participate in a Group Life Insurance program effective the first day of the month following completion of thirty (30) days of active service.
- B. Each full-time employee is eligible for the group life insurance program provided by the Ohio Turnpike Commission at no cost to the employee. A double indemnity feature is included for accidental deaths. Dismemberment benefits are included. In the event that an employee becomes totally and permanently disabled before the age of sixty (60), the insurance remains in effect, through the process of waiver of premium, even though the total disability necessitates termination of employment.
- C. The insurance provided is not affected by Workers' Compensation and is in addition to anything payable due to an on-the-job injury.
- D. The current policy is available without medical examination, and in the event an employee leaves employment with the Commission, he or she may convert the policy or any portion of the policy without medical examination.
- E. The details **and any restrictions associated with** this coverage are described in the life insurance policy booklet provided to employees.
- F. The Commission also makes available to employees the option of voluntary supplemental life insurance plans for the employee and/or the employee's spouse and/or children. **These plans are voluntary and fully paid for by the employee through payroll deduction.**

2.6 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

A. ELIGIBILITY:

This program is available to all full time employees, for post-high school credit courses taken at institutions authorized and listed by the Ohio Board of Regents from which the student could earn an accredited degree or specialized non-degree courses leading to professional certification or licensure in a field that is relevant to the operation of the Ohio Turnpike.

B. TUITION COVERAGE AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. The Commission will reimburse an employee 100% of tuition expenses incurred for courses taken that are directly related to the employee's job. In general, directly related shall mean:
 - The course maintains or improves skills required by the individual in his or her employment, or
 - The course meets the express requirements of the Commission imposed as a condition to the retention by the individual of his or her employment relationship, status or rate of pay.
2. If the course is not directly related to the employee's job, but the course is being taken as part of a program leading toward an undergraduate degree in a field related to the employee's job, the Commission will reimburse 75% of the tuition expense incurred.
3. If the course is not directly related to the employee's job and the undergraduate degree toward which the employee is working is not related to the employee's job, the Commission will reimburse 50% of the tuition expense incurred. (*Reimbursement is subject to tax and withholding).
4. The Commission will reimburse an employee 50% of the tuition expense incurred for courses attended leading toward a graduate degree (*Reimbursement for a graduate degree is subject to tax and withholding).
5. In all cases, reimbursements will be made only for such courses in which the employee earns a grade of "C" or better, or a "Pass" in a Pass-Fail course.
6. The Commission will reimburse the employee 100% for the cost of books purchased for each course. (*This reimbursement will be subject to tax and withholding on the same basis as the courses). Any "Used Book" credits received for returned books should be deducted from the total amount requested.
7. Supplies will not be reimbursed unless specifically required by the instructor, such as accounting ledger books or workbooks necessary to the course work. An explanation of such requirements should be included with the request for reimbursement.

8. Lab fees, testing fees and general fees will be reimbursed on the same basis as the course. Parking fees, late fees or any fees not directly related to customary course registration will not be reimbursed.
9. An employee *may* request prior approval of a course or degree program in order to determine the rate of reimbursement, but such is not required by the Commission.
10. Approval for reimbursement of non-degree courses will be on a first-come, first-served basis and will be conditional based upon availability of funds. If an employee is requesting reimbursement for any course, which is not part of a program or degree, then such approval is based upon the discretion of the department head and approval of the Director of Human Resources. Such course(s) must be directly related to the employee's current position.
11. For non-degree courses that may lead to professional certification, development or licensure, the Executive Director, or his/her designee, shall have absolute, unfettered discretion in deciding which courses qualify for reimbursement as well as which employee(s) may attend such courses.
12. All courses must be attended outside the employee's scheduled work hours. The Commission will not treat the time spent taking the course or any associated study/research time as compensable work time, unless otherwise directed by the employee's department head and approved by the Director of Human Resources.
13. Eligible employees must be in active pay status during the courses for which tuition reimbursement is requested. As a condition of receiving tuition reimbursement, non-bargaining unit employees will be required to sign an agreement whereby in the event the employee separates for any reason from the Commission's employ within one (1) year after a tuition assistance payment is made, he/she must repay all sums expended by the Commission. **Repayment of tuition assistance will be deducted from the employee's terminal pay. If the terminal leave pay is insufficient to cover the reimbursement, then the employee will be obligated to repay the full amount within one year of departure from service and upon terms as agreed to between the employee and the Accounting Department.**
14. The maximum annual reimbursement per employee for tuition and books is \$2,000 and only for courses completed at Ohio-based schools. For purposes of calculating the maximum, the date a course is completed will be used to determine the year in which the reimbursement amount is included but, for tax and withholding purposes, the date of actual reimbursement to the employee applies. The Commission will comply with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules regarding taxation of tuition reimbursement proceeds.

C. PROCEDURE:

Each employee desiring to participate in the program must follow the following steps, in the order listed:

1. The employee must complete the Educational Assistance Application and forward to his or her department head at least two (2) weeks prior to taking the course. The application will be reviewed by the approving department head, Human Resources and Executive Director for reimbursement percentage calculation and approval.
2. After the employee has completed the credit course, the employee is required to submit to the department head the Educational Assistance Reimbursement Form as well as copies of the grade earned and receipts for tuition paid and book fees. Separate reimbursement forms should be submitted for each quarter completed.
3. The department head and Human Resources will review the employee's application and reimbursement forms and verify that the proper documentation has been attached with the appropriate reimbursement request. If all information is correct, the request will be approved and forwarded to the Executive Director for final approval. Upon final approval, the Educational Assistance Reimbursement is then forwarded to the Comptroller for payment.
4. Failure to properly follow the above procedures and/or omission of required documentation will result in unnecessary delays in the consideration and approval of the employee's request.
5. A revolving fund check will be issued to the employee for the amount of approved expenses. If the payment is for educational expenses which are subject to tax, the amount of the payment will be added to the employee's taxable income in the payroll system and withholding will be made on the amount of the previously paid reimbursement.

2.7 EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION

A. Resignation

Employees who plan to voluntarily resign are encouraged to submit a letter of resignation to their supervisor and Human Resources at least two (2) weeks in advance of the effective date of resignation.

B. Retirement.

All Commission employees are required by Ohio law to participate in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). The requirements for OPERS can be obtained by contacting OPERS directly. (See also Policy 2.2 of this Employee Manual)

C. Disability Separation.

Employees who are approved for a disability retirement under Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) will be considered separated from Commission employment the end of the payroll period following the Disability Retirement approval. Employees are not permitted to extend their date of separation through the use of paid leaves.

D. Job Abandonment

An employee who fails to return from a leave of absence within three (3) work days of its expiration is subject to removal and is considered to have voluntarily resigned or abandoned his/her job.

An employee who fails to report for work for a period of three (3) work days, without prior approval of their supervisor or department head, is subject to removal and is considered to have voluntarily resigned or abandoned his/her job.

E. Separation Procedures.

An exit interview will be conducted with each departing employee prior to their last day of work by the Human Resources Department. Any employee who resigns is encouraged to give his/her reasons for resigning and are also encouraged to discuss any working conditions which he/she feels to be unsatisfactory.

Employees are encouraged to check with both the Payroll Department and Human Resources Department one week prior to departure to discuss any final pay arrangements.

All property of the Commission must be accounted for and turned in to the appropriate supervisor on the last day of employment.