

# 5.1 Corporate Employee Orientation Policy

## Policy Statement

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to welcoming, supporting and recognizing employees when they start a new job in government. Effective employee orientation provides corporate, department, and job-specific information to help employees understand their role in the public service, preparing them for success in their new role.

This policy provides the foundation for employee orientation programs within the Government of Nova Scotia.

## Definitions

### DEPUTY HEAD

The deputy of the member of the Executive Council presiding over a department and all others whom the Governor in Council from time to time designates as having the status of deputy head.

### DEPARTMENTS

Any department, office or public service entity established by the Government of Nova Scotia, as identified under Category I in Appendix I-A of the Management Manuals Policy.

### EMPLOYEE

An employee as defined in the *Civil Service Act*; an employee as defined in the *Corrections Act*; an employee as defined in the *Highway Workers' Collective Bargaining Act*; any other person directly employed by the Province of Nova Scotia.

### VALUES

Respect, integrity, diversity, accountability, and the public good, as defined in the 2005-2010 Corporate Human Resource Plan, and/or values as defined in department business plans.

### **EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

The process used to welcome, support and recognize a new employee to an organization and acquaint them with the business goals, organizational structure, strategies, policies, procedures, organizational culture and role expectations related to a new job. Employee orientation in the Government of Nova Scotia is comprised of three components: corporate, department and job-specific employee orientation.

### **CORPORATE EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

Information related to government as an employer, such as its vision, priorities, values, structure and culture.

### **DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

Information related to the employee's hiring department, such as its vision, priorities, structure and culture, in relation to the organization.

### **JOB-SPECIFIC EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

Information related to the employee's role and responsibilities, their immediate work environment and their terms and conditions of employment.

## **Policy Objectives**

To consistently and effectively support, recognize and welcome employees in a timely manner, as they start a new job in government.

To ensure employees are informed about government's goals, structure, strategies and policies.

To provide a framework and resources to assist the development of comprehensive employee orientation programs in government.

To support government's attraction and retention strategies.

## **Application**

This policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and regulations and other direct employees of the provincial government including all bargaining unit employees.

This policy applies to new employees to government, as well as existing employees transferring to new positions within government.

## **Policy Directives**

Every new employee and existing employee commencing a new position within government will receive an employee orientation.

Employee orientation must be delivered in a timely manner, ideally starting on the employee's first day.

Employee orientation programs must reflect three components: corporate, department and job-related information.

The Public Service Commission will develop and periodically review the corporate employee orientation program to ensure that the information is relevant and current.

Departments will develop and periodically review their department employee orientation programs to ensure that the information is relevant and current.

As part of employee orientation and consistent with the performance management process, managers will jointly establish a performance plan with employees to ensure a clear understanding of performance goals and expected results, as it relates to the department's and government's business goals.

Costs related to department-specific and job-specific employee orientation programs will be managed from within departmental budgets. Deputy heads are responsible for the costs associated with department and job-specific employee orientation programs and must authorize all expenditures related to employee orientation activities.

Participating in employee orientation is part of an employee's work responsibility. Hence, employees will not be deducted for time taken to attend, or travel to, an orientation event held during their regularly scheduled hours of work. Time taken from regular work hours to attend, or travel to, an orientation event is treated as time worked in straight time hours. Employees who travel to attend an orientation event will be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with government's travel policy.

## **Policy Guidelines**

A variety of learning methods may be used to support employee orientation programs. Examples include: formal information sessions, directed readings, coaching, peer support and self-initiated learning.

Employee orientation programs may be flexible to meet individual department and employee needs and should be reflective of public service values.

In implementing comprehensive employee orientation programs, departments are encouraged to use the Employee Orientation Program Guidelines that have been created by the Public Service Commission and posted on its website.

## **Accountability**

### **PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Public Service Commission is responsible for:

- Developing and implementing the corporate employee orientation program.
- Providing advice and assistance to departments regarding the application of this policy.
- Providing tools to departments to support their employee orientation programs.
- Providing support to departments as required.

### **DEPUTY HEADS**

Deputy Heads are responsible for:

- Leading the development and implementation of department employee orientation programs appropriate to the individual needs of the department and new employees.
- Integrating elements of this policy within their departmental employee orientation program, and complying with its directives.
- Communicating department values, goals and objectives when engaging in employee orientation activities.
- Authorizing and monitoring expenditures related to employee orientation.

### **MANAGERS**

Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring employees are supported, welcomed and recognized when they start a new job.
- Leading the development and implementation of job-specific orientation programs.
- Initiating the employee orientation process on the employee's first day in their new job.
- Ensuring employees participate in an employee orientation program that includes corporate, department and job-specific employee orientation content.

## **EMPLOYEES**

Employees are responsible for:

- Participating in employee orientation activities, when they are commencing a new role.
- Supporting, welcoming and recognizing fellow employees when they commence a new role.

## **Monitoring**

The Public Service Commission will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and consistent application of this policy. The Public Service Commission may periodically conduct audits of department practices and require access to data maintained by departments with respect to this policy.

Departments will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their own employee orientation programs.

## **References**

*Civil Service Act*  
General Civil Service Regulations  
*Highway Workers' Collective Bargaining Act*  
*Corrections Act*  
Management Manuals Policy  
Performance Management Policy  
Travel Policy  
Corporate Human Resource Plan 2005-2010

## **Enquiries**

Strategic Support Services  
Public Service Commission  
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