

**REPORT ON THE STAFF RETENTION POLICY FOR  
2019-2020, 2020-2021 & 2021-2022**

**BACKGROUND**

In May 2000, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) introduced the Staff Retention Policy, which provides a process for the redeployment of staff whose jobs are eliminated or transferred to another community. The Policy focuses on the retention, retraining and development of existing staff as required to provide job security, career development and to maintain a skilled, stable and competent territorial public service; however, the Policy does provide lay-off as an option where redeployment is not feasible.

The Staff Retention Policy was last updated in May 2013. The Policy is currently under review for change given the amendments to the Collective Agreement with the Union of Northern Workers around lay off and notice periods. The three Ministerial policies (Affected Employee and Staffing Priority, Lay-off and Voluntary Separation) will be eliminated and the relevant information within will be reflected in new Staff Retention guidelines that will accompany the amended Staff Retention Policy.

Once a person is identified as affected, their home department and Client Service Manager work with the employee to identify potential employment opportunities within the GNWT. If a reasonable job offer cannot be made to the individual during the affected period (21 weeks), the employee is given one of the following lay-off options:

- Separation assistance payment based on years of service.
- Severance priority payment based on years of service plus hiring priority in the GNWT for 18 months after the lay-off notice period.
- Retraining for a specific or anticipated vacancy where the retraining can be completed within 12 consecutive months.
- Education assistance for one year to pursue further post-secondary education.

Voluntary Separation Severance is applicable only where an employee's position is transferred to another community or if they choose to terminate their employment to create a vacancy, which will be staffed by an employee who has been laid-off or will be laid-off.

## **STATUS**

### **2019-2020**

In fiscal year 2019-2020, nine **(9)** individuals were identified as “affected employees” under the Staff Retention Policy, as follows:

- Number of positions affected by lay-off or voluntary separation – 9
- Number of affected employees – 9
- Number of employees laid-off – 2
- Number subject to voluntary separation – 0
- Communities affected by elimination of positions, lay-off, and/or voluntary separation – 2 Communities: Yellowknife and Fort Smith
- The reasons that positions were eliminated or reorganized –
  - Technical changes
  - home position filled while on Transfer Assignment,
  - change in job description
  - creation of new unit
  - elimination of a program
- Number of affected employees who chose to exercise a lay-off option rather than seeking retraining or an alternate position – 2
- Retraining and redeployment options identified for employees subject to lay-off – 5
- Confirmation that all reasonable options to retain the employees were explored – Yes

### **2020-2021**

In fiscal year 2020-2021, eight **(8)** individuals were identified as “affected employees” under the Staff Retention Policy, as follows:

- Number of positions affected by lay-off or voluntary separation – 8
- Number of affected employees – 8
- Number of employees laid-off – 1
- Number subject to voluntary separation – 0
- Communities affected by elimination of positions, lay-off, and/or voluntary separation – 3 Communities: Norman Wells, Yellowknife and Fort Smith
- The reasons that positions were eliminated or reorganized –
  - Hours reduced to parttime
  - Main Estimates position elimination
  - loss of funding

- 50% change in duties
- Number of affected employees who chose to exercise a lay-off option rather than seeking retraining or alternate position – 1
- Retraining and redeployment options identified for employees subject to lay-off – 6
- Confirmation that all reasonable options to retain the employees were explored – yes

### **2021-2022**

In fiscal year 2021-2022, **23** individuals were identified as “affected employees” under the Staff Retention Policy, as follows:

- Number of positions affected by lay-off or voluntary separation – 23
- Number of affected employees – 23
- Number of employees laid-off – 5
- Number subject to voluntary separation – 0
- Communities affected by elimination of positions, lay-off, and/or voluntary separation – 4 Communities: Fort MacPherson, Inuvik, Hay River and Yellowknife
- The reasons that positions were eliminated or reorganized –
  - COVID Secretariat Operations ceasing
  - position elimination following budget review
  - 50% change in duties
- Number of affected employees who chose to exercise a lay-off option rather than seeking retraining or alternate position – 5
- Retraining and redeployment options identified for employees subject to lay-off – 11
- Confirmation that all reasonable options to retain the employees were explored – Yes

**\*\* Note: Seven (7) employees are currently in the layoff period\*\***

Statistics for “the number of employees laid-off” can include employees who were affected in the identified fiscal year and/or previous fiscal years dependent on what lay-off option the employee selected.