

REPORT ON THE STAFF RETENTION POLICY FOR 2018-2019

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 updated in May 2013. Three Ministerial policies (Affected Employee and Staffing Priority, Lay-off and Voluntary Separation) have been developed to operationalize the collective agreement lay-off and voluntary separation articles in the Staff Retention Policy. The reporting requirement was amended to include the reasons that positions were eliminated or reorganized and the communities affected.

Once a person is identified as affected, their home department and the Department of Finance work with the employee to identify potential employment opportunities within the GNWT. If a reasonable job offer cannot be made to the individual during their affected employee period (up to eight weeks) and lay-off notice period (13 weeks), they are 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

2018-2019

During the fiscal year 2018-2019, individuals were identified as “affected employees” under the Staff Retention Policy as follows:

- Number of positions affected by lay-off or voluntary separation – 31
- Number of affected employees – 30
- Number of employees laid-off – 2
- Number subject to voluntary separation – 1
- Communities affected by elimination of positions, lay-off, and/or voluntary separation – 5 Communities: Fort Simpson, Fort Providence, Inuvik, Hay River, Yellowknife
- The reasons that positions were eliminated or reorganized – Main Estimates position reductions, declined student enrolment and decreased funding, amalgamation of departments, restructuring where position became redundant, fiscal restraint resulting in unfunded position elimination, position re-described, home position filled when incumbent on extended leave, program cancellation resulting in position elimination, creation of a shared services, position relocated
- Number of affected employees who chose to exercise a lay-off option rather than seeking retraining or alternate position – 2
- Retraining and redeployment options identified for employees subject to lay-off – 16
- Confirmation that all reasonable options to retain the employees were explored – Yes

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.