



# West Virginia Division of Highways Policy: **Cooperative Employment and Training Programs**

*Issued by the Commissioner of Highways*

**Policy No: DOH 3.4**

**Issue Date: 05/03/1986**

**Revised: 04/22/2022**

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

There are three (3) purposes of this policy.

1. To locate capable college students who want to become West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) Engineers or WVDOH Engineering Technicians, Attorneys, Programmers, Database Administrators, or one of several job titles in Accounting, Auditing, Finance and Human Resources (HR) who need to work during the summer months to help finance their collegiate education through WVDOH's Cooperative Employment and Training Program (co-op).
2. To encourage specific graduates who have developed a keen interest in highway engineering work, legal work, or governmental work to accept employment with the WVDOH upon completion of their degree.
3. To build a larger highly skilled group of applicants from which to recruit, particularly for positions that are historically hard to fill.

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## **2.0 SCOPE**

This policy applies to students who are seeking summer employment through the Cooperative Employment and Training Programs at the WVDOH and to the HR Division employees who are responsible for recruiting candidates for these programs.

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## **3.0 POLICY**

- 3.1 The HR Division is responsible for recruiting and evaluating candidates for cooperative employment and training, and for overall coordination and evaluation of the programs.
- 3.2 Heads of organizational units to which co-op students are assigned for work are responsible for seeing that appropriate orientation, guidance, and supervision are provided on the job and that required reports of the students' progress are submitted to the HR Division.
- 3.3 Co-op students in all disciplines, except law students, understand that they should complete their schooling within four (4) calendar years, if possible. Law School is a post-graduate study which should be completed in three (3) calendar years. The students understand that if they drop out of the program for reasons other than the necessity to attend summer school, they will not be readmitted except upon careful review and approval. Any poor performance could result in permanent disqualification from the program.

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## **4.0 SUMMARY OF PROGRAM**

- 4.1 Applicants who meet the requirements and are selected may enter the program

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during the summer immediately following the completion of the first collegiate year.

- 4.2 While this program is primarily focused on disciplines in Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Legal, Computer Science, Technology, and Finance, all disciplines meeting the hiring needs of the WVDOH are eligible. Therefore, students of other engineering disciplines may also be accepted into the program when justified by a Division Director or District Manager and approved by the State Highway Engineer.
- 4.3 This work period continues until the beginning of the fall semester. Following this, the periods of work and school may alternate until the academic work is completed and the degree requirements are met. The students will spend their summers working for the WVDOH unless attendance at summer school becomes necessary or advisable.
- 4.4 The work for the WVDOH will be varied from time to time to give the students a wide range of experience in the many phases of highway engineering, highway administration, highway maintenance, government law, or other areas.

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### **5.0 TIME SCHEDULES TO COMPLETE PROGRAM**

The program is set up primarily for summer work, with the student attending school full-time during the regular school year. However, based on financial necessity, WVDOH needs, performance and other considerations, a student may co-op up to six (6) calendar years, and co-op periods may be arranged for fall or spring. This process, however, is rarely done and special approval must be obtained in each case. No co-op trainee may remain at work after August 31 of any year except as suggested by the HR Division and approved by the WVDOH Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner.

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### **6.0 ELIGIBILITY**

To be considered for admission to this program, applicants must have enrolled in and satisfactorily completed their freshman year in an accredited college or university, with a minimum of 30 hours and a grade point average of 2.0 in a major that is deemed essential by the WVDOH and have the desire to cooperate with the WVDOH in this program. Law students must have completed a minimum of 24 hours and a grade point average of 2.0. Any student that meets the minimum qualifications is eligible; however, preference may be given to West Virginia residents attending a West Virginia College or University.

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### **7.0 HOW STUDENTS ARE SELECTED**

The WVDOH is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all qualified persons regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or political affiliation. Selection of the participants in this program will be made by the WVDOH based on their satisfactory completion of their freshman year, aptitude in their studies, past co-op performance, and character. Selection must comply with the vacancies allocated to deadlines set forth in section 13.0, Time Schedules, of this policy.

- 7.1 Student aptitude will be determined by the college or university in which the trainee is enrolled, subject to procedures agreed to by the WVDOH.

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- 7.2 Co-op performance will be based on reports provided by the supervisor of the organization to which the student is assigned.
- 7.3 Information concerning character and scholastic ability may be obtained from such sources as determined by the HR Division. Selection will be made by the WVDOH management in compliance with WVDOH's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Affirmative Action Plans.

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### 8.0 APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO PROGRAM

- 8.1 To participate in Cooperative Employment and Training programs, applicants who are enrolled at accredited colleges or universities should submit their application to the following address:

Human Resources Division  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Building 5, Room 450  
Charleston, WV 25305

OR

Scan application with supporting documentation to [DOHCareers@wv.gov](mailto:DOHCareers@wv.gov)

- 8.2 Applications must be submitted by the second (2nd) Friday in February of the current year.
- 8.3 The Cooperative Program application forms are available from:
  - Human Resources Division, at address listed above.
  - [www.transportation.wv.gov](http://www.transportation.wv.gov)
  - University or College Career Services Department

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### 9.0 OUTLINE OF THE PROGRAM

This program is designed for the student to enter the summer after their freshman or first year; however, a student may enter at any point after that. An effort is made to correlate work assignments and classroom studies.

There may be irregularities in some instances of work assignments and classroom studies, but the objective will be as listed below.

- 9.1 Pre-Sophomore Year: Trainees will be assigned entry level duties. This will give the trainees a base of understanding as their training and classroom studies progress.
- 9.2 Pre-Junior Year: Trainees will find their duties starting to be more specific to their course of studies and adequate progression in assignments is expected.

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- 9.3 Pre-Senior Year: Trainees will find their proficiency levels have increased and they will receive assignments that reflect their advancing skills and education.
- 9.4 Law students may enter the program after the completion of the first year of law school and each of the next two (2) years. Assignments will be made based on a similar progression as undergraduate students. Accommodation may be made during the third summer for the student to prepare for and take the bar examination.
- 9.5 Upon successful completion of their educational programs, the graduate will receive a degree and will be considered for an applicable WVDOH position.

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### **10.0 CONTINUATION IN THE PROGRAM**

After admission to the program, a co-op student must continue to meet the same entry eligibility requirements and must:

- Maintain enrollment in good standing in an approved major or postsecondary degree program at an appropriate accredited college or university; and
- Successfully perform work assignments for the WVDOH as evidenced by formal evaluations leading to recommendation for the continuance by the supervisor of the organizational unit for which the student is working.

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### **11.0 PAY BENEFITS AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

- 11.1 Within standards and rate schedules approved by the Commissioner, the HR Division will determine the assignment and pay rate for each co-op employee. Schedules for pay will include consideration of the number of semester hours completed in school plus prior pertinent highway experience, either as co-op or otherwise.
- 11.2 Co-op students are ineligible for annual leave, sick leave, or holiday pay. In addition, they will not be eligible to participate in the retirement plan, group insurance plan, or military leave with pay benefits. They will be required to sign a temporary agreement form agreeing to these conditions. See section 14.0 of this policy.
- 11.3 Co-op students may work more than 40 hours per workweek, subject to any agency-imposed standards and other considerations regarding the authorization of overtime hours. They are eligible for payment at one and one-half times the regular rate for such excess hours.

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### **12.0 LIMITATIONS**

- 12.1 The administration of this program is subject to budgetary limitations and all other controls under which the WVDOH operates. Nothing herein is intended either specifically or by implication to guarantee employment for either co-op or permanent employment upon completion of school with the college or university. The WVDOH retains the right to cancel, amend, or restrict this program at any time

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and no rights will accrue to any individual as a result of admittance to the program.

- 12.2 Necessary budgeting for position vacancies to be used for the placement of co-ops is the responsibility of the district or division for which the work is performed.

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### 13.0 TIME SCHEDULES

The following actions will be submitted as shown no later than the dates indicated for the summer co-op.

| DEADLINE DATE                                | ACTION  |
|--|---|
| September 1                                  | Posters, applications, and other suitable descriptive information will be furnished to appropriate colleges and universities in the state.  |
| Second (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) Friday in February | Application Deadline  |
| Second (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) Friday in February | Divisions' and districts' need for co-ops established in discussions with the HR Division.  |
| March 1 – March 15                           | Proposed quotas, allocations, pay schedules and selection standards furnished to management by the HR Division. Report on operation of program for previous year prepared by the HR Division and submitted to management. Report should include academic information from first semester. |
| April 15                                     | Notices of reporting dates and locations completed and sent by HR Division to all those selected.   |
| Second (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) Monday in May      | Earliest date co-ops may begin work unless otherwise specifically authorized.   |
| August 31                                    | Last day any co-op may work for summer unless otherwise specifically authorized.  |
| September 30                                 | Appraisal reports furnished by heads of organizational units on each co-op student to be sent to the HR Division.   |

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### 14.0 RELEVANT MATERIALS / DOCUMENTS

- 14.1 [Temporary Appointment Agreement](#)

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### 15.0 CHANGE LOG

November 1, 2000 –

- Last revision date of policy.

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February 19, 2021 –


- Formatted policy to new policy format. Entire policy revised to combine three (3) cooperative employment and training programs into one (1) cooperative employment and training program.

April 22, 2022 –

- Updated DOH Personnel Division to Human Resources Division
- Updated policy formatting.
- Updated 14.1 link.
- Clarified provisions relating to law students' participation in the program.

**Effective Date of Policy: 04/22/2022**

Approved by:

  
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Jimmy D. Wriston, P.E.  
Secretary of  
Transportation  
Commissioner of  
Highways

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*The Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Transportation or the Commissioner of Highways may, pursuant to the authority vested with the Secretary and Commissioner in W. Va. Code §5F-2-2, §17-2A-1 *et seq.*, and §17-2-1 *et seq.*, waive the requirements of this policy if the circumstances, in the Secretary or Commissioner's sole discretion, warrant such action.