



## Employment Status

(HC34)

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) establishes and maintains employee status categories to classify non-represented employees.

### **PURPOSE**

To provide appropriate identification and classification of employees in order to assist departments in meeting business needs and determine applicability of rules, benefits, and other conditions of employment.

### **APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all RTA non-represented employees.

### **ADOPTED BY:**

The RTA Board of Commissioners on 02/23/2021, Resolution XX-XXX

### **APPROVED BY:**

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Alex Z. Wiggins  
Chief Executive Officer

Effective Date: X/XX/XXXX  
Date of Last Review: X/XX/XXXX

## 1.0 PROCEDURES

The following procedures describe the conditions of employment for each employee status.

Note: All employees must provide and maintain valid proof of eligibility to work in the United States, throughout their employment at RTA.

### 1.1 At-Will Employees

At-Will Employees serve at the pleasure of the hiring authority and, therefore, the employment relationship may be terminated by the employee or the employer at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. RTA confers At-Will status to the following:

- All At-Will Full-Time and Part-Time Employee positions
- All At-Will Full-Time and Part-Time Employee positions in the Board Secretary's Office;
- All At-Will Full-Time and Part-Time Employee positions reporting directly to the RTA Board of Commissioners;
- All Interns; and
- All Contracted, Intermittent, Emergency, and Temporary Employees.

### 1.2 Categories of Employment

#### 1.2.1 At-Will Full-Time and Part-time Employees

##### Status

An At-Will Full-Time Employee may apply for any position and will be considered if he or she meets the minimum qualifications of that position.

##### Recruitment

At-Will Full-Time Employees are recruited per the **Employment Advertisement, Recruitment and Selection (HC37 14)** policy.

##### Release

At-Will, Full-Time Employees may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority subject to the Termination of Employment (HC17) policy.

##### Hours

At-Will, Full-Time Employees are scheduled to work a minimum of 40 hours per work week.

## Benefits

Full-Time Employees are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- Medical insurance
- Dental/vision/life insurance
- Flex spending
- 457 plan
- Paid holidays
- Paid Time Off
- Fare media

### 1.2.2 Project Employees

#### Status

Project Employees occupy a budgeted position and are hired through a competitive process to fill positions for projects that have a specific time frame of at least one year and up to five years. They are Non-Represented Employees who may be used to carry out special project work or staff programs of limited duration. Employment in a Project position does not lead to regular status. Project Employees are RTA employees.

A current Project Employee may apply for any RTA position and will be considered if he or she meets the minimum qualifications of that position.

#### Term

A Project Employee will be hired for a term up to five years (six if RTA has sponsored the employee for an H-1B visa). Human Capital will notify the employee's supervisor and Department Chief 90, 60, 30, and 14 days prior to the expiration of the term.

The employment term may not be renewed or extended beyond five years, with exceptions considered only for those employees working on a "Mega Project" valued at \$500 million or more. These exceptions will be reviewed on a year-to-year basis for the life of the project, up to ten years, upon written justification by the department and with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer or their designee. Requests for extension do not guarantee approval. Per federal law, an H-1B sponsored employee may not be extended beyond six years (even if on a Mega Project).

A Project Employee cannot be transferred to another project. Assignment to another project requires hiring through a competitive recruitment for a different Project Employee position.

If a Project Employee resigns or is terminated prior to the end of the assignment, the length of the Project Employee position term remains as it was originally established

and may not be extended. Any new hire to the same Project Employee assignment will serve the remainder of the term of the assignment.

### Recruitment

Project Employees are recruited per the **Employment Advertisement**, Recruitment and Selection (HC37 14) policy. The job bulletin will note the position is for a limited term and At-Will, if applicable to that job classification, and explain the limited-term nature of the employment.

Any At-Will, Full-Time Employee who accepts a limited term position will be subject to the policies surrounding Project Employees, including separation once the Project Employee assignment is complete.

### Release

All Project Employees will be released upon the completion of the project (including contract close-out) or expiration of their term, whichever is sooner. At-Will Project Employees may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority.

In the event of a Reduction in Force (RIF) pursuant to Reduction in Force (HC40), Project Employees will be considered for RIF before Employees.

### Hours

Project Employees are to work a minimum of 40 hours per work week.

### Benefits

Project Employees are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- Medical insurance
- Dental/vision/life insurance
- Flex spending
- 457 plan
- Paid holidays
- Paid Time Off
- Fare media

## 1.2.3 Intermittent Employees

### Status

Intermittent Employees are hired for seasonal or ongoing special projects or extra help work, such as the elimination of a backlog. They are At-Will Employees who may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority.

Intermittent Employees are not permitted to supervise other employees and may not be hired into supervisory or management level job classifications.

A current Intermittent Employee may apply for any Project Employee or At-Will Full-Time Employee position during their current term or after it expires. A current Intermittent Employee must take a six-month break in service before being eligible for employment in the same or another RTA limited-term position; but does not have to take a six month break to be eligible for employment as an RTA limited-term employee.

### Term

An Intermittent Employee may only be hired for work of a limited duration and may remain in their position only for the duration of the work, up to three years. An Intermittent Employee will be hired for an initial term of 12 months, extendable in 12-month increments, up to three years. Human Capital will notify the employee's Department Chief and supervisor 90, 60, 30, and 14 days prior to the expiration of each 12-month term.

### Recruitment

Intermittent Employees are recruited per the **Employment Advertisement**, Recruitment and Selection (HC **37 14**) policy. The job bulletin will note the position is Intermittent, explain the intermittent nature of the employment, and note the position is At-Will.

### Release

Intermittent Employees will be released upon the expiration of their intermittent work, when their term expires and is not extended, or in response to department needs. Intermittent Employees are At-Will Employees and may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority.

### Hours

Intermittent Employees may work up to 40 hours per work week, up to 2080 hours per fiscal year. They are not eligible to work overtime.

#### 1.2.4 Transportation Interns

### Status

Transportation Interns is a one-to-two-year program that creates a "career ladder" position classification at an entry-level to best fit RTA's business needs, and provides participants titled Transportation Interns a starting point for their career development and career growth. The program is available to recent college graduates and veterans who have graduated with a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited university or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and provided they



received their degree within the last two years of applying to the program. The Program is administered by Human Capital. Transportation Interns are RTA employees.

A current Transportation Intern may apply for any Project Employee or At-Will Full-Time Employee position prior to the expiration of their current term, or at the expiration of their current term. A current Transportation Intern must take a six-month break in service upon completion of a two-year time period before being eligible for employment in the same or another RTA limited-term position; but does not have to take a six month break to be eligible for employment as a RTA limited-term employee. They may not exceed two consecutive years of employment when working in one or more RTA limited-term positions.

### Term

Transportation Interns will be hired for an initial term of 12 months, extendable in 12-month increments, up to two years. Human Capital will notify the employee's Department Chief and supervisor 90, 60, 30, and 14 days prior to the expiration of each 12-month term.

### Recruitment and Selection

A department desiring a Transportation Intern must budget accordingly as part of the department's annual budget preparation process. Once approved, the department can request to hire a Transportation Intern by completing a request form and submitting supporting documents (see Attachment 1), which Human Capital will review to ensure the candidate meets all eligibility requirements.

Human Capital will work with requesting departments to select candidates for the Transportation Intern.

### Work Assessment

Upon completing the program, Transportation Interns and their supervisors will submit a completed, signed work plan to the Human Capital department's Project Managers.

### Release

Transportation Interns will be released upon the expiration of their work, when their term expires and is not extended, or in response to department needs. Transportation Interns are At-Will Employees and may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority. A supervisor must notify the Program Coordinator in writing prior to releasing a Transportation Intern prior to the expiration of their term.

### Hours

Transportation Interns may work up to 40 hours per work week. They are neither eligible to work a flex schedule, nor work overtime.

### Benefits

Transportation Interns are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- Medical/Dental Insurance
- 457 plan
- Flex spending
- PTO Sick Leave (HC20)
- Fare media

### 1.2.5 Temporary Employees

#### Status

Temporary Employees are hired to fill positions for special projects that have a specific time frame of up to two years; one-time high priority tasks; or temporary vacancies. Temporary Employees are RTA employees.

Temporary Employees may not supervise other employees. Temporary Employees are not permitted to supervise other employees.

A current Temporary Employee may apply for any Project Employee or Full-Time Employee position during their current term or after it expires. A current Temporary Employee must take a **60-day six-month** break in service upon completion of a two-year time period before being eligible for employment in the same or another RTA limited-term position; but does not have to take a **60-day six month** break to be eligible for employment as an RTA limited-term employee. They may not exceed two consecutive years of employment when working in one or more RTA limited-term positions.

#### Term

A Temporary Employee will be given an initial term of up to 6 months. Upon the approval of the Chief Human Resources Officer or their designee, the initial term may be extended an additional 6 months, up to a 1-year time limit. Human Capital will notify the employee's supervisor and Department Chief 90, 60, 30, and 14 days prior to term expiration. The employment term may not be extended beyond two years.

#### Recruitment

Temporary Employees are recruited per the **Employment Advertisement**, Recruitment and Selection (HC**37 14**) policy. The job bulletin will note the position is Temporary,

explain the temporary nature of the employment, and note the position is At-Will. Temporary Employees may also be directly appointed pursuant to the **Employment Advertisement**, Recruitment and Selection (HC**37 14**) policy.

#### Release

Temporary Employees will be released upon the expiration of their term or in response to department needs. Temporary Employees are At-Will Employees and may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority.

#### Hours

Temporary Employees may work 20 to 40 hours per work week. They are neither eligible to work a flex schedule nor work overtime.

#### Benefits

Temporary Employees are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- Medical/Dental Insurance
- 457 plan
- Flex spending
- PTO Sick Leave (HC20)
- Fare media

### 1.2.6 Student Interns

#### Status

RTA offers the RTA Internship Program for college students currently enrolled in an accredited institution of higher learning; or United States military veterans who are recently, honorably discharged and their spouses or current members of a United States military reserve (Veterans). The guidelines for Veteran internships under this section do not apply to the Veteran/MSSA internship.

The program offers Student Interns an opportunity to gain practical work experience through a temporary job assignment, where they can learn and explore careers in the transportation industry. Human Capital administers the program. Program guidelines do not apply to student internship programs funded by organizations other than RTA.

Student Internships must be tailored to meet the RTA hiring departments' business needs and provide interns with first-hand experience about RTA's business environment. Internships are designed to provide planned work experiences and an understanding of RTA's business environment, mission, and goals. The following Student Internships are available:



- Administrative Interns - College students currently studying at an accredited institution of higher learning. Administrative Internships may not exceed two academic years.
- Summer Interns - High School Juniors and Seniors currently matriculating at selected New Orleans parish high schools. Summer Internships may not exceed the summer.

Student Interns are RTA employees.

A current Administrative Intern may apply for any Transportation Intern, Project Employee, or Full-Time Employee position during their current term or after it expires. A current Student Intern must take a six-month break in service upon completion of a two-year time period before being eligible for employment in the same or another RTA limited-term position; but does not have to take a six month break to be eligible for employment as an RTA limited-term employee. They may not exceed two consecutive years of employment when working in one or more RTA limited-term positions.

#### Term

Student Internships are not to exceed two academic years. Administrative Interns who graduate while employed as an intern may continue their RTA internship for no more than six (6) months beyond their graduation date.

#### Recruitment and Selection

Each Chief or their designee must determine the number of interns needed to assist their respective departments and request intern funding during RTA's annual budget process.

A department can request to hire an intern by completing an Intern Authorization Form and supporting documents (see Attachment 2).

#### Eligibility

The program is available to college students currently enrolled in Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree programs at a Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or regionally accredited university; Veterans; vocational students; or high school Juniors and Seniors in a selected New Orleans parish High school.

All Student Interns must pass the Human Capital pre-employment screening process and meet all Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requirements.

#### *Administrative Interns*



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RTA requires each potential Administrative Intern to submit a current and official college transcript (electronic copy acceptable) stating the student's degree objective (if declared), class level, academic standing, and cumulative GPA.

Each potential Administrative Intern must meet the following criteria:

- Undergraduate students: maintain a minimum, cumulative 2.5 GPA, and be enrolled in at least 12 semester or quarter units.
- Graduate students: maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA and be enrolled in at least 6 semester or 8 quarter units.
- All students: pursue a course of study relevant and complementary to the agency's goals and objectives.
- All students: U.S. citizen or permanent resident or have legal authorization to work in the United States.

RTA requires each potential Veteran (as defined in this policy) Administrative Intern to submit an Honorable Discharge certificate, or paperwork indicating his/her status as a current member of a United States military reserve. Veteran Administrative Interns must enroll in college within three months of hire and meet all other Administrative Intern criteria to maintain eligibility for employment.

### *Summer Interns*

Summer internships are offered to full-time Juniors and Seniors who are in good standing at a selected New Orleans parish high school. The candidates must meet the following RTA Human Capital requirements:

- Be at least 16 years of age and a current, full-time student;
- Maintain a cumulative 2.5 GPA; and
- Must fulfill their high school's attendance requirements.

### *International Students*

RTA does not sponsor international students requiring DHS authorization to work. International students must have valid work authorization from DHS to work as interns (paid or unpaid), and those without valid DHS authorization to work are not eligible to work as part of the program.

### Release

Student Interns will be released upon the expiration of their assignment or in response to department needs. They are At-Will Employees and may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority.

A supervisor must notify the Program Coordinator in writing prior to releasing a Student Intern prior to the expiration of their assignment. The following guidelines should be considered prior to terminating an intern before the scheduled end date:

- An intern may request a transfer to another assignment or hiring department; and
- An internship may be terminated at any time.

### Hours

Student Interns may not work more than eight hours in a day or more than 29 hours in a work week, and they are not eligible to work overtime.

### Benefits

Administrative Interns and Special Programs Interns are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- 457 plan
- PTO Sick Leave (HC20)
- Fare media

Summer Interns are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- 457
- PTO Sick Leave (HC20)
- Fare media

### Non-Revenue Vehicles

On an as-needed basis only, a Student Intern may use an RTA non-revenue vehicle (NRV) only to carry out supervisor-directed RTA business. Interns must comply with RTA's Non-Revenue Passenger Vehicle Policy; be at least 21 years old; and licensed to drive in Louisiana to drive RTA non-revenue vehicles. Student Interns may not keep a NRV overnight or drive non-RTA passengers.

### 1.2.7 Veteran/Microsoft Software & Systems Academy (MSSA) Interns

### Status

This section applies only to the Veteran/MSSA internship. All other internships for veterans are covered under Section 1.2.6.



The Veteran/MSSA internship is a one to two- year program that creates a “career ladder” position classification at an entry-level to best fit RTA’s business needs and provides Veteran/MSSA Interns a starting point for their career development and career growth. The program is available to veterans who are currently undertaking or have completed MSSA training, provided they received completed their training within the last two years of applying for a Veteran/MSSA internship. It is administered by the Veterans Programs. Veteran/MSSA Interns are RTA employees.

A current Veteran/MSSA Intern may apply for any Project Employee or Full-Time Employee position prior to the expiration of their current term, or at the expiration of their current term. A current Veteran/MSSA Intern must take a six-month break in service upon completion of a two-year time period before being eligible for employment in the same or another RTA limited-term position; but does not have to take a six month break to be eligible for employment as an RTA limited-term employee. They may not exceed two consecutive years of employment when working in one or more RTA limited-term positions. (For applicable employment status categories, reference §1.1 Hiring Authorities).

### Term

Veteran/MSSA Interns will be hired for an initial term of 12 months, extendable in 12-month increments, up to two years. Veteran Programs will notify the employee’s Department Chief and supervisor 90, 60, 30, and 14 days prior to the expiration of each 12-month term.

### Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and selection will follow Veteran/MSSA Intern hiring guidelines in Attachment 7.

### Release

Veteran/MSSA Interns will be released upon the expiration of their work, when their term expires and is not extended, or in response to department needs. They are At-Will Employees and may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority. A supervisor must notify the Program Coordinator in writing prior to releasing a Veteran/MSSA Intern prior to the expiration of their term.

### Hours

Veteran/MSSA Interns may work up to 40 hours per work week. They are neither eligible to work a flex schedule, nor work overtime.

#### Benefits

Veteran/MSSA Interns are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- Medical/Dental Insurance
- 457 plan
- Flex spending
- PTO Sick Leave (HC20)
- Fare media

#### 1.2.8 Emergency Employees

##### Status

An Emergency Employee may be appointed without examination as necessary to prevent stoppage of public business, loss of life, or damage to persons or property, or when qualified personnel cannot be readily obtained due to emergency conditions such as a natural disaster. An Emergency Employee may be hired as an alternative to conducting an emergency procurement for certain services. Emergency Employees are RTA employees.

A current Emergency Employee may apply for any Project Employee or Full-Time Employee position during their current term or after it expires. A current Emergency Employee must take a six-month break in service upon completion of a two-year time period before being eligible for employment in the same or another RTA limited-term position; but does not have to take a six month break to be eligible for employment as an RTA limited-term employee. They may not exceed two consecutive years of employment when working in one or more RTA limited-term positions.

##### Term

An Emergency Employee may be hired for up to 12 months, which may not extend beyond this limit. Annual reoccurring use for this same or similar body of work is not permitted. Human Capital will notify the employee's supervisor and Department Chief 90, 60, 30, and 14 days prior to the expiration of the 12-month term.

##### Recruitment

Emergency Employees are hired per the Recruitment and Selection department's standard operating procedures, although an Emergency Employee does not need to meet the minimum qualifications required for the position.

### Release

Emergency Employees are At-Will Employees and may be released at any time at the discretion of the hiring authority.

### Hours

Emergency Employees may work up to 29 hours per work week. They are not eligible to work overtime.

### Benefits

Emergency Employees are eligible to enroll/receive the following benefits:

- Medical/Dental Insurance
- 457 plan
- Flex spending
- PTO Sick Leave (HC20)
- Fare media

## **1.4 Probationary Status**

### Initial Probation

The first six months of continuous service from the date of hire in the position.

### Secondary Probation

The first six months of continuous service from the date that an employee has been promoted, demoted, or transferred from one position or job classification to another position or job classification.

## **1.5 Interim Status**

Interim status is a temporary assignment of an employee to a position when:

- The incumbent of the higher-level position will be away for more than 30 calendar days and the performance of the duties of the position is critical.
- The position is vacant and there is a critical need to perform the duties of the position.

Interim appointments are made per the **Employment Advertisement**, Recruitment and Selection (HC**37 14**) policy.

## **1.6 Benefits**

See Appendix: Employment Status Benefit Eligibility for the benefits offered to each Employment Status.

## **2.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Hours of service** – Hours that count towards an employee's eligibility for health benefits are: (1) those hours for which the employee is paid to work, and (2) the hours for which the employee is paid for vacation, holiday, illness, incapacity (including disability), jury duty, military duty, or RTA-approved leave of absence.

**Full-Time Employees** - Employees who are scheduled to work a minimum of 40 hours per work week.

**Limited-Term Employees** – Any job category other than Project Employee that has a defined maximum time of employment in a given category. They are as follows:

- RTA: Temporary Employees, Transportation Interns, Veteran/MSSA Interns, and Emergency Employees;
- RTA: Student Interns and Intermittent Employees.

**Part-Time Employees** - Employees who are scheduled to work less than 25 hours per week.

**United States Military Veterans** – Honorably discharged veterans of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, and their spouses;

- Guard/Reserves – Members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine & Coast Guard reserves; and Army & Air Force National Guard who must report for annual training and may be called up to active duty by their respective branches.

## **3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Human Capital Department administers this policy.

## **4.0 FLOWCHART**

N/A

## **5.0 REFERENCES**

- Termination of Employment (HC17)
- Probationary Period (HC32)
- Compensation (HC35)



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- Individual Performance Plan (HC36)
- Attendance and Work Schedule (HC1)
- Progressive Discipline (HC25)
- Medical/Dental Benefits (HC41)
- PTO Sick Leave (HC20)

## **6.0 ATTACHMENTS**

1. Transportation Intern Request Form
2. Transition from Level I to Level II Form
3. RTA Internship Program Authorization Form
4. Work Assessment Form
5. Intern Evaluation Form
6. Supervisor's Evaluation Form
7. Veteran/MSSA Intern Hiring

## **7.0 PROCEDURE HISTORY**

12/15/2020 Interim Board approval granted  
12/11/2020 Interim Executive Committee approval granted  
2/4/2021 Final Executive Committee approval granted  
2/23/2021 Final Board approval granted

## **8.0 SPONSOR DEPARTMENT**

Human Capital