



# Ohio Department of Natural Resources

TED STRICKLAND, GOVERNOR

SEAN D. LOGAN, DIRECTOR

## **Internal Memorandum**

**To: All ODNR Supervisors**

**From: Sean Logan, Director**

**Date: November 7, 2007**

**Re: Departmental procedure for requesting permission to attend external professional development events**

---

---

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources places a major emphasis on career development and job satisfaction. Employee access to educational opportunities, professional association membership and events, and travel to experience new technologies and changes in the way work is done are all keys to the success of the mission of ODNR.

It is also a paramount function of the Department to execute its mission in the most efficient manner possible. When state employees attend external professional development events on state time, it is imperative that they be held accountable for their time in a manner that the taxpayers of Ohio rightfully expect.

This memorandum provides advance notice of a procedural change for reviewing and approving employee participation in professional association events that occur while on state time. Attached are the following:

- 1) The expectations of the Department with regard to the approval of attendance and participation in training opportunities, conventions of any kind or other activities that require an employee to attend while on state time.
- 2) A standard form, to be used by employees seeking approval to attend an external professional development event, in place of all current methods of approval or reporting by divisions.
- 3) An advance copy of a memo that will shortly be distributed to all ODNR employees.

Beginning immediately, approval for all external professional development events must comply with this procedure. Internal audits will be conducted to monitor compliance at all levels.

Should you have any questions regarding this change in procedure contact the Labor Relations Office. A "Frequently Asked Questions" communication will be forthcoming. Employees are reminded that this procedure is in concert with the Governor's executive orders regarding ethics and the purchase of food and should, in no way, be read to controvert them.

I thank you in advance for your hard work and adherence to this new procedure.





## Departmental expectations for approval to attend external Professional development events

---

---

1) The Department **expects** that supervisors, when evaluating employee participation at external professional development events while on state time, ask questions that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Does attendance at the event aid the Division/Department in its mission?
- Does the event have a structured and professional program agenda that will provide work related training?
- Will the program be productive and fully occupy the employee's time away from his/her job?
- Will the benefit the citizens of the State of Ohio gain outweigh the cost incurred by the Division/Department for employee attendance at the event?

2) The Department **expects** that a supervisor will remind an employee, whose attendance at such an external event while on state time has been approved, that he/she remains subject to all policies and procedures in effect as if the employee was at any normal workday function. Furthermore, a supervisor must exercise his/her normal review of an employee's productivity and conduct and take corrective action if necessary.

The Department will not accept a lower qualifying standard than has been stated above for employee attendance at external professional development events while on state time.

### **When seeking approval to attend an external professional development event:**

- 1) Employee will submit a completed request form (see attached) to their supervisor with attached information covering agenda/curriculum and date(s) and time(s) from the sponsor's or provider's brochure or program.
- 2) Employee's supervisor shall evaluate the request based on the guidelines provided above and sign the form having checked either "recommended" or "not recommended" for approval.
- 3) If state funds will be used to pay for the external event, the cost must be included on the request form and copies of cost-related information must be submitted for fiscal approval, followed by approval by the division Chief and Director's Office.
- 4) If no state funds are required, the employee's supervisor should send the form directly to the division Chief followed by the Director's Office.
- 5) Employee will be notified of his/her ability to attend the external event by copy of the signed approval form.

If the employee is attending an external professional development event out of state, he/she may use the existing out-of-state travel form to satisfy this requirement.