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**What MAPE Stewards and Meet and Confer Teams**

**Need to Know About Layoffs**

**If we ask for it, Management is supposed to Meet and Confer *before* laying people off**

Article 14, Section 2, of the MAPE contract says “Upon request … an Appointing Authority shall meet and confer with the Association when it has determined that layoffs will be made for budgetary reasons.”

Note that you have to ask for it. We encourage stewards at every agency to work with your Meet and Confer team to send a pre-emptive message from your Meet and Confer Chair to your agency’s HR director:

*As per Article 14, Section 2, of the MAPE contract, MAPE is requesting a Meet and Confer prior to any layoffs in this agency due to budgetary reasons.*

Make sure to keep your Organizing Business Agent apprised of your progress. If the agency refuses to meet, let us know immediately so we can raise the issue with MMB.

**What to do before a Meet and Confer**

* Check out your agency’s budget documents at <https://mn.gov/mmb/transparency-mn/> (click on “State Budgets”), and any documents you can find on your internal website that discuss the budget. This is usually best done by a working group of 3-4 people willing to geek out on the numbers a bit.
* Communicate with your agency’s membership and ask for any suggestions they have for budget savings. MAPE members are smart people, and many will have good ideas. If possible, compile the ideas into a master document after vetting them.
* Also ask your members if any might be interested in some kind of early retirement incentive, or in a voluntary reduction in hours on a temporary basis. Keep these responses confidential but have the aggregate numbers on hand when you meet with the agency.

**What to ask about at a Meet and Confer**

1. Alternative spending cuts. Attached to this is a list of budget questions we prepared for Meet and Confer teams about possible budget cuts. These are still good questions to ask in a layoff conversation. It is important to press the agency on what alternatives cuts they are making before cutting personnel.
2. Salary Savings Leave. This is Article 29 of our contract, Voluntary Reduction in Hours. This allows employees to reduce their hours worked while maintaining full benefits. Many employees might be interested in this; for example, Salary Savings Leave would allow people to have more time for childcare without using up COVID Leave.
3. Voluntary Layoffs. Under our contract, the state is allowed to ask for volunteers to be laid off before others. Because layoff includes six months’ health insurance coverage for employees who have been with the state for more than three years, this might be an attractive option for those planning to retire or who were in the midst of changing jobs.
4. Extended notice. The agency is only required to give 21 days’ notice before a layoff, but we should ask for people to be notified as soon as the agency knows the layoff will be coming. The more lead time our members have, the better they can prepare.
5. Transition Leave. This is covered under Article 14, Section 2.H of the contract. Transition leave effectively means that during the employee’s last two weeks before layoff, they are released from regular duties so that they can devote their time to looking for other jobs and otherwise getting things in order. It makes like a little bit better for our members.
6. Possible recalls. If your agency is planning to lay off a significant number of positions, ask which ones are likely to be recalled first when the budget situation improves. The agency won’t want to share this information, but it’s only fair for employees to know if the agency ever plans to bring their job back.

**Information for Members Facing Layoff**

**Contractual rights you should know**

If you were laid off from a MAPE-represented position, you are entitled to MAPE’s help at any time, on any issue related to your layoff. This remains true even if you are no longer paying dues to MAPE.

As your rights evolve, we will continue to be your advocate.

**At the time of layoff**

* If you have been with the state for three years, you are entitled to remain on health insurance for six months, with the State continuing its contribution, so your premiums won’t change during that time
* Your vacation leave up to 260 hours will be paid out to you in cash
* You will also receive severance pay (in cash) per Article 13 in our contract: 40% of your first 900 hours of accumulated sick leave, and 12.5% of all hours over 900

**Recall from layoff**

You are automatically placed on what’s called a layoff list, but this does not automatically make you eligible to be recalled to any vacant job. Instead, it only entitles you to be recalled to a job in:

* Your same seniority unit (there is a list of [seniority units](https://mape.org/mapes-contract-working/appendix-d-seniority-units) at the back of the MAPE contract)
* Your same job classification
* Your same geographic location (within 35 miles)
* Your same employment condition (full-time, part-time)

You have the right, by contacting Minnesota Management and Budget in writing, to be placed on additional layoff lists for:

* other geographic locations
* other state agencies, or other departments/seniority units within a state agency
* other classifications, if you have previously served in them
* a different employment condition (full-time, part-time)

For all of these, you can pick and choose which ones you are willing to accept. You can change these at any time by writing MMB.

You remain on the layoff list for a minimum of one year, up to your years of state seniority or a maximum of four years. However, if the State offers to recall you from layoff and you refuse, you can lose your right to remain on the layoff list. Contact your MAPE business agent if you receive a recall offer and aren’t sure how to respond. We always have your back.

 **Other Resources to Help You**

[Unemployment Insurance](http://mn.gov/uimn-stat/app_apply_for_benefits/) – You may be eligible for unemployment insurance. Your fellow MAPE members staff the UI office, and while they can’t offer you special treatment, many of them will be happy to talk about the process. Reach out to us and we can connect you.

[Dislocated Worker Program](https://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/recently-unemployed/layoff/dwp-overview.jsp) – The Department of Employment and Economic Development runs a Dislocated Worker Program, which is designed to be a sort of one-stop shop for information on retraining programs, job sites and other career development. MAPE members help in this program, too. You can also find a lot of resources in the [CareerForce](https://www.careerforcemn.com/), which is also overseen by DEED.

[Health Insurance](https://www.mnsure.org/help/tips/index.jsp) – MNsure is the best place to find health insurance options if you are still without insurance after six months.