

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Subject:	Bureau of Reclamation Learning and Employee Development Program
Purpose:	Establishes Reclamation requirements for managing and administering the learning and employee development program. The benefits of this Directive and Standard (D&S) are to ensure consistent application of program requirements and principles in order to provide effective learning and development of employees at all levels of the organization.
Authority:	Government Employees Training Act of 1958 (Pub. L. 85-507; 5 U.S.C. 4101-4121); Section 1331 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (5 U.S.C. 4107); Sections 201 and 203 of the Federal Workforce Flexibility Act of 2004 (Pub. L. 108-411; 118 Stat. 2305; 5 U.S.C. 4103-4121); 5 CFR 410 and 412; Executive Order 11348; 370 DM 410; Department of the Interior Acquisition Policy Release (DIAPR) 2010-24; and Department Personnel Bulletin No. 12-8
Approving Official:	Director, Policy and Administration (Policy)
Contact:	Human Resources Policy and Programs Division (HRPPD) (84-58000)

1. **Introduction.** Reclamation is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating training and development programs that support the achievement of its mission and goals. These training and development programs include: training required by law or regulation, training and/or development needed by an employee to perform existing or future duties, training needed to obtain or maintain professional credentials, and other programs that support Reclamation's strategic plans, performance objectives, and mission-related organizational needs.
2. **Applicability.** This D&S applies to all Reclamation employees.
3. **Definitions.**
 - A. **Academic Degree Training.** A program that allows selected employees to participate in training leading to an academic degree. It must meet an identified training need, resolve a staffing problem, or accomplish goals in the agency's strategic plan; be approved by the Department; and be part of a planned, systemic, and coordinated Reclamation employee development program linked to accomplishing the strategic goals of the agency. The degree program must be accredited by a nationally recognized body.
 - B. **Approved Training Agreement.** A document authorizing a comprehensive training program meeting the requirements of the Department's Personnel Bulletin No. 12-8 and approved by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that allows exception to time-in-grade requirements established in 5 CFR 300.604. With this agreement, an individual may be promoted more than once (but not more than two times) in a 52-week period.

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- C. **Competency.** An observable, measurable pattern of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully and encompass attributes that differentiate performers.
 - D. **Continued Service Agreement (CSA).** An agreement used to protect the Federal Government's interests when an employee participates in costly or time consuming training or educational opportunities and fails to complete the training or leaves the agency before the agency has an opportunity to fully capture an adequate return on the training investment. Employees agree to continue to work for the Government for a pre-established length of time in exchange for Government-sponsored or -funded training or education. If the employee voluntarily leaves the agency before completing the service obligation, he or she must repay the Government all or some of the costs, excluding salary, associated with the training (5 U.S.C. 410.309).
 - E. **External Training.** Training that is offered by non-Department entities and is not listed in the Learning Management System (LMS) course catalog.
 - F. **Individual Development Plan (IDP).** A tool to help an employee identify and fill gaps in essential job competencies and reach his/her career goals within the context of organizational needs and objectives; it will also help supervisors plan for effective use of training and development resources. An IDP is neither a contract or guarantee that training or advancements will occur nor is it an element of a performance appraisal or rating scheme.
 - G. **Internal Training.** Training that is offered by Reclamation or other departmental bureaus and is listed in the LMS course catalog.
 - H. **LMS.** The Department's automated system that contains the training catalog, and is used to register, approve, record, and report employees' training.
 - I. **Mandatory Training.** Training that is mandated by statute or regulation, required by Department or Reclamation policy, or identified as critical to the development of employees to the mission of the Department, Reclamation, or a region by the head of that organization.
 - J. **Training Needs Assessment.** A tool that identifies future training requirements in an organization by identifying gaps between current and required or desired performance and identifies resources to aid in closing those gaps.
4. **Responsibilities.**
- A. **The Director, Policy.** The Director, Policy is responsible for establishing requirements to make learning, education, and developmental opportunities available to employees to improve both individual and organizational capabilities.

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B. Senior Executives. Senior Executives are responsible for:

- (1) implementing the learning and development policies of Reclamation and the Department;
- (2) securing funding and resources to provide learning and development programs;
- (3) ensuring employees complete basic skills and mandatory training and receive training required to adequately perform the essential functions of their positions;
- (4) encouraging learning and employee development participation throughout Reclamation; and
- (5) determining the need, requirements, and length for CSAs in their respective organization.

C. Manager, HRPPD. The Manager, HRPPD is responsible for:

- (1) designating the Reclamation Learning Officer;
- (2) providing consultation services to Reclamation senior management, human resources officers (HROs), and regional¹ learning officers including advice on employee development goals, issues, and trends for consideration in developing Reclamation priorities and business goals;
- (3) responding to inquiries about and proposing policy for the development of human capital that is consistent with Reclamation human capital initiatives, the Department's Strategic Human Capital Management Plan, and applicable legislation and regulations;
- (4) recommending, in consultation with the Reclamation and regional learning officers, appropriate uses, requirements, and timeframes for CSAs related to Reclamation employee development programs; and
- (5) providing oversight of the LMS within Reclamation to ensure it meets the needs of Reclamation, that accurate data is available for reporting to the Department and OPM, and for management of development programs.

D. HRO. The HROs are responsible for:

- (1) designating the regional learning officers;

¹The terms "region(s)" and "regional" used to describe activities, functions, plans, positions, etc., in this document, refer to the five regional, and the Denver and Washington Offices learning offices.

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- (2) providing consultation services to senior management in the region including advice on employee development goals, issues, and trends for consideration in developing office or regional priorities and goals;
- (3) responding to inquiries about and proposing guidance for the development of human capital that is consistent with regional goals, Reclamation human capital initiatives, and applicable legislation and regulations;
- (4) recommending, in consultation with their respective learning officer, appropriate uses, requirements, and timeframes for CSAs related to regional employee development programs;
- (5) maintaining a record of current CSA obligations;
- (6) checking for and determining CSA reimbursement obligations; and
- (7) informing employees and payroll of any outstanding CSA obligation.

E. Managers and Supervisors. Managers and supervisors are responsible for:

- (1) providing opportunities and incentives for employees to build and/or improve competencies required for current and future work assignments;
- (2) discussing training and development needs, learning opportunities, and accomplishments with employees, ensuring that the resulting plans are documented in the employee's IDP, and keeping a current copy of the IDP for future reference;
- (3) approving training and other learning opportunities within limits of available resources and ensuring that the approval is recorded in the LMS;
- (4) ensuring that employees complete mandatory training within the timeframes established by the Department, Reclamation, or the respective program office;
- (5) discussing learning objectives as they relate to employee performance and setting goals for the training prior to employees receipt of training;
- (6) following up after the training to evaluate what was learned, and determine how to apply and practice the newly acquired competencies on the job;
- (7) ensuring that external training and development is marked complete in the LMS or recommending appropriate action to the HRO if the employee did not complete the training;
- (8) sending a copy of the CSA to the respective HRO within 30 days of it being signed; and

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- (9) completing training needs assessment surveys and informing the learning officer of anticipated training needs.

F. Reclamation Learning Officer. The Reclamation Learning Officer is responsible for:

- (1) Serving as the Reclamation training officer; exercising and delegating authority to certify “Authorization, Agreement, and Certification of Training” Standard Form 182 (SF-182) to procure training and development courses and/or programs within the guidelines published by OPM and outlined in DIAPR 2010-24.
- (2) Creating and updating a training strategic plan to ensure appropriate training and developmental programs are available to develop the human resources needed to accomplish Reclamation’s mission consistent with OPM guidelines and Department policies.
- (3) Working with regional learning officers to ensure that competency gaps are adequately researched, documented, and addressed.
- (4) Developing and/or implementing Reclamation-wide leadership development programs.
- (5) Coordinating a Reclamation learning and development advisory team consisting of the Reclamation and regional learning officers, and others as appropriate to integrate learning opportunities across Reclamation and share expertise and talent when practical and applicable.
- (6) Assisting regional learning officers in developing a process to evaluate training events and programs that determine how well they meet learning goals and objectives. Evaluating Reclamation-wide programs and improving Reclamation-wide training events and programs based on evaluation results.
- (7) Consulting on the learning and development topics to be reviewed and participating as appropriate in Reclamation’s Accountability Reviews process.
- (8) Creating partnerships with regional learning officers and with other organizations to leverage capability and ensure currency, validity, and accuracy in human capital development initiatives.
- (9) Coordinating human resources development matters with the Department.
- (10) Leading the efforts to use technology, social media, and other state-of-the-art methods to deliver development opportunities in the most cost effective manner.
- (11) Consulting with the Manager, HRPPD to recommend appropriate uses, requirements, and time frames for CSAs related to employee development programs.

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- G. Regional Learning Officers.** Regional learning officers are responsible for:
- (1) certifying SF-182s up to specific limits delegated by the Reclamation Learning Officer to authorize the procurement of training and development courses and/or programs within the guidelines published by OPM and outlined in DIAPR 2010-24;
 - (2) working with respective management officials to ensure all training and development is aligned with region, Reclamation, and Department goals;
 - (3) setting direction for learning strategies that align with strategic goals and ensuring competency and skill gaps are adequately addressed;
 - (4) evaluating region-specific training events and programs in accordance with Reclamation-wide requirements and improving those events and programs based on evaluation results;
 - (5) providing consultation services and advice to management on learning program goals, issues, and trends to consider in developing priorities and business goals;
 - (6) providing information to employees to ensure they understand the employee development process;
 - (7) ensuring that learning activities are scheduled appropriately, advertised in a timely manner, and recorded in the LMS;
 - (8) providing reports and transcripts to employees and management as appropriate;
 - (9) establishing a process to ensure probationary supervisors, participants in special hiring programs, and formal leadership development programs are using an IDP to verify and track the employee's required training and development;
 - (10) consulting with their respective HRO and the Reclamation Learning Officer to recommend appropriate uses, requirements, and time frames for CSAs related to employee development programs in the region;
 - (11) providing training and guidance to employees, supervisors, and managers on the use of IDPs as a tool for performance and development improvement; and
 - (12) developing and implementing leadership development programs for their respective region to encourage individual growth, identify potential leaders, meet the requirements of probationary supervisors, and continuous learning by established supervisor and managers.

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H. **Training Coordinators.** Training coordinators are responsible for:

- (1) coordinating training issues for their work team and their respective learning office;
- (2) assisting employees in using the LMS to register for training and other learning activities and completing requests for training;
- (3) paying for training up to the purchase card limit when authorized by the supervisor and/or providing information and documentation to complete an SF-182 for the learning officer's certification authorizing payment; and
- (4) responding to other responsibilities as assigned by the manager or supervisor (i.e., registering employees for training, approving training requests in the LMS for the supervisor, and marking external training as complete in the LMS).

I. **Employees.** Employees are responsible for:

- (1) planning and being fully engaged in their own career development;
- (2) identifying, discussing with their supervisor, and documenting current development needs, career plans, and objectives on an IDP if required and/or desired;
- (3) discussing career development goals with supervisor to ensure training needs are met;
- (4) seeking training and developmental assignments to meet developmental needs;
- (5) notifying their supervisor if they are not able to complete an assigned training activity or program;
- (6) learning how to use the LMS to request training;
- (7) requesting training through the LMS;
- (8) ensuring written or electronic approval is received before attending training or education courses;
- (9) sharing knowledge and skills gained from training and development activities with co-workers to increase competency levels in the organization; and
- (10) requesting an accommodation (for example a sign language interpreter), if needed.

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J. **Sponsoring Program Office.** Offices that require, sponsor, or oversee mandatory training programs will track and report completions and ensure that the respective training requirements are met.

5. **General Provisions for the Selection and Approval of Training Requests.**

A. The selection and assignment of employees for training is based on requirements identified in laws and regulations, Reclamation's current and continuing operational needs, and the immediate training needs and career potential of the employee. The following factors must be considered:

- (1) degree of employee's need for development in the present position;
- (2) extent to which the employee's competency, knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or performance are likely to be improved;
- (3) degree to which the organization expects to benefit from the employee's improved competency, knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or performance;
- (4) ability of the employee to pass the training benefits on to others;
- (5) employee's interest and efforts to improve performance;
- (6) potential of the employee for advancement; and
- (7) financial and other resources of the approving office.

B. Merit principles and procedures (fair and open competition) must be followed when selecting a career or career-conditional employee for training which is part of an approved training agreement (for example Reclamation's Rotation Engineer Program), part of a promotion program, or given primarily to prepare an employee for advancement. This provision does not apply if merit promotion procedures have already been applied (for example training required by the Pathways Programs).

C. Selection of employees for training will be made without regard to political preference, race, religion, color, national origin, gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability (physical or mental), and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as provided by the merit system principles set forth in 5 U.S.C. 2301(b)(2). Training facilities and curriculum must be accessible to employees with disabilities and necessary accommodations including, but not limited to, sign language interpreters or readers, will be provided when requested.

6. **Training That Must be Recorded in the LMS and/or Requires Supervisory Approval.**

A. **Training Requiring Approval and Recording.** Learning activities such as training, workshops, or other forms of educational activities where the goal is to improve an

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individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies must be approved and/or captured in the LMS. This includes all Federal, Department, or Reclamation required training, regardless of length, and any federally paid for learning activity over 1 hour in length.

- B. Exceptions to Approval and Recording Requirements.** Training that does not require supervisory approval and is not recorded in the LMS includes:
- (1) training that occurs spontaneously or casually/incidentally (e.g., reading a book, having a discussion, web casts, briefings, informal on-the-job training, etc.);
 - (2) training where there is no way to evaluate if the training improved knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies (e.g., exercises where the emphasis is on exercising a plan or process and/or no individual learning objectives are identified in the planning documentation.);
 - (3) training that is 1 hour or less in length, unless the training is mandatory or required; or
 - (4) training that is neither job related nor paid for by the Federal Government.
- C. Supervisor Notification.** Employees must ensure that the first-line supervisor is aware of and approves official time being spent in any learning activity whether or not supervisory approval is required in the LMS.

7. Requests for and Approval of Training.

- A.** Training must be requested and approved in advance of the training course start date. A training request cannot be retroactively approved or tuition paid if not approved electronically or in writing prior to the commencement of the training course. The employee and/or the supervisor may be financially liable for payment if prior approval is not documented.
- B.** All internal training must be requested and approved through the LMS. The exception is that some training under 1 hour in length does not require supervisor approval in the LMS.
- C.** External training, including college courses, is requested and approved using the SF-182 within the LMS.
- D.** The SF-182 is also used to procure training for a group of employees attending the same course following the guidelines published by OPM and DIAPR 2010-24. For example, the SF-182 can be used to procure an instructor to teach a course at a Reclamation facility where several employees will be trained.

²Employees or supervisors may request that this training be recorded in the LMS.

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8. **Mandatory Training.** Mandatory training must be completed within the required timeframes set forth by the Department, Reclamation, and/or the sponsoring program office responsible for the mandatory training. The sponsoring program office is responsible for tracking, reporting completions, and ensuring that these training requirements are met. The learning office provides assistance and training on obtaining necessary reports and/or information from the LMS.
9. **Failure to Complete Training.** An employee who fails to complete approved training not subject to a CSA shall notify his/her supervisor of the circumstances and reason(s). If the employee is at fault, the supervisor shall make a recommendation to the respective HRO regarding any action to be taken including recovery of all or part of the expenses of the training.
10. **CSA.** When a CSA is used, the minimum service obligation is three times the length of the training period, and it must be signed by the employee and their first-line supervisor *before* the training begins. An employee cannot be asked to sign a CSA after the training has begun. Obligated service begins on the employee's first work day after training is completed.
 - A. Senior executives establish requirements that must be included in their respective organization's business practices regarding when a CSA is required and the length of the service obligation for the following situations:
 - (1) Senior executives will determine if CSAs are required and the appropriate length of service obligation for academic courses funded by their respective organizations based on cost, amount of official time used, or other justification.
 - (2) Senior executives sponsoring and/or overseeing Reclamation leadership development programs will determine if CSAs are required and the appropriate length of service obligation for those programs. The CSA requirement must be included in each announcement.
 - (3) Regional directors will determine if CSAs are required and the appropriate length of service obligation for their respective regional leadership development programs. The CSA requirement must be included in the respective program announcements.
 - B. The service requirement for employees selected for an academic degree program will be based on the academic institution's contact hours³ with employees required to serve a **minimum** of three times the number of contact hours. Obligated service will begin

³An example using contact hours to compute the service commitment for a 120 credit academic degree assuming two 3-credit courses per semester, a 12-week semester, and 20 semesters to complete the degree: 3 credits X 2 courses (6 credits/semester) X 12 weeks (one semester) = 72 contact hours per semester X 20 semesters = 1440 contact hours for the program. 1440 Contact hours / 40 work hours/week = 36 week training period X 3 = 108 weeks minimum service commitment for this program.

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upon the completion of the entire degree requirements. An employee leaving the Department without completing the obligated service must repay Reclamation for the total cost of the degree.

- C. If an employee is involuntarily separated from the Federal Government, the employee is no longer required to reimburse the agency. The agency cannot require reimbursement under these circumstances.
- D. Senior executives may release an employee from a CSA obligation before it expires when it is shown that recovery would be against equity and good conscience, against the public interest, or repayment would cause the employee to experience a substantial demonstrable financial hardship. If an employee voluntarily separates from the Department under a CSA with an original obligation of:
 - (1) 6 months or less, the employee will be required to reimburse Reclamation for the full cost of the course(s) to include tuition, books, materials, and other fees (e.g., lab fee);
 - (2) more than 6 months⁴, the employee will be required to reimburse Reclamation on a prorated basis for the cost of the training or the amount dedicated to each participant's development in a leadership program (e.g. if the amount expended for training/development computes to \$24,000 per participant and the required service is 2 years, the reimbursable amount will be \$1,000 for each month of obligated service not completed).
- E. Tracking and enforcement requirements of CSA obligations include:
 - (1) supervisor sending a copy of the CSA to the respective HRO within 30 days of it being signed;
 - (2) HRO maintaining a record of current CSA obligations;
 - (3) HRO checking for current CSA obligations during employee checkout procedures and determine any reimbursement obligation based on requirements in Paragraph 13.D.; and
 - (4) HRO informing the employee and the respective payroll office of any outstanding obligation.

⁴The CSA for an academic degree program (see Paragraph 9.E.) is an exception and requires the employee to reimburse the entire cost of the program rather than a prorated amount.

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11. IDP.

- A. All employees will be given an opportunity to develop an IDP in consultation with their supervisor to help define and set learning and developmental goals and expectations to meet both personal career development objectives and organizational needs including all required or mandatory training identified for the employee.
- B. To be effective, IDPs are updated annually, at a minimum, in conjunction with the employee's performance appraisal reviews; more frequent updates are suggested and may be required in some instances (e.g., probationary supervisors and employees hired under special hiring authorities).
- C. Probationary supervisors, and participants in special hiring program (e.g., Pathways Programs) and leadership development programs are required to submit an IDP to the local HRO within 30 days of appointment or selection and an updated IDP every 6 months thereafter.
- D. As employees make critical career transitions (e.g., from a non-supervisory to a supervisory position or from a supervisor to a manager), additional training will be identified on the employee's IDP.

12. **Training Needs Assessment.** No later than January 31 of each year, upon completion of performance reviews, identification of performance gaps, and the setting of new performance standards, regional learning officers will submit results of their training needs assessment to the Reclamation Learning Officer. To ensure consistency, Reclamation's Learning Officer will provide the necessary format to facilitate data analyses. This data will be used to identify, plan, and deliver training that can be offered Reclamation-wide and to identify and utilize in-house regional instructors for cost-saving purposes.

13. **Procurement of and Payment for Training.** Reclamation may pay for all or part of the necessary expenses of training including travel, lodging and per diem, tuition, matriculation fees, professional certifications, licenses, library and laboratory services, purchase or rental of books and/or training materials, other services or facilities directly related to the training of the employee, temporary duty training assignments, conference registration fees, and course or workshop registration fees in accordance with 5 U.S.C 4110 and Reclamation Manual D&S, *Approval and Reporting for Conferences Hosted, Attended, or Co-Sponsored by Bureau of Reclamation Employees* (ADM 04-01).

- A. Training coordinators are authorized to pay for training services that have been approved prior to the start of the training by the supervisor in the LMS or on an SF-182 through the use of the Government charge card, limited to the micro-purchase threshold of \$3,000. For training costing more than \$3,000, the training coordinators must work with their respective learning officer for payment.

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- B. The Reclamation and regional learning officers are authorized by DIAPR 2010-24 to procure training, enroll students, obligate funds, and authorize payment for tuition by certifying an SF-182 under the following conditions:
- (1) the SF-182 is approved prior to the start of any training or developmental activity by the supervisor and the management official having budgetary responsibility for the funds;
 - (2) the training cost of a single training event, program, or instructional service does not exceed the lesser of the limit delegated to the learning officer or the simplified acquisition ceiling established in the Federal Acquisition Regulations and referenced in DIAPR 2010-24;
 - (3) the cost is of a fixed nature (e.g., price per student or price per course, program, or instructional service); and
 - (4) the program, course, or instructional service is off-the-shelf, and no modification or development resulting in increased cost to the Government is needed to meet the organization's needs.
- C. This authority does not allow for the purchase of general supplies, training equipment, and non-training services.
- D. Current fiscal year funds may be used to pay for training occurring in the next fiscal year as long as the training meets the following requirements:
- (1) the training provider requires the agency to register during the expiring fiscal year,
 - (2) the date offered is the only one available, and
 - (3) the time between registration and training is not excessive, usually within the first quarter of the following fiscal year.
14. **Inter- and Intra-Agency Training.** Reclamation is authorized to furnish and/or participate in inter- and intra-agency training on either a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis whenever this will result in better training, improved service, or savings to the Government. Fees received from participants from other Federal agencies may be credited to Reclamation's appropriation used to pay for the training.
15. **Supervisory and Managerial Development.**
- A. Within 1 year of a new supervisor's appointment, he or she will complete initial supervisory training consisting of the "*One DOI Supervisory Course*" or equivalent training, supplemented by training that meets the needs of Reclamation and of the new supervisor, as identified in the new supervisor's IDP.

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- B. All Reclamation supervisors will develop and use an IDP to identify training and developmental opportunities to improve their supervisory competencies, including but not limited to, mentoring employees, improving employees' performance and productivity, conducting performance appraisals, and identifying and assisting employees with unacceptable performance.

16. Leadership Development.

- A. Supervisors, managers, executives, and other leaders will work with employees to develop the talents, skills, and competencies needed to be effective leaders at all levels in the organization.
- B. Current and future leadership development programs throughout Reclamation will be created using "A Model for Leadership Development in the Bureau of Reclamation" (Model for Leadership) (see Reclamation's Model for Leadership on the human resources Intranet, Learning and Employee Development page) to fill gaps and increase collaboration and leadership skills from the beginning to the end of an employee's career. These programs will also be designed to meet and support specific business requirements including but not limited to:
 - (1) assisting potential and existing leaders to explore the challenges of leadership and understand business processes specific to Reclamation;
 - (2) determining employee commitment and ability to be an effective leader;
 - (3) filling competency gaps for senior staff that have little or no supervisory experience;
 - (4) providing continuing education and development for managers, supervisors, and senior executives; and
 - (5) sharing best practices and identifying leadership competency gaps within Reclamation.
- C. Reclamation's Model for Leadership illustrates alignment of leadership development programs, OPM leadership competencies, and leadership levels in Reclamation. As employees move into higher levels of leadership responsibility, they must continue to work on improving competencies identified at lower levels and add the new competencies in the upper levels.

17. Training and Development Evaluation. Reclamation is required to evaluate its training and development programs on a regular basis to ensure alignment with strategic goals.

- A. The metrics of the evaluation must include measuring the results of training and development programs in terms of learning, performance, work environment, and contribution to accomplishing Reclamation's mission.

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- B. The evaluation model or method that will be used in Reclamation is the Kirkpatrick four-level model. A fifth level, return on investment, may be used if the potential return is great enough to justify it. The five levels of evaluation in this model are:
- (1) **Level 1.** Reaction – how the participants feel about the training or learning experience. Did they like it?
 - (2) **Level 2.** Learning – assesses knowledge learned, skills developed or improved, and/or attitudes changed. Did they learn the intended objective?
 - (3) **Level 3.** Behavior – application of learning and changes in behavior in the workplace after completing the training program. Did they use it?
 - (4) **Level 4.** Results – analysis of quality, improvement, reduction in cost, or any intended benefits as a result of the trainee’s performance. Did the training make a difference? Did the result meet the intended goal?
 - (5) **Level 5.** Return on Investment –compares the program benefits to the training costs. Do the benefits of the training repay the costs associated with the training?
- C. Due to the cost and complexity of conducting the higher level evaluations, not all courses will be evaluated using all five levels. For programs or training events which are customized for Reclamation’s needs and goals or conducted by Reclamation employees and which encompass at least 8 hours of contact time, the following requirements exist:
- (1) all courses be evaluated at level 1;
 - (2) formal courses with established individual learning objectives be evaluated at level 2;
 - (3) formal courses with direct linkage to on-the-job behaviors be evaluated at level 3;
 - (4) leadership programs and formal training with potential for a significant impact to the mission and operations in Reclamation be evaluated at level 4; and
 - (5) due to the high cost and complexity associated with calculating return on investment, this level of evaluation will be considered on a case-by-case basis for expensive and/or long-term developmental initiatives.
- D. Requirements 2, 3, 4, and 5 in Paragraph 17.C. will not apply if it increases the total cost of the training event or program by more than 20 percent. If the course is exempt from requirements 2, 3, 4, or 5 due to cost, learning officers must document evidence of that cost.

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18. **Training Requiring Foreign Travel.** Department approval is required for individuals attending training that requires foreign travel. Offices must prepare a "Foreign Travel Certification" (DI-1175), and forward it for processing to the Director, Native American and International Affairs, Mail Stop 96-43000.
19. **Academic Degree Training.** Based on Section 1331 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the Department has authority to select and assign an employee to academic degree training when this training is part of a planned, systemic, and coordinated agency employee development program. In general, training designed to result in academic degrees can be authorized only in very limited circumstances. Funding for individual academic courses, which may contribute to an academic degree, may be approved based on the course's relevance to the employee's existing and/or future duties. Senior Executives may request an academic degree program with a memo through the Manager, HRPPD and the Director, Policy to the Department.
- A. The request must certify that:
- (1) funds are available to conduct the proposed program;
 - (2) the program is accredited by a nationally recognized body; and
 - (3) the training is not for the sole purpose of providing an employee an opportunity to obtain an academic degree or qualify for appointment to a particular position for which an academic degree is a basic requirement.
- B. The request must also include a description of how:
- (1) the program contributes significantly to meeting an identified training need, resolving a staffing problem, or accomplishing a goal in the agency's strategic plan; and
 - (2) the program is consistent with merit system principles, maintaining a balanced workforce, and providing employees effective education and training to improve organizational and individual performance.
20. **Acceptance of Contributions, Awards, and Payments From Non-Government Organizations.** Employees may only accept contributions, awards, and payments from non-Government organizations under certain circumstances governed by 5 CFR 2635 (Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch) and 41 CFR 304 (Payment of Travel Expenses from a Non-Federal Source). Employees must contact Reclamation's Deputy Ethics Counselor or an Assistant Ethics Counselor (<http://www.usbr.gov/ethics/contact.html>) for clarification on when it is appropriate to accept contributions, awards, or payments from a non-Federal source.

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21. **Paying Premium Pay.** Except as provided in 5 CFR 410.402(b) (1998), no funds appropriated or otherwise available to an agency may be used for the payment of premium pay to an employee engaged in training. As a general rule, employees cannot receive overtime pay or compensatory time off for time spent in training.
22. **Training Treated as Hours of Work Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).** Non-exempt FLSA employees can receive overtime pay in specific limited circumstances, see 5 CFR 410.402(d)(1).
23. **Overtime Payment for Travel Related to Training.** For employees exempt from FLSA, the general rule is that time spent traveling from the official duty station to a temporary training site is not hours of work unless the travel results from an event that could not be scheduled or controlled administratively by an executive agency of the Federal Government, e.g., OPM, Department, or Reclamation. For non-exempt FLSA employees, see 5 CFR 551.422 for specifics about when time spent traveling is considered hours of work.
24. **Training Records Retention and Reporting.** Reclamation must maintain training records consistent with the requirements of the Privacy Act and other records management policies to ensure that the data reported to OPM as outlined in the *Guide for Collection and Management of Training Information*, and the *Guide to Human Resources Reporting* is accurate and complete. This requirement includes keeping records of cost data to justify exemption from evaluation requirements in Paragraph 17.D. for relevant courses. Records will be retained in accordance with Department record retention schedules (see Information Management Handbook, Volume II, Records Retention Schedules).

Reclamation Manual Transmittal Sheet

Effective Date: _____

Release No. _____

Please ensure that all employees who need this information are forwarded a copy of this release.

Reclamation Manual Release Number and Subject

Summary of Changes

Filing Instructions

Remove Sheets

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Date: _____