



Adjunct Emergency Workforce (AEW) Frequently Asked Questions

What is the AEW?

The Adjunct Emergency Workforce (AEW) provides opportunities for state government employees to support the Commonwealth's Emergency Response and Recovery activities. During a declared emergency, qualified AEW participants will be temporarily reassigned to close critical staffing gaps in Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) agencies.

The following Frequently Asked Questions provide information about eligibility to participate in the AEW and expectations for participation in the AEW.

Eligibility to Participate in AEW

Who is eligible to participate in AEW?

At this time, emergency roles will focus on sheltering support. Based on the requirements for AEW roles, the following state employees are eligible to participate in AEW at this time. You may be eligible to participate if:

- Your job does not require your presence at work during emergencies (your job has been designated as non-essential by your agency).
- You have received your agency and supervisor/manager's formal approval to participate in AEW. You should check with your supervisor/manager to understand what the approval process is for your agency.
- You are a full-time employee in the Executive Branch.
- You have access to register for AEW in [EmployeeDirect](#).

As the AEW expands in the future, other types of emergency roles may be available and eligibility for AEW may be expanded. If you do not meet the requirements for current AEW roles and/or do not have access to [EmployeeDirect](#), you may have an opportunity to participate in the future.

AEW Process

What is the process for registering for the AEW?

Employees interested in registering for the AEW should complete the following steps:

- Read the AEW Frequently Asked Questions and website information to be clear about AEW requirements and process.
- Determine if you meet AEW eligibility requirements.
- Discuss AEW requirements and activation expectations with family members to ensure their support in the event of activation for a period of up to a few weeks.
- Seek formal approval from your agency and supervisor/manager.
- If approval is provided, register for the AEW via [EmployeeDirect](#).

Employees should check with their agencies to understand the agency process for obtaining approval to participate in the AEW.

If I registered for AEW in the past, do I need to register again?

With the relaunch, the program and registration tool include updated information including preferences for AEW assignments. Employees who registered in the past who wish to continue their involvement in the AEW should re-register in the updated AEW registration tool on or after March 8, 2021.



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What emergency roles are included in the AEW program?

Currently, AEW includes opportunities for AEW participants to serve in a Sheltering Specialist role posted by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS). In the future additional agencies may have opportunities for AEW participants to serve in other types of positions.

What are AEW requirements and activation expectations?

AEW roles may require participants to be able to work up to 12 hour shifts each day for up to 2 weeks. Some roles may require weekend hours too. Roles may be needed at locations across the Commonwealth and participants may be requested to serve at any of these locations when possible. Exact dates and scheduling will depend on employee availability and AEW needs. After registering for AEW, when an emergency need is identified, AEW participants will be contacted to discuss scheduling and location needs and participant availability.

What is the process for activating, or temporarily re-assigning, AEW participants?

The Governor will activate the AEW in emergency situations and authorize the temporary re-assignment of AEW participants in support of the emergency. Once the AEW is activated for an emergency, agencies are free to use the AEW program to supplement their emergency staff. Agencies that decide to use AEW will contact eligible, qualified participants to determine participant availability and activate individual AEW participants.

How will activation assignments be determined?

An agency using the AEW program to supplement their emergency staff will first identify the positions and number of people needed for the emergency. Then, they will use the AEW system to identify all the eligible and qualified AEW participants for the needed position(s). The agency will communicate directly with this pool of potential emergency staff to determine individuals' willingness and availability to be temporarily re-assigned for the emergency. The agency may use additional data such as participant skills, location, and previous experience to determine which eligible, qualified, and available participants to activate.

What happens if employees are offered an AEW temporary assignment and are unable to accept the assignment?

We understand that AEW participants may not be available during certain emergencies. Participants may always decline an offer of temporary assignment for any reason. AEW participants should always respond to availability requests as soon as possible, even if they are unable to accept the assignment.

For what reasons would participation in the AEW end?

Employees' participation in the AEW could end for the following reasons:

- Participants decide that they no longer wish to participate in the AEW.
- Participants no longer have supervisor/manager's formal approval to participate. Participants who move to a new job, a new department, and/or a new agency must seek new agency and/or supervisor/manager approval to participate in the AEW. If approval is provided, employees should submit a new registration for the AEW by registering in [EmployeeDirect](#).
- Participants leave employment with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Who tracks hours worked while activated for AEW?

Actual hours worked by participants activated with AEW will be recorded by the participant and verified by their temporary AEW supervisor. Then, the verified hours worked should be provided to participants' home agency supervisor for time and leave tracking requirements.



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How long will employees be activated for an assignment in the AEW?

The duration of an AEW assignment can vary depending on the need. When offered a temporary assignment, AEW participants will be informed of the duration of the assignment. Sheltering Specialist assignments with VDSS will not last longer than 14 calendar days. Assignments are expected to require the ability to work 12 hour shifts per day. Length of activation will depend on employee availability and AEW assignment needs.

Where will activated employees be assigned?

Activated employees could be assigned to work at locations across Virginia. Although some assignments may be in nearby communities, assignments may also require travel to locations across the state to provide support in communities affected by declared emergencies.

Compensation & Benefits

How are employees compensated when activated during a declared emergency?

Employees' respective agencies who approved their participation in AEW are responsible for providing the appropriate compensation to employees deployed through AEW.

How does activation in the AEW impact employees' leave?

Your agency will temporarily reassign you to an alternate work location with AEW job duties. This temporary assignment counts as work time and will not impact employee leave.

If deployed AEW participants work more than 40 hours a week during activation, how does that impact their compensation?

Activated AEW participants who work more than 40 hours a week during activation may be eligible for overtime compensation based on their Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) exemption status. Employees who are classified as non-exempt from the FLSA will be subject to overtime compensation for hours worked over 40 hours in a work week. Employees who are classified as exempt from the FLSA may be eligible for compensatory leave.

What happens with employee benefits for AEW participants activated during an emergency?

Employee benefits remain unchanged; employees' respective agencies who approved their participation in AEW will continue to provide the appropriate benefits to employees deployed through AEW.

If employees are injured while activated in the AEW, who is responsible for evaluating Workers' Compensation eligibility and claims?

Employees who are deployed in AEW and experience an injury while performing AEW functions may qualify for Workers' Compensation benefits. The employee's agency is responsible for managing and completing the steps required for determining Workers' Compensation eligibility and claims.

AEW Training Requirements

Will I be trained for my AEW role?

Yes, AEW members will receive position specific training prior to receiving a temporary assignment.



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When do I complete my AEW training?

AEW members must successfully complete all training requirements prior to their activation. This policy is strictly enforced as it is critical that AEW participants have the knowledge and skills needed before stepping into an emergency role.

How long will it take to complete the required training?

Training requirements for AEW participants will vary based on emergency role. For example, AEW participants selecting a Sheltering Specialist role will complete several courses in advance. These courses are available online and remotely and may take a day or two to complete. For COVID-19 Community Vaccination Clinic roles, relevant training will be provided for each role.

Agency Financial Reimbursement

Will agencies be eligible for financial reimbursement for employee compensation and other related expenses for employees participating in AEW assignments?

Agencies may be eligible for financial reimbursement for employee participation in AEW. Agency VEST Liaison Officers will need to work directly with the relevant VEST agency to determine eligibility for potential financial reimbursement. If eligible for reimbursement, instructions and support will be provided to agencies with AEW participants by the relevant VEST agency.

Please contact aew@dhrm.virginia.gov with additional questions about the Adjunct Emergency Workforce.