



FAQs

FY26 June One-Time Bonus Authorized by Chapter 7, 2026 Amendment to Acts of Assembly

Summary

The following compensation changes authorized in Chapter 7, [2026 Amendments to the 2025 Virginia Acts of Assembly](#) to become effective on May 25, 2026 (See the [Fiscal Year June 2026 Authorization Bonus memo](#) for specific citations):

- June 16, 2026 One-Time Bonus:
 - Item 469 X.1, [2026 Amendments](#) to the 2025 Virginia Acts of Assembly authorizes a one-time bonus payment on June 16, 2026 equal to \$1,500 for all classified employees of the Executive Branch and other full-time employees of the Commonwealth, except elected officials, who were employed on or before February 25, 2026, and remained employed until at least May 25, 2026.

Employee Eligibility

1. Who is subject to the June 16, 2026 one-time bonus?

All classified employees of the Executive Branch and other full-time employees of the Commonwealth, except elected officials, who were employed on or before February 25, 2026, remained employed until at least May 25, 2026.

*Eligible employees shall receive the bonus payment only if they have attained an equivalent rating of at least “Partially Successful” on their performance evaluation and have no active written notices under the Standards of Conduct **issued** within the preceding twelve-month period (May 26, 2025 to May 25, 2026). Issue date is reflected as the “reported date” for written notice in Cardinal HCM.*

2. Who is NOT subject to the June 16, 2026 one-time bonus?

*Employees who were hired or rehired after February 25, 2026. Employees who received a rating of “Unsuccessful” on their last performance evaluation or more recent interim evaluation. Employees with an active written notice under the Standards of Conduct **issued** within the preceding 12-month period (May 26 2025 to May 25 2026). Issue date is reflected as the “reported date” for written notice in Cardinal HCM.*

3. Are wage employees eligible for the one-time bonus?

No, the legislation for the one-time bonus did not include wage employees.

4. Can written notices under the Standards of Conduct policy be used to deny a June 16, 2026 one-time bonus?

*Yes. In addition to all previously noted criteria, the employee must also have no active written notices under the Standards of Conduct **issued**, within the preceding twelve-month period (May 26, 2025 to May 25, 2026). The issue date is reflected as the “reported date” for written notice in Cardinal HCM*

Assuming all other required criteria are met, below are two fictional examples of employees that received a written notice which would NOT prevent either from receiving the one-time bonus to be paid June 16, 2026:

Example 1: Written notice issued/reported June 1, 2024. The written notice is still active in the system.

Example 2: Written notice issued/reported September 15, 2025. The written notice was removed January 15, 2026, pursuant to the Grievance procedure.

Below are two fictional examples of employees that received, or are expected to receive, a written notice that WOULD PREVENT the employees from receiving the one-time bonus to be paid June 16, 2026

Example 1: Written notice issued/reported May 26, 2025. The written notice is still active in the system.

Example 2: Written notice expected to be issued/reported May 31, 2026. The agency is encouraged to review further. If written notice is to be issued/reported, the employee should not receive the one-time bonus to be paid June 16, 2026.

5. Are employees whose positions are funded entirely by federal grants or other special funding sources subject to the June 16, 2026 one-time bonus?

Yes. As with other general, performance, role specific, or across-the-board increases that are funded in the state budget, the one-time bonus applies to employees whose positions are funded by grants or other special funding sources in addition to those funded by the General Fund.

6. Which performance cycle should be considered to determine the performance criteria?

The eligibility of most employees will be determined by the most recent performance evaluations that were conducted for the 2025 performance cycle (January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025). If ratings for this cycle are unavailable, the most recent performance evaluation should be used. Agencies are responsible for tracking the performance evaluation ratings of employees, [entering in Cardinal HCM](#) and determining the employee's eligibility for fiscal year 2026 June pay action.

Agencies are responsible for ensuring that sufficient documentation exists to support or deny satisfactory performance assessments for employees. This documentation could include the annual performance evaluation, interim evaluation, probationary progress review forms, notice of sub-standard performance forms, and active written notices issued.

NOTE: *The governing authorities of the state institutions of higher education may provide the bonus for faculty and university staff based on performance and other employment-related factors, as long as the bonuses do not exceed what the average would have been based on the [general methodology authorized in this paragraph](#).*

7. Is an employee eligible for the one-time bonus if they transfer from one agency to another?

If an employee has met all eligibility criteria to include the details noted under [Employee Eligibility](#), the employee is eligible for the one-time bonus with the receiving agency the employee just joined.

Effect on Employees' Compensation

8. Can all or part of the June 16, 2026 one-time bonus be deposited into Deferred Compensation?

Yes. A bonus can be deferred if an employee submits a one-time deferral form to their agency HR/Payroll office by May 31, 2026.

Note: Deferred compensation is subject to Social Security and Medicare taxes. Federal Income Tax and State Income Tax may also apply.

Amount of the One-Time Bonus

9. What is the amount of the one-time bonus?

The amount for employees that are eligible for the one-time bonus is a flat amount of \$1,500. The one-time bonus is not based on pay.

Processing the One-time Bonus

10. How will the one-time bonuses be processed?

Agencies are responsible for administering the bonuses. Neither DHRM nor Cardinal will be loading these centrally. Refer to the [Cardinal HCM Instructions](#) section below to review new instructions to utilize the Legislative Salary Increase Tool to review and verify bonus data.

11. What happens to employees on leave?

- *Otherwise-qualified employees who are on short-term disability or other paid leave will receive the bonus on June 16, 2026.*
- *Employees on long-term disability-working will also receive the bonus on June 16, 2026. However, individuals who are on long-term disability-non-working are not eligible for the bonus.*
- *Employees on leave without pay are not eligible for the bonus until they return to work or paid leave. With few exceptions (e.g. approved military leave or layoff leave without pay), agencies should enter the same effective date for both the legislative salary increase and return from leave (RFL).*
- *Employees who have an overdue leave end-date or expected return date in Cardinal HCM are not eligible for the bonus until agencies review and make applicable updates to the employee's record. Agencies should review and update these employees' records on an individual basis and process their bonus when their expected return dates have been extended, or Return-to-Work transactions have been entered.*
 - *If a record is updated within one of the refresh periods as noted on the [FY26 Legislative Bonus](#) site, the bonus can be processed within the Legislative Salary Increase tool. If the record is processed outside of a refresh period, the agency should process the one-time bonus manually.*

NOTE: These rules are based on policies that apply to classified employees.

12. What process should agencies use to pay the one-time bonus for classified employees on leave without pay or, for less than 12-month employees (e.g. 9, 10, 11 month employees) who are not actively working on the bonus payout date to receive the one-time bonus when they return to work?

Refer to the [Cardinal HCM Instructions](#) section below to review new instructions to utilize the Legislative Salary Increase Tool to review and verify bonus data.

13. Can agencies process the one-time bonus at the same time as an agency specific bonus?

No. Agencies should determine an effective date other than May 25, 2026 for any agency specific bonuses.

Cardinal HCM Instructions:

The following provides a high-level overview of the bonus process in Cardinal. Additional detailed communications from Cardinal will be provided.

Please:

- Monitor upcoming Cardinal communications for the latest guidance
- Attend the May 13 forum for a step-by-step demonstration and Q&A
- Visit the Cardinal website for updates: <https://www.cardinalproject.virginia.gov>

Step 1: Review and Validate Bonus Information

Agencies will use the Legislative Salary Increase Tool to review and verify the bonus data.

- Reference [HR354: Using the Legislative Salary Increase Tool](#) for guidance
- Bonus data must be **verified in the tool** before proceeding

Step 2: Post-verification HR Admin Processing

After verification, HR Administrators will run queries to extract the bonus information from the Legislative Salary Increase Tool into a format compatible with mass upload templates.

Note: Referenced queries will not produce any data until the Bonus Cycle has been **verified** by the agency.

A. Enter bonus information in the Reward and Recognition Tracker

Using the V_HR_LEG_BONUS_REW_MASS_UPD query output to:

- Populate the [Rewards and Recognition Mass Upload Template](#), or
- Enter the data directly online on the Rewards and Recognition page.
 - Follow [DHRM Policy 1.15, Employee Recognition and Engagement](#).

B. Prepare data for Payroll

- Extract, review, and validate data using the V_HR_LEG_BONUS_SPOT_MASS_UPD query
- Provide results to the Payroll Administer

Step 3: Payroll Processing

Payroll Administrators will:

- Populate the [SPOT Earnings Mass Upload Template](#), or
 - Note: A separate template is required for each Company and Paygroup combination.
- Enter directly in SPOT
 - Refer to the SPOT Scenarios for Bonus Payments Entered on a Separate Check section in the [PY381 Using the Single-Use Payroll Online Tool \(SPOT\)](#) job aid. A FY26 June Payroll bulletin containing additional SPOT scenarios will be distributed the first week of May 2026. When published the bulletin and can be found here: [Payroll Bulletins](#).

Timing for Step 2 and 3

Both Reward and Recognition entries and SPOT payments must be completed during the week of **June 1 - 5, 2026**. Early completion is encouraged to allow time for issue resolution.

Step 4: Reconciliation

Agencies will use the V_HR_REW_PAY_RECON query to reconcile data between the Rewards and Recognition page and SPOT Payments.

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