VOLUNTARY SEPARATION POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) recognizes that organizational restructuring may result in positions being transferred from one community to another, and that incumbents in such positions require adequate notice of this change.

2. PRINCIPLES

(1) Affected employees are given priority for staffing for vacant positions within the territorial public service during the eight week affected notice period.

(2) No employee represented by the Union of Northern Workers shall be laid off, transferred or relocated while on, or within six months of the employee's return, from maternity or paternal leave without the consent of the employee, the employer and the union.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all territorial public service employees except casual employees, employees in the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and employees of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

4. DEFINITIONS

Definitions as per the *Staff Retention Policy.*

5. AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

(1) General

(a) Minister

This policy is issued under the authority of the Minister of Finance.

(b) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister of Finance is accountable to the Minister of Finance for the administration of this policy.

(2) Specific

(a) Minister

The Minister of Finance may approve changes to this policy.

(b) Deputy Minister

(i) May establish further procedures and/or guidelines on the application of this policy for use by departments, boards and agencies.

(ii) Provides support, assistance and direction to departments, boards and agencies on the mandate and any associated procedures and/or guidelines related to this policy.

(c) Deputy Heads

(i) Deputy Heads are responsible for the administration of this policy in their department, board or agency

(ii) Indeterminate territorial public service employees whose positions will be transferred to another community are provided with written notice of affected employee status by the deputy head. In the case of term employees, every effort is made to continue employment for the remainder of their term.

6. PROVISIONS

(1) Employee Decision

(a) Employees must advise their supervisors in writing of an intention to transfer, or to not transfer, with the relocated position prior to the end of the lay-off notice period.

(b) The supervisor, in conjunction with the Department of Finance, prepares a letter to the employee confirming the employee's decision.

(c) For those employees who choose not to transfer with the relocated position, the Department of Finance arranges with the employee for the appropriate voluntary separation payment to be made.

(2) Severance

(a) Employees terminated under voluntary separation are entitled to the following severance:

Complete Years of Continuous Service	Weeks of Pay at Regular Rate of Pay
1	15
2	16
3-4	17
5-6	18
7-8	19
9-10	22
11-12	25
13-14	28
15- plus	30

(b) Information on voluntary separation is provided to the employee in the formal letter to the employee that provides notice of the relocation of the position.

(a) The employee accepts the voluntary separation severance by signing the confirmation letter and returning the signed letter to the supervisor. The supervisor relays the letter to the Department of Finance.

(b) Voluntary separation severance is provided to an employee in an immediate cash payout.

(3) Term Employees

Term employees whose positions are to be transferred to another community are eligible for staffing priority status for an eight week period effective from the date the written notice is provided by the deputy head.

(4) Voluntary Separation – Laid off Employee

An employee whose employment has been terminated and whose position is filled by another employee who is on the priority list as a result of a lay-off is also eligible for voluntary separation.

(5) Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Department of Finance every three years.

7. PREROGATIVE OF THE MINISTER

Nothing in this policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Minister to make decisions or take actions respecting this policy. In this regard, the Minister may make exceptions to the provisions of this policy. Any exception will require substantiation in writing and must be recorded with the Department of Finance.

Minister of Finance