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ACCESS RULING

In the matter of the Virginia Department of Social Services
Ruling Number 2024-5687
April 11, 2024

On or about February 23, 2024, the Office of Employment Dispute Resolution (EDR) at the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) received a Dismissal Grievance Form from the grievant. As the form was also submitted to the Virginia Department of Social Services (the “agency”), a response was made by the grievant’s former employer, which asserts that the grievant was a probationary employee and, thus, lacks access to the grievance procedure. The grievant appeals that determination.

DHRM Policy 1.45, *Probationary Period*, states that employees “who begin either original employment or re-employment in classified positions must serve 12-month probationary periods effective from the dates of their employment.”¹ The General Assembly has further provided that all *non-probationary* state employees may utilize the grievance process, unless exempted by law.² Employees who have not completed their probationary period do not have access to the grievance procedure.³ Here, it appears that the grievant began her employment with the agency on April 10, 2023. The grievant was separated on February 21, 2024. As such, the grievant had not completed her probationary period at the time she filed her grievance. Therefore, EDR finds that the grievant does not have access to the grievance procedure. Her dismissal grievance will not proceed to a hearing, and EDR will close its file.⁴

EDR’s access rulings are final and nonappealable.⁵

Christopher M. Grab
Director
Office of Employment Dispute Resolution

¹ DHRM Policy 1.45, *Probationary Period*, at 1.

² Va. Code § 2.2-3001(A); *Grievance Procedure Manual* § 2.3.

³ E.g., EDR Ruling No. 2020-5017; EDR Ruling No. 2019-4920.

⁴ This ruling does not address whether any legal or other remedy may be available to the grievant for the issues raised in her grievance. This ruling determines only that she is ineligible to pursue her claims through the state employee grievance procedure.

⁵ Va. Code § 2.2-1202.1(5).