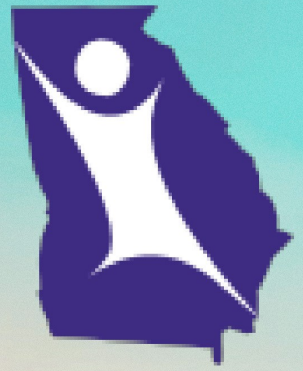


Inside



GLGPA

Georgia Local Government Personnel Association

*As far as we can discern, the
sole purpose of
human existence is
to kindle a light in
the darkness of mere being.*

-Carl Jung

President's Greeting

Leadership
Direction
Initiative
Guidance
Influence
Organization

Dear members of the GLGPA,

Welcome to our 5th installment of Inside GLGPA! While these are not normal times, we remain diligent in providing our quarterly newsletter to our members.

This year has been extremely challenging for all of us. But let us take a moment and rejoice in what has been 45 years since the inception of the Georgia Local Government Personnel Association! Imagine how many times we have been faced with adversity in 45 years, but we still manage to overcome and maximize our roles as personnel experts.

In this edition of the newsletter, we are excited to highlight all the great things that have surfaced this year. Personnel professionals have been called to action in ways that many of us have never experienced before. We are indeed 'essential staff' in our organizations as we continue to provide support and compassion as servant leaders.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Officers and Staff, we want to acknowledge that it was a tough decision to cancel our 2020 Spring Conference. While education and networking are high priorities, the safety and well-being of our members matters most. We do not know what's in store for tomorrow, but we certainly look forward to the day and time that we can fellowship together again in person.

With that being said, we are hopeful that we can move forward with our 2020 Fall Conference. Rest assured we are taking everything into consideration before we make any final decisions. In the meantime, be encouraged, be resilient, and be safe. Let us lean on our network in ways that colleagues do in good and bad times.

This too shall pass my friends. We're in this together and we'll get through this together!

Warm Regards,

Teaa Allston-Bing, MBA, ACHRM, PHR, SHRM-CP

President, GLGPA



Class Schedule

REGULAR TRACK (CHRM):

- Foundations of Public Human Resource Management (2 days) – Fall 2020
- Job Analysis for Training, Testing, and Promotional Assessments – Fall 2020
- Managing Risk and Controlling Loss – Fall 2020
- Employee Recruitment and Selection – Fall 2020
- Components of Budgeting – Fall 2020

- Foundations of Public Human Resource Management (2 days) – Spring 2021
- Discipline and Grievances – Spring 2021
- Managing Human Resources in a Political Environment – Spring 2021
- Effective Performance Appraisal Systems – Spring 2021
- Ethics in Local Government – Spring 2021

- Foundations of Public Human Resource Management (2 days) – Fall 2021
- Records and Technology – Fall 2021
- Employee Rewards (Total Compensation) – Fall 2021
- The Legal Environment of Human Resource Management – Fall 2021
- Toward Diversity in the Workplace – Fall 2021

ADVANCED TRACK (ACHRM):

- Budgeting Methods & Strategies – Fall 2020
- Organizational Performance Measures – Fall 2020
- Training & Organization Development (2 days) – Spring 2021
- Effective Presentations (2 days) – Fall 2021
- Creativity & Innovation – Spring 2022
- Media Relations – Spring 2022
- Ethical Use of Power – Fall 2022
- Managing Change & Conflict – Fall 2022

New Members New Members New Members



Nothing more exciting than meeting new people, hearing their stories, and being inspired.

Sandra Bennett - City of Statham
Shalonda Brown - City of Forest Park
Celina Castro Vazquez - Toombs County Board of Commissioners
Joey Cumbie - Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Hannah Day - Jeff Davis County Board of Commissioners
Alexandra Gebhardt - City of Milton
James Henderson - City of Sandy Springs
Don Holley - Gordon County Board of Commissioners
Juliana Irvin - Hall County Government
Kay Landers - Pike County Board of Commissioners
Emily Means - Columbus Consolidated Government
Diamond Mixon - City of Bloomingdale
Savonne R. Monell - Columbus Water Works
Lauri B. Moore - City of Alpharetta
Celibeth Rivera-Velez - Hall County Government
Anita Rookard - Augusta-Richmond County Commission
Cory Salley - City of Peachtree Corners
Lisa O. Sheffield - City of Coolidge
Ashley Steinmetz - Hall County Government
Teresa M. Taylor - City of Decatur
Lisa K. Turner - Town of Alto
Rebecca Tydings - City of Centerville
John White - Grady County Board of Commissioners

Board & Officers

President: Teaa Allston-Bing, City of Douglasville

Past President: Ryan Sarks, Cherokee CO Water and Sewer Authority

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Treasurer/Membership Coordinator: Arlene Ivey, Banks County BOC

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Board Member: Lorrie Waters, City of Canton

Board Member: Niki Graham, City of Norcross

Board Member: Paul Dailey, City of Covington

Board Member: Tracey Clark, Newton County Water and Sewer Authority

Board Member: Hope Blakely, Three Rivers Regional Commission

Legal Update



Megan V. Martin, Esquire

While our daily lives may not be completely back to normal with the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the United States Supreme Court is still issuing decisions, with a monumental opinion issued on June 15, 2020. *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia* is a landmark discrimination case, affecting not only one of our local government entities, but one that greatly impacts all employers.

In *Bostock*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that any employer who dismisses an employee for being gay or transgender, violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We are all familiar with Title VII's protections, which protects employees from discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. This new decision enshrines the idea that when an employer fires an employee for being gay or transgender, they are discriminating against that employee's sex. Any employer who uses sex as a factor in a termination violates Title VII. It is a very broad rule and continues the Court's expansion on what sex discrimination entails. Examples of earlier expansions include defining sexual harassment as sex discrimination, and even finding that men can be the victims of such harassment. The majority opinion emphasizes that Title VII is written broadly, should be defined broadly, and that it is not necessary to look at the original legislative intent. In interpreting "sex" under Title VII, the Court looks at it as the written and plain text of the terms - sex is a biological difference of males and females.

What does this mean for Human Resource professionals and other decision makers at local governments? It means that homosexuality or transgender status can play no part in the decision of an employee's termination. It does not matter if it was the sole factor, or only one of many factors. If *any* factor relied on sexual orientation or sexual identity, a discriminatory action has occurred. The opinion itself has a great example. Assume a female and male employee are identical in every aspect, including that they are both attracted to men. If the employer fires the male in part because he is attracted to men, the employer has not tolerated an aspect in the male employee that is tolerated in the female – the attraction to men. Therefore, the employer has singled out the male employee for treatment different than the female employee, and discrimination based on that biological difference, sex, has occurred. For transgender status, the Court provides another example – if an employer does not tolerate an action in someone who was born male at birth, but now identifies as female – yet tolerates the action in someone born female at birth and still identifying as female – a discriminatory action based on sex has occurred.

Legal Update

The opinion also clarifies that courts should apply what is called a “but-for” analysis. As described, “a but-for test directs us to change one thing at a time and see if the outcome changes. If it does, we have found a but-for cause...” In other words, it doesn’t matter if there are multiple reasons for a person’s termination. If going through all of the reasons, homosexuality or transgender status is one of the “but for” causes of the decision, and changes the decision outcome, there may be discrimination. Having other, even valid, reasons for a termination will not avoid liability under Title VII.

It’s also important to know that these are individualized decisions. In other words, it does not matter if the employer would have treated all males the same way or all females the same way. What matters is how *each* employee is treated and if their sex was a factor. The Court gives another example: “...an employer who fires a woman, Hannah, because she is insufficiently feminine and also fires a man, Bob, for being insufficiently masculine may treat men and women as groups more or less equally. But in both cases the employer fires an individual in part because of sex. Instead of avoiding Title VII exposure, this employer doubles it.”

There were three plaintiffs in the case, one being Gerald Bostock, a child welfare advocate employed by Clayton County for more than a decade. Mr. Bostock was terminated shortly after joining a softball league for gay men. The underlying case has never been tried on the merits, as it was initially dismissed when the federal courts ruled that it was permissible to fire an employee for being homosexual. Now, with the Supreme Court decision, the case will go back to the lower courts to re-review. Whether one of the reasons for Mr. Bostock’s termination was his being gay will now be reviewed.

The Court points out that their decision does not yet consider some of the situations opponents have raised, such as segregated bathrooms, locker rooms and dress codes. However, be aware of your local ordinances. Some localities may address such matters in their own ordinances or guidelines that may impact local employment decisions. The Court also left open the question on whether religious objections outweigh any discriminatory application of Title VII. Those are all sure to be questions raised in future discrimination cases.

The Bostock case makes very clear that “homosexuality and transgender status are inextricably bound up with sex.” Our job as local government professionals is to insure we take that guidance and apply it going forward in our employment decision making processes.

Reissuance of Employer Quarterly Statement of Benefit Charges

Georgia Department of Labor

The Georgia Department of Labor thanks you for all of your support during the COVID-19 public health emergency. We are including below some updates to rules and guidelines for Unemployment Insurance as we move forward during this pandemic. Thank you for helping us bridge the gap for the Georgia workforce.

Reissuance of Employer Charge Notices

Due to an internal processing error, some employers received an Employer Quarterly Statement of Benefit Charges (DOL-620) containing inaccurate charge amounts for quarter ending March 31, 2020. These statements included charges for employer-filed claims related to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Please disregard the statement dated 7/24/2020 and do not protest the charges reflected. These Employer Quarterly Benefit Charge Statements are being corrected and will be reissued early next week.

Per Emergency Rule 300-2-3-0.6 containing Rule 300-2-3-0.6-.05

(8) In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the National Emergency declaration by President Donald Trump on March 13, 2020, and the Public Health State of Emergency declared by Governor Brian Kemp on March 14, 2020, under the authority of O.C.G.A. § 34-8-93(b), in the determination of the Commissioner, the account of an employer may not be charged for certain benefits paid for unemployment due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, including benefits paid on partial claims filed online.

This rule was amended and extended on July 17, 2020 as:

Rule 300-2-3-.05 Charges to Experience Rating Account

Emergency Rule 300-2-3-0.14 containing Rule 300-2-3-0.14-.05

Charges to Experience Rating Account

(8) In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the National Emergency declaration by President Donald Trump on March 13, 2020, and the Public Health State of Emergency declared by Governor Brian Kemp on March 14, 2020, and subsequent extensions thereof, under the authority of O.C.G.A. § 34-8-93(b), in the determination of the Commissioner, the account of an employer may not be charged for certain benefits paid for unemployment due to the COVID19 public health emergency, including benefits paid on partial claims filed online. This rule shall expire upon the earlier of: (a) 120 days from the date of adoption; (b) The date on which the Public Health State of Emergency ends; or (c) The date on which the United States Department of Labor rescinds guidance permitting flexibility to the States with respect to charging of COVID-19 related claims.

Reissuance of Employer Quarterly Statement of Benefit Charges

Georgia Department of Labor

Part time Employee Partial Claims

Also included in the amended rules is a change in partial unemployment claims for part time employees.

300-2-4-.09 Partial Unemployment. Amended

Emergency Rule 300-2-4-0.13, containing Rule 300-2-4-0.13-.09(1).

Partial Unemployment. Amended

(d) For partial claim weeks beginning on or after July 19, 2020: 1. All partial claims shall be filed online; 2. An employer shall file partial claims with respect to any week during which a full-time employee's hours and pay are reduced below the level of Full-time Continuous Employment, defined in Rule 300-2-1-.01(9)(d), due to the COVID-19 public health emergency; 3. An employer shall be permitted, but not required, to file partial claims with respect to any week during which a part time employee's hours and pay are substantially reduced due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Part-time employment is defined in Rule 300-2-1-.01(9)(g). 4. An employer shall not be required to file partial claims for an employee with respect to any week in which the employer offered to restore the employee's hours and pay to the preCOVID-19 impacted level.

Employers can file partial claims for part time employees when hours and pay are substantially reduced due to the COVID-19 public health emergency but are not required to file on the employee's behalf.

Employee Refusal to Work Reporting

Employers are NOT REQUIRED to file partial claims for employees who have been offered employment at the hours and pay of the pre-COVID-19 impacted level. If an employee has been offered their job back and are refusing to return, please report the Job Refusal at: <https://www.dol.state.ga.us/public/uiben/fraud/reportType>

Claims Conversion Program

The GDOL Claims Conversion Program allows employers who have permanently laid off their employees and who will not receive severance and/or retirement pay to convert employer filed partial claims to individual claims without having the employee restart the claims process from the beginning. If you are converting claims from employer filed partial claims to individual claims, please wait one business day after you have uploaded your final weekly employer filed partial claims spreadsheet before submitting your employer filed claims conversions. The system needs time to process the weekly benefit employer filed partial upload file before converting the claim to an individual one. If this is done before allowing the upload, the conversion will override the request for weekly payment cancelling the request.

Reissuance of Employer Quarterly Statement of Benefit Charges

Georgia Department of Labor

Employer Filed Partial Claims Conversion Tool Step-By-Step Instructions

Follow these steps to convert employer filed partial claims to regular UI individual claims on the Employer Portal:

1. Log into the Employer Portal
2. Select the **employer account number** under **Registered Account**.
3. Select the **Partial Claims Conversion link** under **Common Links**.
4. Select **All** or **individual employee names** who are permanently laid off or working reduced hours, but you elect to no longer submit employer filed claims on their behalf on the **Partial Claims Conversion page**.
5. Review your list of selected employees on the **Partial Claims - Preview page**. Select the Export to Excel button if you wish to export your list to an Excel spreadsheet. If changes are necessary, select the **Cancel** button to return to the Employer Portal Dashboard and restart the process. Select the **Confirm** button to approve the list and convert to regular UI individual claims.
6. Advise your employees that their claims are being converted to individual claims and they will be responsible for requesting their own weekly UI benefit payments.

Please wait one business day after uploading your final weekly employer filed partial claims spreadsheet before submitting your Employer Filed Claims Conversions.

If you are permanently separating an employee and convert their unemployment claim from an employer filed partial claim to an individual claim, your employer account will be charged at this point.

NOTE: The affected employees will also be sent notification from the Georgia Department of Labor advising that employer filed claims will no longer be filed on their behalf. They will be provided instructions for requesting their own weekly UI benefit payments. The employer and employees will be sent a Lack of Work Separation determination. The employer's account will be charged for benefits paid for weeks after the conversion.

Georgia Department of Labor

I'm a remote worker. Here's what I want HR leaders to know.

By: Kathryn Mayer

Each morning I get dressed, walk downstairs to my kitchen for coffee and generally head to my home office at 7:30 a.m. or so. My days are filled with Zoom calls and instant-message exchanges with co-workers. There are telephone calls with sources, plenty of emails to return, numerous stories to write and usually a midday walk with my dog.

This isn't a new coronavirus routine. It's been my normal work-from-home schedule for the past several years.

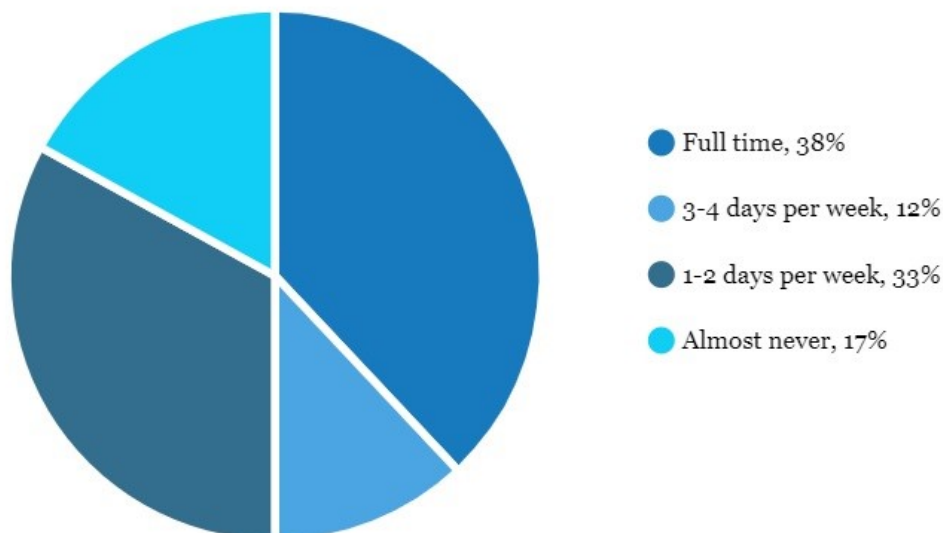
I've been working remotely from my home in Denver since 2016, when I was hired by a New York-based company. I continue to work from home in my current job at *Human Resource Executive*®. Now that most employees are working from home because of the coronavirus pandemic, enjoying a benefit they may never have asked for, I say, "Hello; welcome to my world."

Remote work is one of those employee benefits that has sparked a lot of debate over the years: Are workers really more productive at home? How do you manage remote employees? How do you build camaraderie? Are employees (gasp) working in sweatpants?

Sure, there are pros and cons to every situation, but my work-from-home experience has been great. I have always worked much better in the quiet and without distractions, especially when it comes to writing and editing articles. Plus, as someone who interviews people on a regular basis, I don't have to worry about distracting others or being too loud on the phone. Do I miss random gatherings, team lunches, water-cooler conversations, happy hours? Sure. But connection with my team members and co-workers has never been an issue, despite the physical distance.

Checking in

Amount of time employees say they work remotely



Source: Korn Ferry

Coronavirus has put a spotlight on remote work benefits, to be sure. A vast majority of employers have been forced to move their employees home as the virus spreads and social distancing and quarantining become the norm. While it's a necessary step, it's been filled with a lot of surprises. One big one? How many companies were so vastly unprepared for or unwilling to allow remote work.

Truth is, the vast majority of employees have been working remotely since the advent of the smartphone, when constant emails, phone calls and text messages were in the palm of our hands. For many with office jobs, work is not being done just in an office—it's done in our homes and on our commute and when we sneak in just one more email on our phones while in bed before we go to sleep. Work is not 9-to-5, in the same way not all work is done in the same brick-and-mortar location in a cubicle.

The coronavirus pandemic is reinforcing the benefits of remote work and workplace flexibility—something employees were universally clamoring for before COVID-19 entered the conversation (research from benefits provider Unum, for instance, found that flexible and remote work was the top non-insurance perk desired by employees). The benefit is essential in a pandemic, to be sure, but it's also an important offering for employees in a number of situations, whether they're parents or caregivers or employees with chronic health conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unforeseen, massive experiment of a workplace model many employers were hesitant to adopt, but it's one that will teach us how work can be done, how employees can be flexible, how managers can best manage and, yes, the importance of HR technology to help make it all possible.

It is important to say: This is not usual work-from-home business. Our collective worlds are turned upside down. Kids are home. Spouses are home. Stress and anxiety are high. In these tumultuous times, it's hard not to let your mind wander. To have anxieties and fears that crop up several times a day, to click on the latest headlines, to be engrossed in the press conferences, the stunning statistics, the most updated case count. You get worried. You get distracted. As someone with chronic health conditions, I get worried about my own safety. I get worried about family, about my aging parents and in-laws. About job security and healthcare coverage and my 401(k) balance. And so does everyone else.

Whether it's during a pandemic or when work gets back to normal, the biggest way to ensure successful implementation of remote work is for employers—managers and HR leaders among them—to offer the right support, give employees flexibility, create a culture of trust and be compassionate. These things are always important, but all the more so now in a world that is so upended.

The pandemic and the quarantine will end eventually. But if employers are willing to learn from the experience, I suspect remote work will be around much longer.



Kathryn Mayer is *HRE*'s benefits editor and chair of the Health & Benefits Leadership Conference. She has covered benefits for the better part of a decade, and her stories have won multiple awards, including a Jesse H. Neal Award and honors from the American Society of Business Publication Editors and the National Federation of Press Women. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Denver. She can be reached at kmayer@lrp.com.

The Back Page



GLGPA

Georgia Local Government Personnel Association

Engaging | Networking | Community

GLGPA 45th Celebration & Fall Conference

**November 17-20, 2020 - Great Wolf Lodge
LaGrange, GA**

We cannot wait to see you!

