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HOUSE BILL NO. 2460

Offered January 20, 2023

A BILL to amend and reenact § 2.2-602 of the Code of Virginia, relating to control of firearms by state agencies; rights of employees.

Patron—Fariss

Referred to Committee on Public Safety

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 2.2-602 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 2.2-602. Duties of agencies and their appointing authorities; establishment of personnel standards; diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic plans.

A. The heads of state agencies shall be the appointing authorities of the respective agencies, and shall establish and maintain within their agencies methods of administration relating to the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards on a merit basis that are approved by the Governor for the proper and efficient enforcement of the Virginia Personnel Act (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.). But the Governor shall exercise no authority with respect to the selection or tenure of office of any individual employed in accordance with such methods, except when the Governor is the appointing authority.

Appointing authorities may assign to the personnel officers or to other officers and employees of their agencies such personnel duties as they see fit.

Agencies shall establish and maintain rosters of their employees that shall set forth, as to each employee, the class title, pay, and status and such other data as they may deem desirable to produce significant facts pertaining to personnel administration.

Agencies shall establish and maintain such promotion and employment lists, rated according to merit and fitness, as they deem desirable. Agencies may make use of the employment list kept by the Department of Human Resource Management in lieu of keeping employment lists for their agencies.

Agencies shall supply the Governor with any information he deems necessary for the performance of his duties in connection with the administration of*the* Virginia Personnel Act (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.).

B. The heads of state agencies shall establish and maintain a comprehensive diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic plan in coordination with the Governor's Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The plan shall integrate the diversity, equity, and inclusion goals into the agency's mission, operations, programs, and infrastructure to enhance equitable opportunities for the populations served by the agency and to foster an increasingly diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace environment.

The plan shall include best practices that (i) proactively address potential barriers to equal employment opportunities pursuant to federal and state equal employment opportunity laws; (ii) foster pay equity pursuant to federal and state equal pay laws; (iii) promote diversity and equity in hiring, promotion, retention, succession planning, and agency leadership opportunities; and (iv) promote employee engagement and inclusivity in the workplace.

Each agency shall establish an infrastructure to effectively support ongoing progress and accountability in achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion goals in coordination with the Governor's Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Each agency shall submit an annual report to the Governor assessing the impact of the strategic plan on the populations served by the agency and on the agency's workforce and budget.

C. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no agency other than the Department of Corrections, the Department of Juvenile Justice, a public institution of higher education as defined in § 23.1-100, or the Virginia Port Authority shall adopt any regulation or workplace rule that prevents an officer or employee of such agency from storing at that agency's workplace a lawfully possessed firearm and ammunition in a locked private motor vehicle unless the adoption of such regulation or rule is expressly authorized by statute. Any such regulation or rule adopted prior to July 1, 2023, is invalid.