

# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration  
July 2020 - Volume 27, Issue 7

## Employee of the Month

### Purchasing's Johnson a Valuable Team Member



**Courtney Johnson**  
**July Employee**  
**of the Month**

Courtney Johnson, a Public Information Specialist II for the Purchasing Division, has been selected as the Department of Administration's *Employee of the Month* for July.

A state employee for nearly 10 years, her duties include coordinating monthly in-house training workshops and webinars as well as maintaining the state certification program, writing and editing newsletter articles, tracking legisla-

tive updates and coordinating the Purchasing Division's annual conference.

"Courtney has proven herself to be a valuable member of the team," said the co-worker who nominated her. "She can be counted on to always get the job done and assumes personal responsibility for her work. She completes her tasks in a timely and professional manner and is willing to take on new projects without complaint. She has built great working relationships, shares ideas freely and works toward team goals."

When she's not working, she enjoys reading, boating, church activities, cheering on the Thundering Herd and spending time with her husband and son.

Johnson will be joined by friends and co-workers at a special ceremony presented by Cabinet Secretary Allan McVey at a later date.

## Innovative Technology Assists West Virginia in Serving Citizens Affected By COVID-19

Even though West Virginia was the last state in the nation to report a case of COVID-19, social distancing and lockdown orders created needs that left it struggling to manage.

One of the state's first challenges was providing information to citizens and the news media. Amazon Web Services (AWS) approached the state with a solution in the form of Amazon Chime, a cloud-based communications service. Amazon Chime would allow the governor and health officials to broadcast to media members located anywhere and support live interactive chat that would enable the governor to field questions from reporters. Once state officials gave the go-ahead, Amazon



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## SNEAK PEEK

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# Division of Personnel Shares Return-to-Work Frequently Asked Questions Document

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The Division of Personnel (DOP) is pleased to share that it has published a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) about the reopening of state agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of the document is to answer important questions regarding requirements, restrictions, and other important guidance associated with the ongoing pandemic, such as the wearing of face masks, screening of employees, teleworking, and more.

Below are some of the questions shared as part of this FAQ document. Visit <https://personnel.wv.gov/SiteCollectionDocuments/DOPFAQ-ReturningtoWork.pdf> for the full list of questions and answers.

***May an agency require employees to wear a cloth face covering while at work?***

Yes. For the safety of employees, customers and visitors, agencies may require employees to wear masks, gloves, or other personal protective equipment to reduce the potential for exposure to COVID-19.

***Are agencies permitted to hold in-person meetings and trainings?***

Employers should follow social distancing and other guidelines issued by state and local authorities and health officials. Guidance regarding group settings will be updated as conditions change.

***What does an employee need to do in order to request a reasonable accommodation from the agency because he or she has one of the medical conditions that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says may place him or her at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19?***

An employee – or a third party, such as an employee's doctor – must notify the agency that he or she needs an accommodation related to a medical condition. Employees may request accommodations in conversation or in writing.

***Can the agency change my work schedule when we return from teleworking?***

Yes, according to section 14.2 of the Division of Personnel's Administrative Rule (W. Va. Code R. § 143-1-1 et seq.), agencies are responsible for establishing the work schedule for their employees and may include any work shifts they determine to be appropriate for the efficient operation of their agency.

***Can an employee continue teleworking because of concerns regarding their own serious health condition?***

Agencies are encouraged to permit an employee to continue to telework if the employee requests to do so due to medical con-

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**Please see DOP FAQs, Page 5**

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## GSD Seeks Donations for Capitol Campus Holiday Tree

While the summer heat makes winter seem far away, the General Services Division (GSD) is already hard at work planning for holiday decorations. This time of year, GSD begins seeking donations for holiday trees to be displayed on the Capitol Campus.

"The selection process is very detailed, and each year we receive less interest," explained GSD Grounds Manager John Cummings, who organizes the tree selection process. "We are hoping to change that this year, despite the many challenges faced with transporting and displaying such a large tree."

The ideal tree should stand between 25- to 30-feet tall and must be uniform in shape since the circumference of each tree will be fully decorated. There must also be enough access and level ground for the Division of Highways' truck to enter and exit the property to remove the tree, and no utility poles or meters should be in the area of pickup.

The trees displayed last winter included a Canaan fir and a Norway spruce that were donated by David and Rebecca Absher on behalf of the West Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association.

If you or someone you know would be interested in donating a tree, please contact Cummings at 304.558.2317.



**Pictured above is last year's 25 foot Norway Spruce tree being lifted for display at the Capitol Campus' North Plaza. Both trees displayed on the Capitol Campus during the holiday season are donated.**

Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes

# Help Keep the State Government Directory Up-to-Date

The West Virginia State Government Directory is an important resource for the general public and state workers. To keep this document up-to-date and accurate, the Department of Administration depends on each division and/or agency.

A designated contact person has been established by each division and/or agency to monitor their information and relay any updates needed to the directory. Updates include any changes to leadership, telephone numbers and/or addresses relating to the agency that may have occurred recently.

All changes and updates needed should be submitted from the designated contact to Samantha Knapp with the West Virginia Purchasing Division, who currently handles all updates to the directory for the Department of Administration. While the directory is updated once a month, changes can be submitted throughout the month.

Questions regarding the directory should be submitted to your agency's designated contact person. If you are unsure who your agency's designated contact is, contact Knapp at 304.558.7022. A copy of the directory can be found online at [www.wv.gov/Documents/StateGovernmentDirectory.pdf](http://www.wv.gov/Documents/StateGovernmentDirectory.pdf).



West Virginia State Government Directory

Published June 1, 2020

West Virginia State Government Directory 1

## Employee Question of the Month

In our June *Employee Question of the Month*, we asked, "What is your favorite ice cream?" Thank you to all who responded. While top answers included butter pecan, chocolate, and mint chocolate chip, you can see all of the responses in the chart below.



## PEIA Weight Management Program Update

The Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) recently re-opened its Weight Management Program for members wanting to get back to their fitness journey and whose gym is open. The program will operate in a friendly, soft re-acquainting manner through August 31, 2020, and all current members in the program will have six months added to their program to account for the pause taken due to COVID-19. Members can begin where they left off in the service schedule.

If a member does not feel comfortable starting back into the program right away due to COVID-19 concerns, that is acceptable. Members have until August 31, 2020, to determine if they wish to remain in the program. If a member chooses to drop out of the program due to COVID-19, they must notify PEIA at [weightmanagement@wv.gov](mailto:weightmanagement@wv.gov) or 1.866.688.7493. They will be eligible to re-apply for their remaining months in the program at any point using the online application.

Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes



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# WVOT Reminds State Employees of the Self-Service Password Reset Option and its Unlock Account Feature

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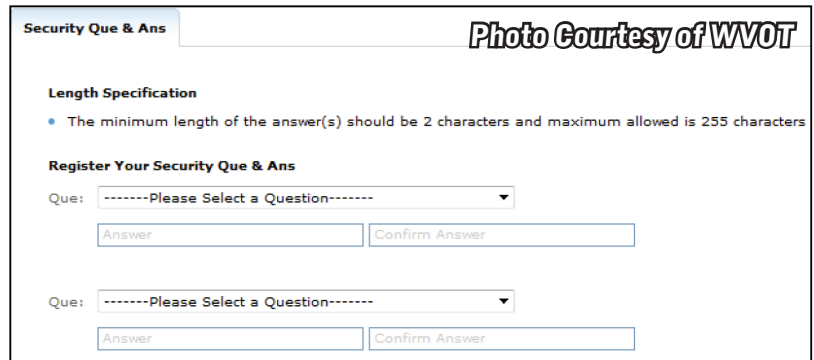
Being locked out of your computer is frustrating. Luckily, the West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT) offers a quick and easy solution to help resolve this issue. The Microsoft Self-Service Password Reset (SSPR) service allows state employees to reset their password once registered and unlock their network account without having to contact the WVOT Service Desk.

To use this feature, employees must first register with the Microsoft SSPR program using the following steps:

- Visit <https://aka.ms/ssprsetup>
- Enter [userid@wv.gov](mailto:userid@wv.gov) with their login number (i.e. A, B, or E number) where indicated, and click “Next”
- If redirected to the [sts.wv.gov](https://sts.wv.gov) page, re-enter [userid@wv.gov](mailto:userid@wv.gov) and password
- Select “Set Them Up Now.” If the option for the Self-Service Password Reset doesn’t immediately show, the employee may be required to click on his or her profile and then click on the appropriate link under “Manage Account”
- The employee may be required to re-enter their password to proceed
- Complete three of the provided questions and select “save answers”
- Click “Finish” and close the window.

Please note that the WVOT cannot see the password reset questions and cannot change or delete the user’s questions. To make changes, users must sign back into <https://aka.ms/ssprsetup> to modify their own questions.

If an individual forgets his or her password or gets locked out of their account and has already completed



**The West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT) has developed a password reset tool to assist individuals who have been locked out of their account. After registering and creating answers to the security questions shown above, state employees will be able to unlock their device without calling the WVOT Service Desk. A full guide to this process is available on WVOT’s website at [technology.wv.gov](https://technology.wv.gov).**

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the Microsoft SSPR, they can follow these simple steps:

- Visit <https://pw.wv.gov>
- Enter their [userid@wv.gov](mailto:userid@wv.gov) and complete the CAPTCHA/security code
- Select “I forgot my password” or select “I know my password but still can’t sign in” and click “Next”
- Complete the previously chosen security questions (which are not case-sensitive) and select “Next”
- Create a new password or access their now unlocked account.

For any individual needing assistance setting up their Microsoft SSPR, contact the WVOT Service Desk at 304.558.9966 or [servicedesk@wv.gov](mailto:servicedesk@wv.gov).

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## TECHNOLOGY

Continued from Page 1

Chime was deployed in approximately three hours—in time to support Governor Justice’s news briefing on March 18, 2020. The solution made West Virginia one of the first states in the nation to conduct completely virtual, interactive press conferences.

Shortly after the implementation of Amazon Chime, the state had a bigger problem to handle. The mandatory shutdown of non-essential businesses put thousands of residents out of work. Traffic began to spike at the state’s unemployment insurance (UI) call center as people applied for benefits. By the second week of April, the state’s existing UI call centers had received 77,000 calls, which overwhelmed the phone systems. The state also

could not support the use of prerecorded messages with commonly requested information to help callers avoid waiting on hold to speak to a live agent.

WVOT again selected AWS and its Premier Amazon Consulting Partner Smartronix to implement Amazon Connect, a cloud-based contact center solution. By April 20, 2020, the new Amazon Connect was fully rolled out and processed a record 61,252 calls in one day. The new solution handles an average of 40,000 to 45,000 calls daily. West Virginia also deployed Amazon Polly, a text-to-speech service, to provide callers basic information during the initial call flow. Providing automated information dramatically lowered the number of callers who needed help from

a live agent. Currently, 96 percent of calls are handled by the interactive voice response (IVR) system, allowing questions to be answered quickly and efficiently without human interaction and leaving only four percent requiring an agent. The state is working to expand capacity even further by adding Amazon Lex, an artificial intelligence-enabled chatbot solution, to its website to provide information and answer questions.

“This is an opportunity to engage on multiple channels in order to assist more West Virginians through the UI process,” said Chief Technology Officer Joshua Spence. “Technology is invaluable when it comes to expanding our ability to answer questions and help our citizens.”

Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes

# Staying Safe and Remaining Aware During Rainy Drives

Driving in rain, whether a sprinkle or a heavy downpour, can be one of the most difficult driving situations a driver will encounter. Rainy conditions are directly associated with higher accident rates. No matter what part of the country you live in, it is almost certain that you will be required to drive your vehicle in the rain at some point. Knowing how wet roads and reduced visibility can affect the handling of your vehicle will help you drive safely in rainy conditions. The Fleet Management Division would like to share these tips for driving in wet conditions:

## Double Check Your Car's Equipment

Make sure that your car's equipment is in working order before driving in rainy weather. Check your headlights, taillights, and windshield wipers to ensure they will work efficiently when they are needed. Also check the tread of your vehicle's tires. Balding tires can severely reduce traction on wet roadways.

## Turn on Your Headlights

Most states require drivers to turn on their vehicles' lights while driving in rain. Even if it is only misting, turning on your vehicle's headlights will increase both your own visibility and other drivers' ability to see your car on the road.

## Use Your Windshield Wipers

While this may seem like common sense, some people forget to turn on their windshield wipers in light rain. Most cars' windshield wiper speed is adjustable to clear moisture from the glass in a light mist or in a heavy rainstorm. There are various products available that can be sprayed or wiped onto the windshield that claim to defer the collection of rainwater if wipers are an issue.

## Slow Down

Reduced speed is imperative in rainy weather. Not only should you adhere to the posted speed limit when driving in wet weather conditions, you should drive considerably slower than you nor-

mally would. Wet roads are very dangerous and your vehicle's reaction time is much slower when it is raining.

## Maintain a Safe Distance and Avoid Heavy Braking

Keep a greater distance between your vehicle and the car in front of you. Stopping your vehicle will be more difficult when driving in the rain, especially if your tires have low tread. Maintain the encouraged distance of several car lengths between your car and other vehicles.

Try to slow your vehicle by taking your foot off the accelerator earlier than you normally would in preparation to slow down or stop. Do not use cruise control so your attention on using both the gas and brake are in tune.

## Watch Out for Standing Water

Driving through standing water can cause hydroplaning to occur. Hydroplaning is when you lose traction and skid across the surface of the road. To avoid hydroplaning, pay attention to the road and avoid spots along the road where water has collected by changing lanes or safely steering around those areas.

## Let Off the Gas When Hydroplaning

Hydroplaning is one of the most common causes of car accidents in the rain. If your car hydroplanes, calmly take your foot off the accelerator and steer in the direction that the front of your car needs to go. Avoid sudden turns or slamming on your brakes.

## Ventilate Your Car

Rain causes humidity levels to increase. You may find that your vehicle's windows become foggy when operating your vehicle while it is raining. Most cars' ventilation systems include a function that works to reduce this type of fog that develops on the interior of your windows and windshield. If necessary, pull over until you are clearly able to see through your windows.

## DOP FAQs

Continued from Page 2


cerns. Should the employee be unable to telework, or telework becomes unavailable, working from an alternate worksite should be considered, or it may be necessary for the employee to request the appropriate form of leave.

*During a pandemic, may an agency ask an employee why he or she has been absent from work if the agency suspects it is for a medical reason?*

Yes. Asking why an employee did not report to work is not a disability-related inquiry. An agency is always entitled to know why an employee has not reported for work.

*An employee left the workplace sick and exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. What should I do?*

Supervisors should notify their agency human resources department immediately for additional guidance. Clean and disinfect the employee's work area, along with common workplace areas and frequently touched surfaces. Labels on the supplies contain instructions for the safe and effective use of the cleaning product, including precautions you should take when applying the product such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.



**Covid-19**  
QUICK LINKS  
FOR EMPLOYEES

Division of Personnel  
<https://personnel.wv.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

CDC COVID-19 Information  
[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)

## New Employee Joins Small but Mighty EEO Office

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office, which is the smallest office within the Department of Administration, has hired a new employee. Brittany Rutrough recently joined the EEO office as an Administrative Secretary.

A resident of Nitro, Rutrough previously worked as an Administrative Assistant and Support Service Specialist at AMFM Nursing & Rehabilitation Centers' home office in Charleston for more than six years. Rutrough graduated from Capital High School in 2007 and Carver Career Center in 2010.

Rutrough is now one of three employees who make up the EEO office and will join the fight to advocate for individuals who have been discriminated against in the workplace.

To learn more about the EEO office, please see the August 2018 issue of *Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes*.

Are you following the Department of Administration on Twitter for news and announcements at @westvirginiadoa?

Stay informed on the latest information!

**Welcome!** ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Brittany Rutrough** (EEO), **Conner Kleppinger** and **Trevor Veltri** (Personnel); **Karissa Blackburn** (Public Defender Services); and **John Vance** (Purchasing).

**Best Wishes** ... to **Robin Hill** (Finance) who recently resigned from our department.

**Happy Retirement!** ... After years of hard work and dedication, we would like to wish **Rosa Burgess** (CPRB) the very best during her retirement.

**Fleet Management Training** ... The Fleet Management Division's mandatory annual training for fleet coordinators will be available later this month as an online recording. Updates will be available at [www.fleet.wv.gov](http://www.fleet.wv.gov).

**In Other News** ... The month of July will have three paydays. Employees will see a larger paycheck on the third payday.

**Employee Question of the Month** ... A big THANK YOU to our employees who participated in our **Employee Question of the Month**. Last month, we asked you to share your favorite ice cream, and those answers can be seen on Page 3.

This month's Department employee question is, "**What is your favorite summer activity?**" Share your comments with us by July 15, 2020, by visiting [www.surveymonkey.com/r/JQ9MYLV](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JQ9MYLV).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in JULY

Below is a list of Department of Administration employees celebrating their birthdays during the month of July:

Lori Bailey.....BRIM	April Taylor.....PEIA
Carl Baldwin.....BRIM	Stephanie Whitney.....PEIA
Marilyn McMinn.....BRIM	Christie Yarbough.....PEIA
Timothy Abraham.....CPRB	Monica Ashford.....Personnel
Raymond Barron.....CPRB	Heather Atkins.....Pub.Def.Srvs.
Jennifer Looney.....CPRB	James Light.....Pub.Def.Srvs.
Alysia Miller.....CPRB	Dana Hoffman.....Purchasing
Terasa Miller.....CPRB	Mitzie Howard.....Purchasing
Malechra Pannell.....CPRB	Jennifer Fields.....Purchasing
Paula Van Horn.....CPRB	Matthew Beckett.....Technology
Sharon Whittaker.....CPRB	Jeffrey Bird.....Technology
Sarah Jarrett.....Finance	Toney Broyles.....Technology
Patty Johns.....Finance	Jamie Cartwright.....Technology
Lora Reese.....Finance	Kevin Cecil.....Technology
Timothy Scites.....Finance	Staci Clutters.....Technology
Teresa Taylor.....Fleet	Robert Cogar.....Technology
Tony Easley.....Gen.Srvs.	Kelli Doyle.....Technology
Jesse Erby.....Gen.Srvs.	John Gibson.....Technology
Raymond Jordan.....Gen.Srvs.	April Honaker.....Technology
Robert Kilpatrick.....Gen.Srvs.	Steven Martin.....Technology
John Miller.....Gen.Srvs.	Nathan Merritt.....Technology
Jeffrey Moore.....Gen.Srvs.	Shaun Neidlinger.....Technology
Limber Munoz.....Gen.Srvs.	Valerie Osburn.....Technology
Patrick O'Neill.....Gen.Srvs.	Jack Pullen.....Technology
Michelle Spencer.....Gen.Srvs.	Tametta Richards.....Technology
Stanley Stewart.....Gen.Srvs.	Thomas Riddell.....Technology
George Williamson.....Gen.Srvs.	Thaddeus Robinson.....Technology
Kenna DeRaimo.....PEIA	Duane Ryder.....Technology
Lee Halstead.....PEIA	Ruth Shaffer.....Technology
Marinda Lanham.....PEIA	Philip Skeen.....Technology
Thomas Marchio.....PEIA	Cris Spradling.....Technology
Tom Miller.....PEIA	Teddy Thompson.....Technology
Nicole Spears.....PEIA	

### Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

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