

# 2021 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination  
*Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

Nominations from dues-paying states are considered for eligibility. Nominated leaders and programs should have a positive effect on the administration of state human resource programs. A state's central human resource department or line agency human resource operations may administer nominated programs.

Programs and projects must have been operational for at least six months and must be transferable to other states. Selection criteria are based on the questions asked on the award application. Included in this packet are the specific criteria for each award and their categories. Nominations are encouraged in all areas of human resource management administration.

Additionally, please attach a one-page summary of the program and prepare a narrative answer for the questions listed below. Do not send supporting documentation. Provide a narrative answer for each of the following questions.

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## PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: Adjunct Emergency Workforce

State: VA

Contact Person: Anne Waring

Contact's Title: Communications and Public Relations Manager

Agency: Virginia Department of Human Resource Management

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### ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

Meet all eligibility requirements. • Meet deadline requirements stated on the NASPE website. • Be entered in the correct category and be correctly identified. • Include a complete nomination packet. • Conform to all copyright laws.

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## NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Anne Waring      Title: Communications and Public Relations Manager

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## DETAILS

Please see attached summary and details.

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*Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*  
*Virginia Department of Human Resource Management*  
*Adjunct Emergency Workforce*

**SUMMARY**

The Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) and partner agencies have transformed an existing employee temporary reassignment emergency response program, the [Adjunct Emergency Workforce](#) (AEW), into an innovative resource for providing assistance with vaccination efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, approximately 270 employees at 50 state agencies across the Commonwealth of Virginia have registered to help fill critical gaps in Virginia sheltering and vaccination efforts in alignment with state agency responsibilities outlined in [Executive Orders 41 and 42](#) issued in 2019 by Virginia Governor Ralph S. Northam.

Originally a partnership among DHRM, the Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS), and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) in 2007 following Hurricane Katrina, the AEW was designed to give state employees the opportunity to support the Commonwealth of Virginia's emergency response and recovery activities. Employees can register for AEW using an online tool, and must receive approval from their agencies.

During a declared emergency, qualified AEW participants may be offered temporary reassignment to close critical staffing gaps in the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST), comprised of more than 105 state agencies, private businesses, and volunteer organizations. The AEW may be called upon to assist the public in a variety of ways, including sheltering support and providing other essential emergency services.

In early 2021, the AEW underwent an innovative transformation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a registration tool upgrade, enhanced web site and expanded services. Originally conceived to offer sheltering support in emergencies, AEW has become a resource to the Virginia Department of Health in vaccinating Virginia residents. Participants have been deployed in data entry, logistics, as site assistants, intake managers, and greeters. Others are registered to assist as site managers and public information officers, among other roles.

**DESCRIPTION:** Building upon the existing employee [Adjunct Emergency Workforce](#) (AEW), an employee temporary assignment emergency response program that helps fill critical gaps in emergency response and recovery, the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) and its partner agencies have transformed and expanded the program to provide assistance with vaccination efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. An upgraded registration tool allows employee participants to be on call for deployment to assist other state agencies with vaccinations in positions such as data entry, logistics, site assistance, intake managers, and greeters. Employees may also continue to sign up for supporting sheltering activities during an emergency, such as a natural disaster.

As a result of the repurposed AEW, approximately 270 employees at 50 state agencies across the Commonwealth of Virginia have registered to help fill critical gaps in Virginia sheltering and vaccination efforts in alignment with state agency responsibilities in [Executive Orders 41 and 42](#) issued in 2019 by Virginia Governor Ralph S. Northam.

**HOW LONG IN OPERATION:** The AEW was launched initially in 2007 during the administration of Governor Tim Kaine in response to Hurricane Katrina. It was repurposed beginning in 2019 and officially re-activated for expanded services in early 2021.

**WHY CREATED:** The original AEW was created in response to Hurricane Katrina in 2007. In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic came to Virginia with a vengeance, changing the daily lives of Virginia residents. When the Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines were introduced in late 2020 and early 2021, providing vaccinations to adults 18 years and older became paramount. Transforming the AEW was in response to a need identified by the Northam

*Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*  
*Virginia Department of Human Resource Management*  
*Adjunct Emergency Workforce*

administration and our partner agencies for assisting state agencies with COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

**WHY NEW AND CREATIVE METHOD:** DHRM, DSS and VDEM were able to innovatively transform an existing program's tools and framework to meet an unanticipated and unexpected need in the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. The AEW registration tool was updated, the web pages enhanced and services expanded in a few months' time, made possible at minimal cost by using tools and programs already owned by DHRM, as well as the expertise of its internal staff.

**PROGRAM'S START-UP COST:** The repurposing of the Adjunct Emergency Workforce (AEW) was made possible because of programs and tools already owned by the DHRM Information Technology group. Consequently, there were minimal start-up costs and the program took advantage of the expertise of internal staff across office areas, who took on AEW as an additional assignment.

**OPERATIONAL COSTS:** No direct operational costs have been identified. Commonwealth employees who participate are paid their normal salary while serving in AEW.

**HOW PROGRAM IS FUNDED:** The AEW uses DHRM-owned technology tools and programs. When working with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management for vaccination clinics, state agencies may be eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement.

**DID PROGRAM ORIGINATE IN YOUR STATE:** Yes, the Adjunct Emergency Workforce originated in Virginia.

**AWARE OF SIMILAR PROGRAMS IN OTHER STATES:** To our knowledge, the Virginia Adjunct Emergency Workforce is unique because all state employees are eligible to participate.

There are two similar programs at the state level, in New Jersey and California, where employees can be temporarily redeployed in their agency/department (not all state employees like AEW) for mass care operations. The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a similar program that includes federal workers from other agencies - the Surge Capacity Force program.

**HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS:** The success of the AEW is measured by the number of employees who have registered and been temporarily reassigned to assist other agencies in responding to emergency sheltering or COVID-19 vaccination efforts. Commonwealth of Virginia employees have always been supportive of their communities, and this is an additional way for them to give back and have an impact on their local communities. The most recent statistics show that to date about 270 unique employee volunteers in 50 state agencies have registered on AEW. There have been 97 registrations to provide sheltering support, and 221 to assist with vaccinations.

**HOW HAS PROGRAM CHANGED:** There have been few changes other than those outlined above in the innovative transformation of AEW into a resource for the Commonwealth in its COVID-19 vaccination efforts. The program has an upgraded registration tool, enhanced website and specific AEW email mailbox for submitting employee or participant questions.