SHARING MUNICIPAL STAFF

Options for Temporary Coverage and Long-Term Capacity

Sharing municipal staff can help communities maintain essential services, manage workload, and build long-term capacity. This resource highlights common approaches, key considerations, and legal options under Vermont law.

1 Identify Your Need

Start by understanding what you need and what you hope to achieve

- What services or positions do you need to cover?
- Is the need temporary or long term?
- What skills, training, or certifications are required?
- What do you hope to achieve (e.g., maintain services, reduce costs, build capacity?

2 Choose an Approach

Vermont municipalities use a variety of arrangements to share staff. The right option depends on your needs and circumstances.

Temporary Staff Loans

An employee works for another municipality for a short period while remaining an employee of their home municipality.

Shared or Part-Time Positions

An employee works for two or more municipalities on an ongoing basis, with duties and time shared by agreement.

Mutual Aid Agreements

A flexible option for short-term assistance, often used during emergencies or to meet specific needs.

Union Municipal Districts

A separate municipal entity created by two or more municipalities to provide shared services, which may include employees.

3 Consider Key Issues Before You Begin

No matter which approach you choose, municipalities should discuss and document:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Supervision and reporting
- Duties, schedule, and work location
- Compensation and benefits
- Insurance and liability
- Personnel policies
- Communication and dispute resolution

4 Put the Arrangement in Writing

A written agreement helps prevent misunderstandings and protects all parties. Your agreement should address:



5 Under Vermont's Legal Options

Several Vermont laws allow municipalities to work together and share staff.

Interlocal Contracts

Allows municipalities to contract to perform any governmental service or activity, including sharing employees.

Union Municipal Districts

An employee works for two or more municipalities on an ongoing basis, with duties and time shared by agreement.

Agreements for Water, Wastewater & Stormwater Services

Allows municipalities to contract for water supply, water systems, and sewage, and stormwater disposal, including construction, operation, and maintenance

Working with a Regional Planning Commission

Allows two or more municipalities to partner with an RPC for intermunicipal services that the RPC promotes, coordinates, implements, or administers.

6 Discuss and Plan

Use these questions to start a conversation in your community or with a neighboring municipality.

- What staffing challenges are you faciing?
- Which services could be shared?
- What approach might work best for your needs?
- Who should be included in the discussion?

7 Find Additional Resources

Read the full resource

Sharing Municipal Staff: Options for Temporary Coverage and Long-Term Capacity at vlct.org/resource/sharing-municipal-staff

Additional resources include:

- Example agreements
- Checklist for key considerations
- Links to Vermont statutes
- Related VLCT resources