ARTICLE 31

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

Section Five. (a) Professional leave is defined as leave to attend seminars, classes, lectures, workshops, conventions, or other related activities in aid of the development, maintenance or exchange of professional skills, techniques or experiences which clearly relate to an employee's primary job assignment or logical

career progression.

(b) The Employer recognizes that certain benefits accrue to both the State and the employee through participation in professional leave and will support such leave consistent with agency operating needs and budgetary constraints.

(c) Employees may request and, subject to the conditions outlined herein, shall be granted up to ten (10) days leave with pay per contract term for professional development.

(1) Request must be in writing, identifying the activity to be attended and its relationship to the job assignment and/or career progression, submitted at least three (3) weeks in advance of leave.

(2) No overtime or expenses other than time off without loss of regular day's pay will accrue to the State.

(3) Professional leave, if not used in any contract year, shall be neither accruable nor payable.

(d)Nothing herein will prevent the Employer from assigning an employee to participate in professional development activities as part of a regular job assignment. Such assignments however, will be in addition to professional leave. In such a case, the Employer will absorb any overtime or other expenses accruing from a regular job assignment, consistent with applicable contract provisions.