



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

This is your Town of Poolesville Employee Handbook. Read it thoroughly. It is your responsibility to review it periodically and contact your supervisor with any questions. This is not a contract for employment but rather a guide to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all employees.

Effective May 1, 2022

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Welcome

Welcome to the Town of Poolesville!

We look forward to the opportunity to work with you. Our continued success in providing the highest level of service to our residents, businesses and visitors depends on having top talent like yourself and your fellow employees. We are passionate about our work, and it is essential our employees feel that same passion while being part of a great team.

As a municipality that puts people first, the Town of Poolesville supports opportunities for your personal and professional growth. Among our goals is to be the best when attracting, hiring, training, coaching, mentoring, motivating, and developing people. We sincerely hope that you enjoy your time here and we are committed to helping you succeed in your job.

This handbook has been prepared to answer some of the questions that you may have concerning the Town of Poolesville and its policies. It is intended solely as a guide, and it is not intended to be a binding contract. Read it thoroughly, and if you have any questions, contact a member of the management team for assistance.

Again, welcome to the Town of Poolesville. We are happy you're here and hope you find it rewarding!

Sincerely,

Poolesville Town Commissioners & Town Manager

Overview

This Town of Poolesville Employee Handbook (or “Handbook”) will not provide an answer for every situation or dilemma that you may encounter. It is also a “living document” that will change from time to time, as circumstances dictate. If your judgment and this document do not provide the answer, use other resources that are available, such as your supervisor. Throughout this handbook, the Town of Poolesville is also referred to as the “the Town” or sometimes as “Town”.

If you are ever uncertain about something you intend to do while conducting Town business, you should seek advice before acting. It is also your responsibility to let us know if you see or learn of something that suggests any law or Town of Poolesville policy has been violated. The Town does not tolerate retaliation against any employee who raises concerns or questions regarding a potential violation of any laws or Town policies that he or she reasonably believes to have occurred.

We have a Handbook because our reputation for integrity flows from our commitment to our values. The Town of Poolesville depends on its employees to follow the law and to make the right decisions. The Town operates in a dynamic world and what’s “right” may not always be obvious. This Handbook provides practical overviews of some of the legal and ethical codes that we all must follow on a day-to-day basis.

The Town of Poolesville takes seriously reports of possible violations of any of its policies or the law. As appropriate, we will investigate and take action, including taking steps to prevent a recurrence of any problems. Your cooperation may be required in any investigation.

The Town of Poolesville requires all employees to follow the law and to act honestly and ethically in conducting our business. We are each responsible for our own conduct. No one has the authority to approve illegal acts, and an illegal act cannot be justified because a superior “ordered it”. The Town does not permit an employee to direct or encourage another employee to violate the law, any Town policy, or to otherwise act improperly.

Failure to comply with the law, *Code of Conduct*, or any of the Town of Poolesville policies can have severe consequences for the Town and the employees involved. Any employee who fails to meet the obligations set forth in this Handbook or the law will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal. Discipline also may be imposed if an employee fails to report violations of policies, or the law; if an employee retaliates against another employee for reporting a violation or cooperating in an investigation; if an employee is untruthful or deliberately withholds relevant information in making a report or in an investigation; if an employee directs others to violate any policies, or the law; or if the circumstances indicate a supervisor has failed to adequately or properly perform their supervisory duty.

All employees are required to acknowledge upon hire or receipt that they have read, understand, and are in compliance with this Handbook. Abiding by the Handbook is a condition of continued employment with the Town of Poolesville.

Open Door Policy

The Town of Poolesville has an obligation to ensure that you are treated fairly. Everyone, from time to time, has an idea, question, or occasional problem relating to his/her job or to the Town in general. We encourage you to communicate these thoughts.

When you have an idea, problem, or concern, please follow these steps:

- Talk with your immediate supervisor.
- If you are not satisfied after meeting with your immediate supervisor, schedule an appointment with the Town Manager.

Equal Opportunity Policy

The Town of Poolesville is an equal opportunity employer. We recruit, hire, train, and promote persons in all job classifications without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or any other protected status.

We ensure that decisions regarding compensation, promotions, benefits, transfers, professional development opportunities and any social or recreational programs will be administered in accordance with the principals of equal opportunity.

The Town of Poolesville will also not tolerate any form of harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability or any other protected status.

Diversity

The Town of Poolesville actively promotes an environment that is inclusive of all people and their unique abilities, strengths, and differences. We respect and embrace diversity in each other, our vendors, and all others with whom we interact as an essential component in the way we serve. Should you ever believe the Town of Poolesville has not provided an environment that is diverse, inclusive, and equitable for all, please notify the Town Manager or a member of the Commission.

How We Treat Our Residents

As an employee of the Town of Poolesville, you are a public servant. We view every resident as an important individual, and we treat everyone with dignity and respect. This means we never harass, retaliate, or discriminate against anyone, and we aim to provide exceptional service with each interaction. Smiles and eye contact, personal greetings, a thank you and, of course, respectful conversation exemplifies the service we give.

Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy

Statement of Policy

It is the policy and practice of The Town of Poolesville to provide and promote equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees. The Town is firmly committed to maintaining a workplace based on our collective values, which stress the quality of our services, the importance of teamwork, and the need for all employees to treat each other professionally, with dignity, fairness, and respect. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that the concepts of equal employment opportunity, non-harassment, and non-discrimination are understood, abided by, and carried out by everyone.

Prohibition on Discrimination and Harassment

It is the policy of The Town of Poolesville to hire, train, promote, compensate, and administer all employment practices without regard to race, color, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, marital status, religion, medical condition, national origin, disability unrelated to the ability to perform essential job functions, or on account of membership in any protected category under federal, state, or local laws. Harassment of employees or applicants because they are members of or affiliated with members of any of the foregoing protected groups is also prohibited and will not be tolerated. The Town will take appropriate measures in response to any such incidents which are reported. Every good faith effort will be taken by the Town fulfill the objectives of this policy.

The Town of Poolesville believes that every employee has the right to work in an environment free of harassment and discriminatory conduct, to include joking, or epithets. Such behavior does not advance the purposes of the Town; it causes harm to victims and may subject the Town of Poolesville to legal liability in certain circumstances. This policy sets a standard of conduct that may be higher than what federal, state, and local laws may require, as it forbids discriminatory or harassing conduct of the kind described in this policy even if the conduct does not rise to the level of a violation of applicable law. Consequently, any employee who engages in these types of prohibited conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Conduct Constituting Prohibited Sexual or Discriminatory Harassment

Sexual harassment is one of the forms of harassment forbidden by this policy. The Town of Poolesville also prohibits inappropriate and unprofessional as well as sex-related conduct regardless of whether it amounts to unlawful sexual harassment, as such conduct is deemed to be inconsistent with The Town of Poolesville policy of promoting tolerance, respect, and dignity in the workplace.

For example, and without compiling an exhaustive list, the following are illustrative of conduct by any employee that the Town condemns and prohibits under this policy regardless of whether the conduct is based on gender or results in an adverse employment action and regardless of whether the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create an unlawful hostile environment:

- Conditioning a benefit such as a certain salary, job, shift, schedule, or promotion on the granting of sexual favors or the establishment or continuance of a personal relationship, or to imply to an employee that an award of such a benefit is conditioned upon the granting of sexual favors or the establishment or continuance of a personal relationship.
- Stating or implying that another employee's performance is attributable in whole or in part to the employee's sex or membership in any protected-group categories under federal, state, or local laws.
- Stating or implying that a fellow employee's promotion in the employment hierarchy has

- resulted from the granting of a sexual favor or relationship.
- Engaging in any type of conduct which has the effect of unreasonably interfering with another employee's work or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

As an employee of The Town of Poolesville, you should be aware that the issue of whether behavior constitutes inappropriate, unprofessional harassment or discriminatory conduct might depend on how that behavior is viewed by the employee who is subjected to the behavior. Any employee who initiates or persists in such prohibited behavior assumes the risk of violating this policy if the person who is the object of the behavior views it as offensive; accordingly, such an employee may be subject to discipline even if his or her conduct might not have been intended as offensive.

Conduct Constituting Sexual or Discriminatory Conduct, Joking, or Epithets

For example, and without compiling an exhaustive list, the following are illustrative of conduct by an employee that the Town of Poolesville condemns and prohibits under this policy:

- Bringing any item to the work premises that is sexually offensive or discriminatory even if it is intended as a joke.
- Posting any material that is discriminatory, offensive or sexual, even as a joke, on Town property, bulletin boards, documents, or e-mail or voicemail systems.
- Defacing Town property or the personal property of anyone else, especially if sexually offensive or discriminatory even if intended as a joke.
- Uttering or utilizing any offensive sexual or discriminatory jokes or epithets at work, or when referring to or about any other person, be they an employee or a non-employee.
- Harassment of any person else due to their sex, sexual orientation, race, color, ethnic background, age, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, or other protected-group status.
- Bringing to or displaying in the workplace any materials having an offensive content (such as pornography or due to a demeaning reference to another's protected-group status), or to circulate or disseminate any such materials through Town of Poolesville internal mail, voice mail, or e-mail systems.

Application of the Policy to Non-Town Employees

This policy also applies to the dealings of any employee with non-employees such as Town of Poolesville, such as (but not limited to) contractors, vendors, and members of the public. Furthermore, the policy also applies to individuals who do business with the Town of Poolesville, who are present on Town premises, or who interact with any employee of the Town of Poolesville while the employee is on duty.

Procedure Upon Occurrence of Prohibited Contact

Employees who believe they have been subjected or exposed to discrimination or harassment prohibited by this policy, and have made that circumstance known to management, have the right to have any such activity terminated immediately. Every employee has a role in preventing discrimination and harassment. Every employee must avoid any conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as discrimination or harassment under this policy, and every employee should indicate when another person's conduct in the workplace is unwelcome. In addition, every employee should

endeavor to protect other employees from discrimination and harassment. Employees are expected

and encouraged to inform others in the workplace whenever their conduct is unwelcome, offensive, inappropriate, or in poor taste. Therefore, employees are required to come forward promptly and report any problems pursuant to this policy before the alleged behavior becomes severe or pervasive.

Employees may come forward with complaints about alleged problems or violations of the Town's policy at any time. Complaints need not be limited to someone who was the target of the alleged offending conduct. Anyone who has observed an alleged violation of the policy is also encouraged to report it to the Town.

Reporting Procedures

If any employee witnesses any conduct that he or she believes is inconsistent with this policy, the Town of Poolesville expects the employee to notify immediately one or more of the people designated below. The Town has convenient mechanisms in place for reporting alleged violations of the policy. Complaints will be accepted verbally or in writing, in writing preferred. Complaints can be directed to multiple people within the Town of Poolesville, including:

- Any Supervisor
- Any senior member of management
- Any Commissioner

All complaints shall be treated with the utmost seriousness and discretion. Upon receipt of the complaint or in circumstances where the Town of Poolesville becomes aware of alleged offending conduct, a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation will be made concerning any alleged offending conduct. Upon determination of said investigation, the Town will disclose to the complainant, regardless of the result, to ensure they are kept informed and up to date. If the investigation leads to a determination that an individual engaged in conduct in violation of Town of Poolesville policy, appropriate corrective action will be taken promptly, including the possible termination of the offending party. The Town may impose discipline for inappropriate conduct that comes to the Town's attention, without regard to whether the conduct constitutes a violation of law.

No Retaliation

The Town of Poolesville will not tolerate adverse treatment of any employee because he or she reports harassment or discrimination, or provides information related to such complaints. As this policy strictly prohibits retaliation of any form against anyone who complains of alleged violations of this policy, it also applies to any employee involved in or cooperating with any investigation of alleged offending conduct. Thus, a supervisor is prohibited from making any personnel decision or taking any other adverse action against any employee because the employee complained or cooperated in good faith with an investigation of alleged conduct prohibited by this policy. Any acts of retaliation will be considered a violation of this policy, and corrective action will be taken promptly, including the possible termination of any individual who engages in retaliation of any form.

Immigration Law Compliance

The Town of Poolesville is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens legally authorized to work in the United States. The Town will not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin. In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 (or subsequent equivalent) and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the Town within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid. Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the Town Clerk. Employees may and are encouraged to raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

Employee Privacy and Personal Activities

Treating each other with respect and dignity includes respecting one another's privacy. Of course, you may keep your personal activities outside of the workplace confidential. However, you should keep in mind that you are, at all times, a representative of the Town of Poolesville. Further, if you use the equipment or resources of the Town for any communication from or to anyone, you have consented to the right of the Town to intercept such communication and to monitor your use of Town equipment and resources. Do not use the equipment or resources of the Town of Poolesville if you intend a communication to be private. For example, any use of the Town of Poolesville equipment or its network to send or receive email communication or for connecting with the Internet is never considered a private communication.

Internet Usage

Internet access is provided by the Town of Poolesville to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and technology. All internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications system is part of the official records of the Town and, as such, is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in Internet e-mail messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful.

The equipment, services, and technology provided to access the internet always remain the property of the Town of Poolesville. As such, the Town reserves the right to monitor internet traffic, and retrieve and read any data composed; sent, or received through its online connections and/or stored in our computer systems.

Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone based on race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the Internet is expressly prohibited. As a rule, if an employee did not create material, does not own the rights to it, or has not gotten authorization for its use, it should not be used.

Employees are also responsible for ensuring, to a reasonable degree possible, that the person sending any material over the internet has the appropriate distribution rights. To ensure a virus-free environment, no program files may be downloaded from the internet without prior authorization.

Abuse of the Internet access provided by the Town of Poolesville is in violation of Town policy and, under certain circumstances, the law. Such abuse may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy that are the result of willful and/or gross negligence.

Workplace Monitoring

Workplace monitoring may be conducted by the Town of Poolesville to ensure quality control, employee safety, security, and customer satisfaction. Computers furnished to employees are the property of the Town. As such, computer usage and files may be monitored or accessed.

Additionally, the Town of Poolesville may conduct video surveillance of any of its premises, including (but not limited to) indoor workspaces, vehicles, and outdoor areas, as it deems appropriate.

Pay Day and Paychecks

The official payroll week begins every other Saturday and ends on the subsequent second Friday

- All employees will be paid bi-weekly, generally on the last day of the pay period
- Payroll is required to be made via direct deposit to the employee's bank account
- If a payday falls on a holiday, the Town will make every effort for you to receive your check on the working day before the holiday.
- If you have any questions about your paycheck, contact your supervisor immediately.
- Your wages are private. It is recommended not to discuss them with anyone except your supervisor.

Wage and Hour Rules

The Town of Poolesville has an approved compensation plan for its employees, with individual positions being classified according to the nature of the employment. The Town is committed to following all applicable minimum wage, overtime wage, child labor, and other wage and hour laws and regulations.

To ensure that all work performed for the Town is compensated correctly, it is essential that all work time is reported and recorded accurately. Every employee is responsible for this important recordkeeping task, both for yourself and for any employees whom you may supervise. If you have

questions about your classification, or any other wage and hour issues, consult with your supervisor or the Town Manager. Any problems or inaccuracies with recordkeeping in compensation should be reported promptly to your supervisor.

Timesheet Accuracy

To ensure you are paid accurately for each pay period, always record your starting time immediately at the start of your scheduled shift when you are in dress code and ready to work. Similarly, record the end of your shift with supervisor's acknowledgement (if needed) that you are finished for the day. Submission of a completed timesheet and/or acceptance of pay constitutes your acknowledgement that your timesheet accurately reflects your time worked, use of leave, overtime hours, etc. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Social Security

Social Security benefits provide a source of supplemental retirement income after you have reached a certain benchmark age. Federal law requires that you contribute a certain percentage of each paycheck, up to an annual maximum depending on your rate of pay. The Town of Poolesville matches this contribution, dollar for dollar, and then forwards the total amount to the Federal Government, where it is credited to your personal Social Security account. Please note that although the Town participates in contributing to your Social Security benefits, it cannot guarantee any specific eligibility or level of benefits that will be provided to you upon reaching the age of retirement. Employees of the Town may not opt out of Social Security benefits.

Work Week, Schedule, On-Call & Overtime

Your schedule will depend on the work area and position to which you are assigned. The following policies will help our operations run efficiently and to balance the workload to the extent possible.

- **Hours of Operation** - As a municipality with diverse responsibilities in serving residents, businesses and visitors, the various divisions of the Town of Poolesville maintain certain core hours (which may differ between divisions), but employees may be called upon to work at any time, 24 hours per day.
- **Your Availability** - Your availability should be given to your manager at the time of hire. Any changes to this availability should be given to your manager, in writing, and require approval.

In certain situations, you may be called in to work when you are not scheduled. Also, there may be times when you will be required to work beyond your scheduled hours. Your cooperation at these times is appreciated. You will be paid appropriately for your work, and you will be released as soon as the need for your services has passed.

- **Leave Requests** - Requests for scheduled time off must be submitted to your supervisor for approval. Whenever possible, this should be done at least one week in advance - two weeks in advance for requests of greater than seven days. Every effort will be made to honor all requests, but we cannot guarantee that all requests will be honored, depending

on the Town's operational needs. Unscheduled leave and/or absences are covered in the next section of this Handbook (see "Tardiness and Absences"), below.

Meal Period

All full-time employees will be provided one meal period of no less than 30 minutes in length each 8-hour workday unless otherwise required by any local, state, or federal laws. Reasonable effort will be made by the Town to ensure that employees will be relieved of active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods. Employees are compensated as time worked during meal periods.

On-Call Policy

Due to the critical nature of some Town operations, certain employees are required to be readily available to ensure continuity of service. A Town employee is considered "on-call" if they are (a) required to be available for work during off hours, (b) are specifically designated by their supervisor as being in an on-call status for a defined shift or period of time, and (c) cannot use their off-work time fully for their own purposes during that designated shift.

The various divisions of the Town are able to have differing on-call policies, but are all subject to the following basic provisions –

- An employee may receive a fixed amount of additional compensation (up to one hour, at their overtime rate, for each weekday that the employee is designate as on-call), regardless of whether they perform any work.
- There is no expectation that an employee must remain at their home while on-call, provided they are available within a reasonable response time, as determined by the Town in advance.
- An on-call employee who is called back to work outside his/her normal work schedule shall be paid for the time worked or a minimum of one hour, whichever is greater. Call back time should be recorded in quarter-hour increments. Time worked shall include travel time to report, through completion of the assignment.
- Time worked while on call will be calculated at the employee's regular rate of pay. Overtime compensation is applicable only when total hours worked exceed 40 hours per week, with the following exception -
 - An employee called back to work during any paid holiday will receive pay at double their normal rate, regardless of how many other hours are worked in that week.

Individual divisions desiring to amend or exceed the above require the approval of the Town Manager. Their approved, division-specific policies should be provided, in writing, to all eligible employees and staff should be promptly notified of any changes.

Overtime

All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior authorization for all employees. Overtime

assignments will be distributed as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work.

Overtime compensation is paid to all employees in accordance with federal and state wage and hour restrictions. Unless otherwise required by law, overtime pay shall be calculated based on actual hours worked and at the rate of one-and-one-half (1.5) times the regular wages. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performance overtime calculations.

With certain exceptions, overtime is paid only when an employee works over 40 hours in his/her workweek (see "On-Call Policy"). They will not be paid overtime for hours in excess of 8 hours per day, or for work on Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, or regular days of rest, if the 40-hour requirement has not been met.

Tardiness and Absences

Your attendance is critical to providing superior service to the Town of Poolesville. Each employee must arrive ready for work as scheduled. When you are absent, other employees must cover your responsibilities. It is very important that you contact your supervisor about every instance of tardiness or absence. Failure to report for your scheduled shift without calling your supervisor is considered job abandonment and could lead to termination.

If you will be late or absent due to an unexpected circumstance, make sure to call your supervisor and let him/her know immediately. Each time you are late, even with a valid excuse, it will be documented in your file. If you are ill or cannot report for your scheduled shift for any reason, you must call your supervisor prior to your start time – as early as possible, but generally no earlier than 5:00am. If a situation arises in which you know in advance that you will miss your shift, let your supervisor know immediately so that he/she can make the proper accommodations.

When you call to report tardiness or absence, it is preferred that you speak directly to your supervisor. Do not leave a message with any other employee. If you contact your supervisor via email or text message, it is your responsibility to ensure the message was received and acknowledged.

Consistent tardiness or absences will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

No call + No show = No job (Job Abandonment)

Please remember the following:

- It is your responsibility to arrive for work on time and notify your supervisor in advance of any absence, late arrival, or early departure.
- The Town of Poolesville management reserves the right to determine employees' schedules as its operations necessitate.

Dress and Appearance

As an employee of the Town of Pooleville, you are expected you to present a neat and clean appearance. If your department is required to wear a shirt with a "Town Staff" logo, it must be worn at all times, be clean, unwrinkled, unmodified (i.e. removal of sleeves), and in good condition without holes, tears or discolorations.

Field employees are provided an annual allowance for steel-toed boots and work pants. These must be worn at all times while on duty. The current (July 2022) annual allowance is \$100 for boots and \$200 for pants per field employee and is reimbursed to the employee, upon presentation of appropriate receipt(s), up to the annual maximum. This amount may be amended, from time to time, within the adopted Town budget.

You must arrive ready to work in your assigned uniform. If you do not arrive in your assigned uniform or with appropriate safety gear, you will be sent home, it will be documented in your file, and may lead to disciplinary action up to termination of employment.

The Town of Pooleville has no desire to implement an unreasonable dress code for staff. However, if a supervisor, member of management, or Commissioner determines an employee's appearance is inappropriate for the workplace, that employee may be sent home to change.

General Policies

Job Descriptions

Employees in each division will have duties assigned to them as generally described in their respective job descriptions. The Town of Pooleville reserves the right to modify job descriptions at any time and employees will be notified of any changes. No matter what department or position you are hired for, the operational needs of the Town take precedence over your individual position. You may be asked to work overtime or perform duties outside of your normal assignments, schedule or division.

Job Performance Evaluations

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. However, we understand that this is not always practical. Performance reviews are normally conducted every six (6) months; generally near the end of the fiscal year and again near the end of the calendar year. All performance reviews are based on merit, achievement, and performance in your position. Possible bonuses and salary increases may be based upon one or both reviews, and can also include dependability, attitude, and/or documented performance improvement over the review period.

You and your supervisor will discuss performance standards and objectives as well as your results compared to those standards during the previous review period. These meetings should be mutually beneficial, to identify and resolve problems and to document performance and growth opportunities.

Continual poor performance or failure to meet objectives set forth in the performance review and documented in writing by the supervisor may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Lost Check

If an employee is issued a live (non-payroll) check and then loses it, it is very important that they tell their supervisor immediately. He/she will contact the Town Clerk to place a stop payment on the check and make arrangements for another check to be issued. If the check is lost after being in the employee's possession, any costs incurred by the Town in re-issuing the check will be deducted from the replacement payment.

Media Relations

We believe that open and honest communication with the media (including social media outlets) is critical. If for some reason a member of the media visits or contacts you, refer them to the Town Manager, who will determine how to best address their inquiry.

Personal Belongings

The Town of Poolesville is not responsible for loss or theft of personal belongings. It is always best not to bring or store valuables in your workspace or vehicle. If you have any concerns about the security of your belongings, please discuss them with your supervisor and/or the Town Manager.

Personnel Records

We need to ensure that Town of Poolesville personnel records are correct and up to date, as the information in the records affects your pay, deductions, benefits, and other matters. You are ultimately responsible for the accuracy of the records in your file. For this reason, if you have a change in any of the items below, please notify your manager and/or the Town Clerk as soon as possible -

- Legal name
- Home address
- Any telephone numbers
- Emergency contact(s) information
- Number and status of dependents
- Marital status
- Exemptions on your Federal or State tax forms

Personnel records are stored confidentially. You may review your file at the discretion of the Town and in accordance with all relevant state and federal laws. The following guidelines apply:

- Requests must be submitted in writing to the Town Clerk and you will receive a response within 10 working days.
- Upon approval, you may view your file in the presence of a designated Town representative
- Unless mandated by law, you may not remove or alter any documents in the file

Phone calls, Cell phones & Texting

- Personal communication, including phone calls, emails and texts, are allowed, as a privilege, while at work so long as they don't unreasonably interfere with the performance of your job (in the sole determination of your supervisor)
- You should remind friends and family members accordingly
- The Town may also choose to contact you utilizing your cellular number, or via text. The Town will not be responsible for any additional charges that may be incurred, however.
- Abuse of this policy by any employee, as determined solely by the Town, may result in a personnel action limiting this privilege.

Smoking (including vaping & smokeless tobacco products)

- The Town of Poolesville is a “Smoke Free” workplace environment
- Smoking is not allowed inside any Town building or vehicle
- Smoking is not permitted while performing job duties

Use of Town Property

Town employees shall not use any Town facilities, property, vehicles, equipment, materials or personnel for any private purpose (whether for profit or not), or facilitate or permit such use by others, unless the use of such facilities, property, vehicles, equipment, materials or personnel is:

- Generally available to the public; or
- Authorized by a Town law or regulation; or
- Reasonably necessary in emergencies, with permission of the Town Manager

Public Relations and Information Disclosure

All information disclosed by, or on behalf of, the Town (for example, to media, real estate development firms, or the general public) must be accurate, complete, and consistent. If someone asks you for specific information, refer them to the Town Manager. Inquiries about former or current employees, such as reference requests or employment verification, should be referred to the Town Clerk. Do not attempt to answer these questions yourself unless advised to do so by a supervisor or the Town Manager. Be sure to advise your supervisor of the request.

If a member of the media, or someone else, appears unexpectedly at a Town of Poolesville function or facility and asks to shoot video, take photographs, or makes other inquiries, immediately notify your supervisor. Most of these activities are perfectly appropriate and this policy is not meant to hinder them. The Town of Poolesville management and elected officials simply desire to be informed of the activity, be cooperative, and to participate as appropriate.

Confidentiality

The Town of Poolesville is regularly made privy to confidential information. Vendors, residents, and other stakeholders may ask you to share this information. Town employees are not authorized to share confidential information with other employees or the general public and must direct inquiries to a supervisor.

If you have any questions regarding confidential information and who may have a need to know, you should always speak with your supervisor.

Outside Employment

If you are employed by the Town of Poolesville in a full-time position, generally working 30 hours per week or more, we consider your position here to be your primary employment and the priority for your working time. Any outside employment requires prior written authorization of the Town Manager and must not interfere with your ability to properly perform your job duties with us.

If you work for us part-time, less than 30 hours a week, you should inform your manager of your other employment to ensure it does not conflict with your employment with the Town. Written authorization is not required for part-time workers.

Your manager will inform you if, in the opinion of the Town of Poolesville, your outside employment appears to be a conflict. If your other job is determined to be a conflict, you may not be employed with the Town of Poolesville so long as you are employed in the conflicting job.

Additionally, you may not at any time take any outside job, either for pay or as a donation of your personal time, with a vendor or supplier of the town of Poolesville or any entity that is subject to the Town's regulatory or judicial authority; nor may you do work on your own if (in the sole discretion of the Town Manager) it competes with the Town of Poolesville's programs or activities in any way.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when a personal interest or activity interferes or appears to interfere with the duties that you perform at the Town of Poolesville. A conflict of interest may unconsciously influence you and even the appearance of a conflict may cause an employee's acts to be questioned. We all must avoid situations that affect or appear to affect our ability to act in the best interests of the Town of Poolesville.

You should carefully review your own situation for any potential conflicts of interest. You must disclose any conflicts or potential conflicts to your supervisor. In consultation with management, your supervisor will determine whether a conflict or potential conflict exists and whether any corrective action should be taken. All employees, with actual, potential, or apparent conflicts must remove themselves from the decision-making process with respect to the matter involving the conflict.

Some situations in which conflicts of interest may arise, and therefore should be avoided, are:

- Being employed by or operating a firm (including consulting) which does or desires to do business with the Town of Poolesville.
- Having any financial involvement directly or indirectly, or ownership of any interest in any organization by you or anyone in your immediate family, with whom the Town of Poolesville does business, including but not limited to: vendors, suppliers, or residents except with the Town of Poolesville specific prior knowledge and written consent.
- Engaging a family member or someone with whom you have a familial or personal relation to perform services for the Town of Poolesville.
- Entering the Town of Poolesville into contracts with relatives or household members or represent the Town of Poolesville in any transaction in which you or a related individual have a substantial personal interest.
- Acting on behalf of anyone besides the Town of Poolesville in any transaction with the Town (for example, helping someone sell products and/or services to the Town).

If you have any questions about whether participation or engagement in an organization with which the Town of Pooleville does business presents a risk of a possible conflict of interest, contact your supervisor or the Town Manager before entering such a relationship.

Personal Relationships/Fraternization Policy

The Town of Pooleville is committed to ensuring all employees are treated fairly and consistently. To avoid the potential for perceived preferential treatment, sexual harassment, or a conflict of interest, any relationship where a person is able to influence, either directly or indirectly, any decision concerning the terms and conditions of the subordinates' employment is prohibited.

The Town of Pooleville encourages positive working relationships among its employees, especially between supervisors and their direct and indirect reports. Sometimes these relationships also involve socializing or fraternization inside and outside the workplace. These activities can build better communication and trust between employees and supervisors, but they can also result in actual or perceived favoritism and other problems for the work group.

All supervisor/subordinate staff relationships must be strictly professional. If a personal relationship develops, both individuals are to notify their manager or the Town Manager immediately. We will attempt to accommodate the placement of one of the individuals in a non-conflicting position. However, if that is not possible, we may have no alternative but to terminate the employment of one or both of the individuals involved.

Social Media

The purpose of this policy is to provide our employees with requirements for participation in social media in which the Town's affiliation is known or presumed. These restrictions are intended to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory restrictions and privacy and confidentiality agreements. Social media includes items such as blogs, podcasts, discussion forums, and social networks.

Social Media is becoming a more common way to communicate and a tool for self-expression. These best practices will help you when participating in social media.

- Use a disclaimer: If you publish a blog, post a comment, or share an image and it relates to the work you do at the Town of Pooleville, make it clear that what you say is representative of your views and opinions and not the views and opinions of the Town of Pooleville.
- Get Approval: Do not announce Town news on your social media site. Do not cite or reference residents, clients, partners, or vendors without their approval. When the Town wishes to communicate publicly, whether to the marketplace or to the general public, it has well-established processes to do so. Only those officially designated by the Town of Pooleville have the authorization to speak on behalf of the Town.
- You must make sure you do not disclose or use Town of Pooleville confidential or proprietary information or that of any other person on any social media site.

- **Keep the Town informed:** If you see content on social media forums or online review sites, that disparage or reflect poorly on the Town, we ask that you notify the Town Manager. You should not attempt to reply to such postings or comment in any way.
- **Use your best judgment:** Remember that there are always consequences to what you write. If you're about to post something that makes you uncomfortable, think about why that is. If you're still unsure, and the post is about the Town of Poolesville business, feel free to discuss your proposed post with your supervisor. Ultimately, however, you have sole responsibility for what you choose to post online. You should make sure that social media does not interfere with your job or commitments to customer service.
- **Be professional:** The Town of Poolesville workforce members are directed that, as with all communications, statements made in the confines of private blogs, social media sites, or chat rooms must treat the Town and its employees, residents, and vendors with respect. Never identify a resident, client, partner, or vendor by name without permission and never discuss confidential details. Additionally, your social media site is not the place to conduct business with a client.
- **Be mindful of the world's longer memory:** Everything you say is likely to be indexed and stored indefinitely, either via search engines or through bloggers that reference your posts.

If the Town determines that you have violated your obligations under this policy (or other related provisions of this Handbook), it has the option to take steps which may include, among others, warnings, suspension, and/or termination.

The best way to avoid a conflict is to not engage in any social media activities that directly involve the Town of Poolesville other than through the official sites sponsored by the Town.

Intellectual Property, Proprietary Information & Records

Confidential Information

While employed at the Town of Poolesville, all employees gain some knowledge and information which is nonpublic and proprietary. Employees are trusted with maintaining the confidentiality of this information. Some information, if it were known outside the Town, it could potentially harm our residents, businesses, or employees (for example, the security of our water system).

Confidential information includes supplier information, our technologies, designs, formulas, business and marketing plans, and existing and future project information. Such information should be used only for Town purposes and should not be disclosed to anyone outside of the Town of Poolesville staff. Occasionally, some information that may be disclosed is provided under the auspices of a non-disclosure agreement, which must be approved by the Town Attorney and signed in advance.

Some basic rules to follow include:

- DON'T bring any papers or computer records from prior employers to the Town of Poolesville.
- DON'T accept or use anyone else's confidential information (or agree to maintain anyone's information in confidence).
- DON'T solicit confidential information from another present or former employee.

Other Intellectual Property

As an employee, the things you create for the Town of Poolesville belong to the Town. This “work product” includes inventions, discoveries, ideas, improvements, artwork, and works of authorship. This work product is Town property (and does not belong to you) if it is created or developed, in whole or in part, as part of your duties or using the Town of Poolesville resources or information. You may have rights to any invention for which no equipment, supplies, facility, or trade secret or confidential information of the Town was used and which was developed entirely on your own time.

Employees must promptly disclose to the Town of Poolesville, in writing, any such work product and cooperate with the Town’s efforts to obtain appropriate (patent, trademark, copyright, etc.) protection for the Town. To ensure that the Town of Poolesville receives the benefit of work done by outside consultants, it is essential that an appropriate agreement or release be in place before any work begins.

When the Town of Poolesville uses the work product of others, including art and music, we must also be sure to follow the rules. For example, you should only use software for which you have a valid license and should only use that software in accordance with the terms of the license for that software. Written materials and music may be subject to copyright protection and should only be copied when permitted. Use caution, as not all copyrighted materials bear a notice.

Town Records

The Town of Poolesville retains many records under a federally or state-approved records retention plan. Others are kept only for as long as the records are being actively used, unless the law or business needs require longer retention. This policy applies to records maintained in all forms at the Town of Poolesville, including records kept in written and electronic form.

The Town of Poolesville does not knowingly destroy or discard evidence or records that may be covered by a Public Information Request. Records relevant to a legal action cannot be destroyed or discarded without the approval of the Town Attorney. If The Town of Poolesville receives a subpoena, a request for records or other legal papers or if we have reason to believe that such a request or demand is likely, the Town’s policy is to retain all records which are relevant to the matter. If you receive such a request or other legal papers, notify your manager immediately.

Employee Benefits

Eligible employees at the Town of Poolesville are provided a wide range of benefits, including health coverage, paid time off, and retirement plans. Several programs (such as Social Security, workers' compensation, state disability, and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by federal, state and local law. Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Your supervisor can identify the programs for which you are eligible.

Health & Life Insurance

Medical/Hospital Insurance

Employer paid: The Town pays 85% of premium for employee and qualified family members to purchase the Local Government Insurance Trust - Cigna health benefit plan. Full plan description, including coverages and limits, is available from the Town Clerk.

Employees may select dental and/or vision insurance and must pay the full premiums.

Life Insurance (activated after the six (6) months probationary period)

Employer paid:

Life & AD&D: Two times earnings to \$180,000.00 (up until age 65, while actively employed)

Schedule of Benefits: \$180,000.00

Minimum Benefit: \$80,000.00

Retirement Plans

Retirement

Employer funded: 401 (a)

The employer will contribute 10% of base salary as budgeted for each fiscal year for each employee. Once the employee has six (6) months credited service with the Town of Pooleville, retirement will be contributed on the last day of the month preceding his or her six (6) months and will be retroactive to include all monies earned on the base salary of the employee. No payments will be made on overtime. Any merit or other adjustment made to the base salary within the fiscal year will be reflected in the retirement contribution.

Employee funded: 457

Employee may make pre-tax contributions to the IRS-sanctioned 457 retirement plan, up to applicable limits.

Vacation Time

Vacation time off with pay is available to eligible employees to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. Regular full-time employees are eligible to earn and use vacation time as described in this section. The Town of Poolesville may alter its vacation time policy at any time.

Employees are eligible to receive payment for vacation time after completing six months of continuous service. After completion of the first six months of service, leave is advanced at the appropriate rate as cited below. If employment is terminated before the end of the six months, employees will have no earned vacation pay.

After 6 months	5 days
1-5 years of service	10 days
6-10 years of service	15 days
11-15 years of service	20 days
16-20 years of service	25 days
21- years of service	30 days

Leave hours are available to the employee on July 1 of each fiscal year and is intended to be taken during the fiscal year in which it is advanced. Employees should monitor their leave usage to ensure they have sufficient hours when needed.

At the end of any fiscal year, up to 80 unused vacation hours may be “carried over” and added to the next fiscal year’s allocation. No more than 80 vacation hours may be carried over from one year to the next, however hours exceeding 80 will be added to the employee’s sick leave balance, which may accrue without limit.

If an employee voluntarily resigns after completing at least two years of service and provides a required notice of at least two full weeks, their unused vacation time will be paid. If the employee fails to provide the required notice, they will forfeit their vacation pay.

Vacation days may generally be used at the discretion of the employee, subject to the needs of Town operations. However, any vacation requests in excess of seven consecutive days must be submitted and approved no less than two weeks prior to the desired vacation. (see “Work Week, Schedule, Overtime & On Call”)

Holidays

The Town of Poolesville generally recognizes the schedule of federal holidays. The current schedule includes-

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday (Monday observance)
- George Washington's Birthday (Monday observance)
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth National Celebration
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Native American Heritage Day*
- Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, for most Town employees the preceding Friday will be treated as a holiday for pay and leave purposes. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, for most Town employees the following Monday will be treated as a holiday for pay and leave purposes.

**Not a federal holiday. Recognized by the Town on the day after Thanksgiving.*

Unemployment Insurance

The Town of Poolesville carries Unemployment Insurance for all employees. This is a cost that is covered by the Town; however, state law will determine your eligibility and benefits for unemployment compensation.

If you are eligible and become unemployed, you will receive weekly benefits based upon your previous earnings calculated over a certain number of calendar quarters preceding the time of your application for unemployment benefits. It is important to note that unemployment benefits are not guaranteed in the event of your termination. Certain scenarios (even times when you are terminated involuntarily) may preclude you from collecting unemployment benefits. Furthermore, nothing contained in this Handbook should be construed to limit the Town of Poolesville's ability to dispute unemployment benefit claims thought to be in bad faith or ineligible.

Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA) Policy

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Town voluntarily provides family and medical leave in accordance with the terms and conditions of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, even though it is not required to do so and may suspend, amend or terminate this policy at any time. You should contact your manager/supervisor as soon as you become aware of the need for FMLA Leave. Accepting other employment, continuing to work in another job, or filing for unemployment insurance benefits while on FMLA leave may be treated as a voluntary resignation from employment, unless you and the Town have agreed otherwise in writing.

Employee Eligibility

To be eligible for FMLA Leave benefits, you must:

- Have worked for the Town for a total of at least 12 consecutive months; and
- Have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months as of the start of the leave

Reason for Leave

Because an employee's rights and obligations may vary depending upon the reason for the FMLA Leave, it is important to identify the purpose or reason for the leave. FMLA Leave may be used for one of the following reasons:

- The birth or adoption of a son or daughter, or placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care ("Bonding Leave") (eligibility for this type of leave expires 12 months after the birth, adoption, or placement);
- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition ("Family Care Leave");
- An employee's inability to work because of a serious health condition ("Serious Health Condition Leave");
- A "qualifying exigency," as defined under the FMLA, arising out of a spouse's, child's, or parent's active duty or call to active duty in a foreign country as a member of the Armed Forces or Reserves ("Military Emergency Leave"); or
- To care for a spouse, child, parent, or next of kin (as defined under the FMLA) who is a member or eligible veteran of the Armed Forces who has incurred or aggravated a serious injury or illness in the line of duty, as defined by the FMLA ("Military Caregiver Leave").

Length of Leave

The maximum amount of FMLA Leave is twelve (12) workweeks in any 12-month period when the leave is taken for: (1) Bonding Leave; (2) Family Care Leave; (3) Serious Health Condition Leave; and/or (4) Military Emergency Leave. However, if both spouses work for the Town and are eligible for leave under this policy, the spouses will be limited to a total of 12 workweeks of FMLA leave between the two of them when the leave is for Bonding Leave or to care for a parent using Family Care Leave. A 12- month period begins on the date of your first use of FMLA Leave. Successive 12-month periods commence on the date of your first use of such leave after the preceding 12-month period has ended.

The maximum amount of FMLA Leave for an employee wishing to take Military Caregiver Leave will be a combined leave total of twenty-six (26) workweeks in a single 12-month period. A "single 12-month period" begins on the date of your first use of such leave and ends 12 months after that date.

For example, you take 12 workweeks of FMLA leave to bond with a newly adopted child. Later, but within the 12 months after you took the first FMLA leave, you wish to take FMLA leave to care for a spouse, child, parent or next of kin under the Military Caregiver Leave provision of this policy. Because the law allows extra time off for Military Caregiver Leave, you will be allowed to take this time off, so long as the total amount of leave does not exceed 26 workweeks.

If both spouses work for the Town and are eligible for leave under this policy, the spouses will be limited to a total of 26 workweeks off between the two when the leave is for Military Caregiver Leave only or is for a combination of:

- i. Military Caregiver Leave; and
- ii. Military Emergency Leave, Bonding Leave, and/or Family Care Leave.

Under some circumstances, you may take FMLA Leave intermittently—which means taking leave in blocks of time, or by reducing your normal weekly or daily work schedule. Leave taken intermittently may be taken in increments of one (1) hour or more.

Bonding, Family Care, and Serious Health Conditions Leave Requirements

Employees may be required to provide:

- 30-day advance notice when the need for the leave is foreseeable.
- Advance notice within one or two business days after learning of the need for leave when the leave is not foreseeable;
- When the leave relates to medical issues, a completed Certification of Health-Care Provider form within 15 calendar days (these forms are available from the Benefits Administrator); and
- Periodic reports during the leave.

At the Town's expense, the Town may also require a second or third medical opinion regarding your own serious health condition. Employees are expected to cooperate with the Town in obtaining additional medical opinions that the Town may require.

When leave is for planned medical treatment, you must try to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the Town's operation. Contact your Benefits Administrator or Employee Relations Advisor prior to scheduling planned medical treatment.

Failure to Provide Certification to Return from Leave

Absent unusual circumstances, failure to comply with these notice and certification requirements may result in a delay or denial of the leave. If you fail to return to work at your leave's expiration and have not obtained an extension of the leave, the Town will assume that you do not plan to return to work and have voluntarily terminated your employment. Employees are expected to provide prompt notice to the Town of any change(s) to an employee's return to work date.

Benefits During Leave

The Town will continue making contributions for your group health insurance during your leave on the same terms as if you had continued to work. This means that if you want your insurance coverage to continue during your leave, you must also continue to make any premium payments that are due.

Employees who fail to pay their share of health insurance premiums in a timely manner may, after notice, be terminated from the group health insurance plan, and the termination may be retroactive to the last date their share of the premiums were paid in full. In some instances, the Town may recover premiums it paid to maintain health insurance coverage if the employee fails to return to work following FMLA Leave.

Your length of service as of the leave will remain intact, but accrued benefits such as vacation and sick leave will not accrue while on an unpaid FMLA Leave. Further, you will not be eligible for paid holidays which may occur during the leave.

Job Reinstatement

Under most circumstances, you will be reinstated to the same position held at the time of the leave or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and

conditions. However, you have no greater right to reinstatement than if you had been continuously employed rather than on leave.

For example, if you would have been laid off had you not gone on leave, or if your position has been eliminated during the leave, then you will not be entitled to reinstatement. Prior to being allowed to return to work, an employee wishing to return from a Serious Health Condition Leave must submit documentation from his/her health care provider that certifies the employee can perform the essential functions of the job, with or without accommodation.

“Essential employees,” as defined by law, may be subject to reinstatement limitations in some circumstances. If you are a “key employee,” you will be notified of the possible limitations on reinstatement at the time you request a leave.

Disability Accommodations

The Town of Poolesville is committed to fully complying with the Americans and Disabilities Act (ADA) and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws to ensure equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. Our hiring procedures provide an opportunity for persons with disabilities to have meaningful employment. Pre-employment inquiries are made only regarding an applicant's ability to perform the duties of the position. Post-offer medical examinations may be required for those positions in which there is a bona fide job-related physical requirement; however, they are given to all persons entering the position only after conditional job offers. Medical records will be kept separate and will be held strictly confidential.

Reasonable accommodations are available to all disabled employees, where their disability affects the performance of job functions. All employment decisions are based on the merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual. Qualified individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal pay and other forms of compensation (or changes in compensation) as well as in job assignments, classifications, organizational structures, position descriptions, lines of progression, and seniority lists. Leave of all types will be available to all employees on an equal basis.

Military Leave

A military leave of absence not related to FMLA Military Emergency Leave (see “Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA) Policy”) will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advance notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice, or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable. The leave will be unpaid. However, employees may use any available paid time off for the absence.

Continuation of health insurance benefits is available as required by USERRA based on the length of the leave and subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible.

Employees on military leave for up to 30 days are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of service, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement in accordance with USERRA and all applicable state laws. Employees returning from military leave will be placed in the position they would have attained had they remained continuously employed or a comparable one depending on the length of military service in accordance with USERRA. They will be treated as though they were continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service. Contact the Town Manager for more information or questions about military leave.

Paid Sick Leave

Sick leave is earned by full-time employees at the rate of one (1) day per month, with unlimited accumulation. Leave will be accounted, accumulated, and maintained in increments of hours and cannot be used in lieu of any other type of leave. Sick leave will not be earned for any month in which an employee is absent for illness for more than ten (10) days.

Sick leave can be used for the following reasons:

- Personal illness
- Quarantine
- Medical appointments
- Birth of a child.
- Illness of a parent, spouse or child
- Other situations or appointment reasonably related to the employee's (or dependents) health

Three (3) days of consecutive sick leave taken will require a doctor's written excuse.

Employees who desire to use five (5) or more days of sick leave consecutively shall submit a certificate from a physician or other licensed medical or dental practitioner confirming the employee's ability to return to work.

Three (3) non-consecutive sick days taken within a one-month period may constitute a written reprimand and/or further disciplinary action at the discretion of the Town, depending on the individual circumstances.

Employees experiencing a serious health condition, and who have used their entire sick leave balance, may request donation of additional sick leave hours from fellow employees. Such donations are strictly voluntary, may be donated anonymously, if desired by the donor, and are made on an hour-for-hour basis, regardless of rate of pay.

Upon retirement, and after at least ten (10) years of service with the Town of Poolesville, accrued sick leave hours will be paid to the employee, in a lump sum (at their hourly rate of pay at that time), equal to 25% of their accrued sick leave hours. (For example, an employee who retires with 200 hours of sick leave will be paid for 50 hours at the final rate of pay.)

Worker's Compensation & Disability Insurance

Workers Compensation

The Town of Poolesville provides Worker's Compensation Insurance in accordance with federal, state, and local laws for employees who may become injured on the job during the course of employment. If an employee has been injured while performing work duties, the employee must notify a supervisor and follow the Town's worker's compensation procedures. The following are only the general limits/descriptions of coverage and are subject to change. See the Town Clerk for complete details.

Disability Insurance

The Town also provides (after six (6) months credited service) employer-paid short term and long-term disability insurance.

Short Term Disability:

8th day accident/8th day sickness

Weekly Benefit: 60% up to \$700

Benefit Duration: 12 weeks

Long Term Disability:

90 days

Definition of disability: 2 years own occupation

Benefit Schedule: 60% of monthly earnings (up to a defined monthly maximum)

Pre-existing Condition Limit: This limitation applies to conditions for which an employee receives medical services within 3 months of the effective date of coverage. No benefits are payable for a disability resulting from such a condition until the employee has been covered for 3 consecutive months with no medical care for the condition, or until the employee has been covered for 12 consecutive months.

Mental & Nervous Limit: 24 months unless hospital confined

Survivor Benefit: 3-month benefit

Jury Duty Leave

We encourage employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when called. Employees may request paid jury duty leave for up to five (5) days of absence while actually serving on a jury (not on stand-by status). Appropriate proof of service is required. Employees may also use any available paid time off, if needed, to complete their service. Regardless, employees must show the jury duty summons to their supervisor as soon as possible so that the supervisor may make arrangements to accommodate their absence. Employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Employment at Will

Your employment with the Town of Poolesville is “at-will” and does not guarantee any specific terms or length of employment. The “at-will” employment relationship is one that is voluntarily entered into by both parties. This means that you, the employee, are free to resign at will at any time, with or without cause; and similarly, the Town of Poolesville may terminate the employment relationship at will, at any time, with or without notice or cause.

Progressive Discipline

The Town of Poolesville’s best interests lie in fair treatment of all employees and in ensuring that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future. The Town of Poolesville may use progressive discipline at its discretion; however, the Town maintains its right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause or advance notice.

Progressive discipline means that, with respect to most disciplinary problems, these steps will normally be followed: a first offense may call for a verbal warning; a next offense may be followed by a written warning; another offense may lead to a suspension; and a subsequent offense may then lead to termination of employment. If more than 3 months have passed since the last disciplinary action, the process will normally start over, unless the employee has been notified otherwise beforehand.

Disciplinary action may call for any of four steps -- verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment -- depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences. Additionally, there may be circumstances when steps are bypassed, and/or it is necessary to terminate an employee without going through the usual progressive discipline steps. By using progressive discipline, we hope that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and the Town of Poolesville.

Justification for Reprimand, Probation and/or Termination

Reasons for reprimand or personnel action up to and including termination include (but are not limited) to:

- Any act that endangers the safety or health of others
- Careless, negligent, or improper use of authority
- Conviction of a crime that impairs the desirability of continued employment
- Illegal destruction of property
- Discourtesy to an employee, resident or vendor
- Reporting for work in an impaired state (from any legal or illegal cause)
- Failure to carry out any order given by a management representative, including refusal to do assigned work and other acts of insubordination
- Failure to maintain satisfactory and harmonious working relationships with the public or other employees

- Failure to promptly report work related injury or accidents
- Failure to report to work without notification (voluntary resignation); job abandonment
- Falsifying a time-keeping record, business expense report or other report, record or work-related document
- Releasing confidential information without written authority
- Foul and abusive language
- Gambling on the Town of Poolesville property
- Working overtime without prior approval from the supervisor
- Intentional violation of safety and/or sanitation rules
- Intentionally giving false or misleading employment information
- Conduct unbecoming of an employee and/or detrimental to the image of the Town of Poolesville (including on social media)
- Allowing non-employees to work for the Town of Poolesville
- Allowing or requiring employees (or non-employees) to work off the clock
- Performing personal business on Town time
- Smoking in prohibited areas (see “General Policies” “Smoking”)
- The possession or use of any kind of weapon or other dangerous instrument not directly used for work purposes on the Town premises
- Theft of property
- Unauthorized or improper use of any type of leave
- Unauthorized use of Town equipment
- Unsatisfactory job performance
- Violation of Town rules, regulations, policies, and procedures
- Violation of no solicitation/no distribution rules

The Town premises include all buildings, grounds and parking areas used by the Town of Poolesville to conduct its business. Aiding or abetting any of the listed offenses will result in the same corrective action as the offense involved. If three offenses occur that merit a written warning or a final written warning within a rolling six-month period, termination could occur regardless of the offense. However, depending on the severity of the offense, termination could occur without warning.

Conducting any of the following offenses, in the sole determination of the Town of Poolesville, will result in immediate termination:

- Drinking or illegal drug use prior to your shift or during work hours, or performing work in an impaired state
- Conviction of illegally selling, or possessing any controlled substance
- Theft, fraud, embezzlement, or other proven acts of dishonesty including falsifying documentation.
- Job abandonment, the failure to report to work for scheduled shift without properly notifying immediate supervisor, or failing to submit required documentation, medical or other, requested by the Town.
- Violence, threats or harassment (sexual or otherwise), willful destruction of property, theft, or dishonesty towards the Town of Poolesville, its residents, or its Employees
- Any harassment of another Employee (verbal, physical, written, or visual) including sexual harassment such as offensive gestures, unwelcome advances, jokes, touching, or comments made to or about another employee, manager, vendor or customer.

- Any other act or circumstance that, in the sole determination of the Town, constitute grounds for termination

Safety Policy

The Town of Pooleville will provide appropriate safety gear to field employees. The Town is committed to providing all employees with a clean, safe, and healthy work environment in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. To achieve this goal, we must recognize our shared responsibilities to follow all safety rules and practices, to cooperate with officials who enforce those rules and practices, to take necessary steps to protect ourselves and other employees, to attend required safety training, and to report immediately all accidents, injuries and unsafe practices or conditions.

Accident Prevention

We all have a responsibility to each other to make the Town of Pooleville a safe place to work. If you see any unsafe situation or practice, report it to your supervisor immediately.

Following are some examples of situations that must always be reported to your manager:

- Wet or slippery floors or stairs
- Equipment that is partially or fully blocking traffic areas
- Exposed or unsafe wires or switches
- Exposed sharp edges of any type
- Equipment that is or appears to be defective
- Anything that poses a fire hazard

If you have or observe an accident involving a personal injury, even if it appears minor, report it to your supervisor promptly.

Town employees must adhere to the following guidelines to prevent accident or injury:

- Immediately report to your supervisor any condition or practice that appears unsafe.
- Operate only equipment that you are trained and authorized to use.
- Do not block fire corridors or fire exit doors. Furniture, equipment, or electrical cords may not be stored in front of exit doors.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of all fire extinguishers in all areas of our buildings.
- Approach stairwells and intersections carefully. Do not run in the building.
- Familiarize yourself with emergency evacuation procedures.
- Do not bring unauthorized visitors or children into our building.
- Immediately report to your supervisor injuries to yourself, fellow employees, or visitors, however minor. Your supervisor will assist in arranging for appropriate medical attention.
- If you are injured on the job, you may be entitled to benefits under Workers' Compensation law. The Town of Pooleville carries Workers' Compensation insurance and will assist you in getting all of the benefits to which you are entitled. To ensure that you receive these benefits, when necessary, report every accident or injury, no matter how minor, to your supervisor immediately, if possible, and no later than the end of your

scheduled work shift.

Policy Against Workplace Violence

The Town is committed to providing and maintaining a safe workplace. In keeping with this commitment, we have a zero-tolerance policy regarding actual or threatened violence against co-workers, residents, or any other persons whom our employees have contact in the course of their duties.

We expect all employees and persons who have contact with our employees to perform their duties and conduct themselves in a professional manner and to refrain from threatening, disruptive, and/or violent behavior. The Town prohibits all forms of violent, threatening, or disruptive behavior made by or against any employee of the Town or any other person on the premises who have contact with Town employees during the course of their duties.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Threats of violence
- Use of abusive language
- Making annoying or threatening phone calls, emails, or other communications
- Displaying or threatening the use of weapons
- Harassment (sexual or otherwise)
- Destroying Town property
- Using or attempting to use actual physical violence against another person

This also includes any other conduct that the Town of Pooleville determines endangers the safety or well-being of any employee or any other person on the premises who may have contact with Town employees during the course of their duties.

Any person who engages in conduct deemed to have violated this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

If an employee is in fear of imminent danger – he or she should call 911 immediately. In a non-emergency situation, any action that causes an employee to feel unsafe should be reported to the supervisor. Truthful reporting of violations of this policy will not subject any employee to retaliation, discipline, or reprisal of any kind.

Substance Abuse and Weapons

In order to promote the safety of our employees, residents, and vendors, the Town of Pooleville has a strict policy regarding substance abuse and weapons. Employees are not permitted to use or possess alcoholic beverages on the Town property at any time, including at Town-sponsored social events where the Town permits alcohol. You also may not use or possess illegal drugs or controlled substances on the Town of Pooleville property or while you are engaged in any job-related activity. Employees may not report to work with alcohol or illegal drugs or controlled substances in their system. Employees may not have or possess any weapon while on Town of Pooleville property, to the extent allowed by law and the provisions of this Handbook.

The Town of Pooleville is committed to providing a safe, efficient, and productive work environment for all employees. Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job may pose serious safety and health risks. To help ensure a safe and healthful working environment, job applicants and employees may be asked to provide body substance samples (such as urine) to determine the illicit or illegal use of drugs and alcohol. This can be done either as a pre-employment condition or under "reasonable suspicion" of the supervisor (which shall be documented, in writing, to the Town Manager). Refusal to submit to drug testing may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

At the discretion of the supervisor, in consultation with the Town Manager, drug testing may be required after any accident, vehicle or workplace, and appropriate action will follow. The employee must report for such testing, accompanied by his/her supervisor (or designee of the Town Manager), at a location chosen by the Town promptly, and must follow all directions of the facility needed to determine any possible impairment. Time spent undergoing drug testing is considered paid hours, including for the supervisor.

Professional Development

The Town of Pooleville provides an opportunity for employees to improve their skills through continuing education as long as the class, course of study or certification is beneficial to the Town. This benefit is subject to available funding. Hours spent receiving Town-funded training during non-work time will not be paid. Employees are required to repay any associated fees if they leave Town employment prior to the completion of one (1) year of work following the end of the class/training.

The supervisor and the Town Manager may also approve training that can be completed during scheduled work hours. If approved, such hours will be considered paid time.

Termination of Employment

Voluntary resignation occurs when an employee leaves his or her employment with the Town of Pooleville or fails to report to work without notice to, or approval by, his/her supervisor. All Town-owned property including keys and uniforms must be returned immediately upon termination of employment. If an employee is terminated from his or her position, all wages due at the time of termination will be paid in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

Involuntary resignation occurs when an employee is terminated with or without cause. Upon termination, all Town-owned property including keys and uniforms must be returned immediately upon termination of employment. Employees will be paid all wages due at the time of termination.

Poolesville will promptly issue an employee's final pay and does not withhold from the final paycheck except where legally allowed and subject to the provisions of this Handbook.

Review

This Handbook contains general information and guidelines. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to cover all possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. If you have specific questions regarding how the content provided in this Handbook applies to you, please direct your questions to your supervisor or the Town Manager.

This Handbook is not an employment agreement or contract. It does not guarantee any specific terms and conditions of employment. Your employment is "at will" and is not for any specific length of time. You may resign at any time, without prior notice, and for any reason. In addition, The Town of Poolesville may terminate your employment at any time, without prior notice, and for any reason (except as prohibited by applicable law).

If a provision of this Handbook conflicts with a federal, state, or local law, the provisions of the law will apply. Contact management if you have questions on specific laws.

The policies, procedures, practices, and benefits contained herein may be modified or discontinued at any time. This Handbook supersedes any previous handbooks or policies relating to the subject matter covered in this Handbook.

Waiver

The provisions of this Employee Handbook cannot be waived. The Town of Poolesville management does not have the authority to approve waivers to this Employee Handbook.

Receipt of The Town of Poolesville Employee Handbook

I acknowledge that I have received and have had an opportunity to read a copy of the Town of Poolesville Employee Handbook. I understand that this Handbook is solely for the purpose of summarizing the Town of Poolesville's current policies, benefits and rules, **that it is not a contract or enforceable promise or guarantee of any kind, whether of employment or of any specific terms or conditions of employment or procedural rights**, and that any or all portions of this Handbook may be amended or eliminated from time to time without advance notice.

Employee Name

Date

Employee Signature