

The City of Ocala Employee Handbook



February 17, 2026

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK/DISCLAIMER

We prepared this handbook to help employees find the answers to many questions that they may have regarding their employment with the City of Ocala. Please take the necessary time to read it.

We do not expect this handbook to answer all questions. Supervisors and Human Resources also serve as a major source of information.

Neither this handbook nor any other verbal or written communication by a management representative is, nor should it be considered to be, an agreement, contract of employment, express or implied, or a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation, nor does it confer any contractual rights whatsoever. The City of Ocala adheres to the policy of employment at will, which permits the City or the employee to end the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without reason or notice.

No City representative other than City Manager may modify at-will status and/or provide any special arrangement concerning terms or conditions of employment in an individual case or generally and any such modification must be in a signed writing.

Many matters covered by this handbook, such as benefit plan descriptions, are also described in separate City documents. These City documents are always controlling over any statement made in this handbook or by any member of management.

This handbook states only general City guidelines. The City may, at any time, in its sole discretion, modify or vary from anything stated in this handbook, with or without notice, except for the rights of the parties to end employment at will, which may only be modified by an express written agreement signed by the employee and City Manager.

This handbook is subject to the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

This handbook supersedes all prior handbooks.

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Section 1 - GOVERNING PRINCIPLES OF EMPLOYMENT

1-1 Introduction

The City of Ocala values the talents and abilities of our employees and seeks to foster an open, cooperative and dynamic environment in which employees and the City alike can thrive. The City of Ocala Employee Handbook establishes policies, procedures, benefits and working conditions that will be followed by all City of Ocala employees. This Employee Handbook is not a contract of employment, nor is it intended to create contractual obligations for the City of any kind.

The policies and procedures outlined in this Employee Handbook will be applied at the discretion of the City of Ocala. The City reserves the right to withdraw or change the policies, procedures, benefits and working conditions described in this handbook at any time, for any reason and without prior notice.

1-2 Vision Statement

VISION STATEMENT

To make Ocala a great place to live, play, and prosper

MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Ocala provides fiscally responsible services consistent with the community's current and future expectations

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS

Customer Focus

Efficiency

Quality of Work

Integrity

Teamwork

Job Knowledge

Leadership

1-3 City of Ocala Government

CITY OF OCALA GOVERNMENT

The City of Ocala operates under a Council-Manager form of government. It is governed by a five-member Council comprised of five elected Council Members, and an elected non-voting Mayor. The City Manager is appointed by the City Council to manage all day-to-day operations of the City, with the exception of the Police Department. The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the City. The Mayor has charge and control of the Police Department and accordingly, the Chief of Police receives direction from the Mayor.

The City Council is the lawmaking body and sets the policy for matters over which the municipal government has jurisdiction. Our City operates under a City Charter that may be revised by City Ordinance and/or voter referendum. A majority of the Council constitutes a quorum, and they can take official action. The Mayor can veto any Ordinance adopted by the City Council within ten days after such adoption, and City Council can override a veto with a four-fifths vote of the Council.

The City Council appoints members of various advisory boards, commissions, and committees to assist in the operation of city government. The members of these boards, commissions and committees are volunteers and receive no compensation.

1-4 Equal Employment Opportunity

The City of Ocala is an Equal Opportunity Employer that does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, color, religion, alienage or national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, disability or handicap, sex, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, arrest record, ethnic background, pregnancy, political affiliation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws. The City of Ocala does not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on protected characteristics from supervisors, co-workers, citizens or customers. Nor does the City of Ocala tolerate retaliation against employees who report violations of this policy. For reporting information, contact any supervisor or Human Resources. Our management team is dedicated to this policy with respect to recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, training, compensation, benefits, employee activities and general treatment during employment.

Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities: The City will make reasonable accommodations, as required by law, for the known physical or mental disabilities of an otherwise qualified applicant or employee, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship upon the City's business operations. An accommodation is not reasonable if, among other things, even with the accommodation, the employee is unable to perform essential job duties in a manner that would not endanger the employee's health or safety of the employee or others.

Any applicant or employee who believes they require an accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of the job should contact the Employee's Supervisor and/or Human Resources/Risk Management to request such an accommodation. Employees should specify what accommodation they need to perform the job and submit supporting medical documentation explaining the underlying physical or mental disability and the basis for the requested accommodation. The City then will review and analyze the request, including engaging in an interactive process with the employee or applicant, to identify if such an accommodation can be made. The City will evaluate requested accommodations, and as appropriate, identify other possible accommodations, if any. The employee will be notified of the City's decision regarding the request within a reasonable period. The City treats all medical information submitted as part of the accommodation process in a confidential manner.

The City will endeavor to accommodate the sincere religious beliefs of its employees to the extent such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on the City's operations. If employees wish to request such an accommodation, they should contact the Employee's Supervisor and/or Human Resources/Risk Management.

Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Employee's Supervisor and/or Human Resources/Risk Management. The City will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of equal employment opportunity. If employees feel they have been subjected to any such retaliation, they should contact the Employee's Supervisor and/or Human Resources/Risk Management. To ensure our workplace is free of artificial barriers, violation of this policy including any improper retaliatory conduct will lead to discipline, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

1-5 Non-Harassment

It is the City of Ocala's policy to prohibit intentional and unintentional harassment of any individual by another person on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, color, religion, alienage or national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, disability or handicap, sex, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, arrest record, ethnic background, pregnancy, political affiliation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate our employees' personal morality, but to ensure that in the workplace, no one harasses another individual.

If the employee feels that he or she has been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, he or she should immediately report the matter to Human Resources. If the employee is unable for any reason to contact this person, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of what the employee perceives to be harassment, the employee should contact any member of management. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, the employee should contact any higher-level manager in his or her reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated, and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the City will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. If the employee

feels he or she has been subjected to any such retaliation, he or she should report it in the same manner in which the employee would report a claim of perceived harassment under this policy. Violation of this policy including any improper retaliatory conduct will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

1-6 Sexual Harassment

It is the City of Ocala's policy to prohibit harassment of any employee by any supervisor, employee, customer or vendor on the basis of sex or gender. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate personal morality within the City. It is to ensure that at the City all employees are free from sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what types of conduct could constitute sexual harassment, examples of prohibited behavior include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, obscene gestures, displaying sexually graphic magazines, calendars or posters, sending sexually explicit e-mails, text messages and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as uninvited touching of a sexual nature or sexually related comments. Depending upon the circumstances, improper conduct also can include sexual joking, vulgar or offensive conversation or jokes, commenting about the employee's physical appearance, conversation about one's own or someone else's sex life, or teasing or other conduct directed toward a person because of their sex or gender which is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an unprofessional and hostile working environment.

If the employees feel they have been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, they should immediately report the matter to Human Resources. If unable for any reason to contact this person, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of perceived harassment, the employee should contact any member of management. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, the employee should contact any higher-level manager in their reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated, and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the City will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. If the employees feel they have been subjected to any such retaliation, they should report it in the same manner in which a claim of perceived harassment would be reported under this policy. Violation of this policy including any improper retaliatory conduct will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

1-7 Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

To help ensure a safe, healthy and productive work environment for our employees and others, to protect City property, and to ensure efficient operations, the City of Ocala has adopted a policy of maintaining a workplace free of drugs and alcohol. This policy applies to all employees and other individuals who perform work for the City.

The unlawful or unauthorized use, abuse, solicitation, theft, possession, transfer, purchase, sale or distribution of controlled substances (including medical marijuana), drug paraphernalia or alcohol by

an individual anywhere on City premises, while on City business (whether or not on City premises) or while representing the City, is strictly prohibited. Employees and other individuals who work for the City also are prohibited from reporting to work or working while they are using or under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substances, which may impact the employee's ability to perform their job or otherwise pose safety concerns, except when the use is pursuant to a licensed medical practitioner's instructions and the licensed medical practitioner authorized the employee or individual to report to work. However, this exception does not extend any right to report to work under the influence of medical marijuana or to use medical marijuana as a defense to a positive drug test, to the extent the employee is subject to any drug testing requirement, except as permitted by and in accordance with applicable law. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

The City maintains a policy of non-discrimination and will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations to assist individuals recovering from substance and alcohol dependencies, and those who have a medical history which reflects treatment for substance abuse conditions. However, employees may not request an accommodation to avoid discipline for a policy violation. We encourage employees to seek assistance before their substance abuse or alcohol misuse renders them unable to perform the essential functions of their jobs or jeopardizes the health and safety of any City employee, including themselves.

Employees will report, to their immediate or other chain-of-command supervisor, the use of any medication that could reasonably be expected to impair their ability to perform their duties, prior to, or upon reporting for duty. Any employee who is required to drive a personal or City vehicle in the performance of their job duties who is cited, arrested, or charged with any criminal drug or alcohol related offense shall notify their department director within 24 hours.

Drug/Alcohol Testing Policy – All safety-sensitive employees and prospective safety-sensitive employees must participate in testing for the presence of drugs or alcohol as a condition of hire or continued employment. The use of medical cannabis is not permitted for safety-sensitive employees for any reason. All employees must disclose the use of prescription medications that may affect their ability to perform their job safely, before reporting for duty. For non-safety-sensitive employees use of medical cannabis is permitted only when legally prescribed; however, impairment while on duty is expressly prohibited. Failing or refusing to take a test, a confirmed positive drug and/or alcohol test result or failure to disclose such prescriptions when required shall be deemed a violation of this policy. The City will exclude from employment any job applicant who refuses to abide by the terms of this policy. Any applicant with a confirmed positive drug test may not reapply for employment with the City for one (1) year from the date of such result.

Reasonable Suspicion (For Cause) Testing - An employee may be required to submit to a drug test when reasonable suspicion arises and the employee's supervisor, manager, or department director and a City designee concur that reasonable suspicion exists. The City designees are the Human Resources and Risk Management Director and Assistant Director. Once the authorized supervisors have determined that reasonable suspicion exists, testing shall be done as soon as practical. The employee shall be driven to the facility by the supervisor or his or her designee. The employee may be placed on paid administrative leave until the results of the test are available if deemed in the best interest of the City. The supervisor shall make arrangements or help the employee make arrangements to get home without driving him or herself.

Post-Accident Testing - Post-accident testing will be conducted on employees involved in the

following incidents:

- Treatment for a worker's compensation injury at a medical facility (either outpatient or in-patient); or
- A traffic accident involving bodily injury to any party, a collision with any pedestrian or person on a non-motorized device, or a police estimate of total property damage of \$1,000.00 or more; or
- Any event or incident estimated by the employee's supervisor to involve property loss or damage of \$1,000.00 or more.
 - Such testing will occur as soon as practical after the accident.
 - The employee's immediate supervisor and the Human Resources/Risk Management Director or Assistant Director shall be notified of all such incidents.

Random Testing - For purposes of maintaining safety and as a deterrent to drug and alcohol abuse, safety sensitive employees are subject to random drug and alcohol testing.

Testing Protocols

- Any drug or alcohol testing shall occur during or immediately after the regular work period of current employees and shall be deemed time worked for purposes of compensation and benefits for current employees.
- The City shall pay all costs of testing and transportation associated with a test required by the City.
- The information received from drug testing shall be the property of the City.
- Upon City receipt of the test results, Human Resources/Risk Management shall, as soon as practical, notify the person tested, by telephone or in writing, of the test results.

Employees required to Hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) - Those employees required by their employment at the City of Ocala to hold a CDL shall be tested as required by federal and/or state law.

- CDL post-accident testing is only conducted if the employee, during the drug testing window, is cited for a contributory moving violation or if another person is a fatality. All other post-accident testing will be done under the City's drug/alcohol testing policy.
- Any reasonable suspicion testing decision must be made by an officially trained supervisor, and a City designee must concur.
- Random drug testing is conducted just before, during, or just after performance of CDL duties.
- Rehabilitation testing, if offered by the City, shall meet CDL requirements.

Rehabilitation Testing - If the City returns an employee to work after he or she has enrolled in a rehabilitation program for drug or alcohol abuse and has successfully completed the rehabilitation program, such employee may be entered into a program of unannounced drug and alcohol testing for a predetermined period of time at the sole discretion of the City.

1-8 Workplace Violence

The City of Ocala is strongly committed to providing a safe workplace. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the risk of personal injury to employees and damage to City and personal property.

The City of Ocala does not expect employees to become experts in psychology or to physically subdue a threatening or violent individual. Indeed, the City of Ocala specifically discourages employees from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual. However, the City of Ocala does expect and encourage employees to exercise reasonable judgment in identifying potentially dangerous situations.

Experts in the mental health profession state that prior to engaging in acts of violence, troubled individuals often exhibit one or more of the following behaviors or signs: over-resentment, anger and hostility; extreme agitation; making ominous threats such as bad things will happen to a particular person, or a catastrophic event will occur; sudden and significant decline in work performance; irresponsible, irrational, intimidating, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behavior; reacting to questions with an antagonistic or overtly negative attitude; discussing weapons and their use, and/or brandishing weapons in the workplace; overreacting or reacting harshly to changes in City policies and procedures; personality conflicts with co-workers; obsession or preoccupation with a co-worker or supervisor; attempts to sabotage the work or equipment of a co-worker; blaming others for mistakes and circumstances; or demonstrating a propensity to behave and react irrationally.

Prohibited Conduct

Threats, threatening language or any other acts of coercion, aggression or violence made toward or by any City employee **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**. For purposes of this policy, a threat includes any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, any attempt at intimidating or instilling fear in others, menacing gestures, flashing of weapons, stalking or any other hostile, aggressive, injurious or destructive action undertaken for the purpose of domination or intimidation.

Procedures for Reporting a Threat

All potentially dangerous situations, including threats by co-workers, should be reported immediately to any member of management with whom the employee feels comfortable. Reports of threats may be maintained confidential to the extent maintaining confidentiality complies with Florida's public records law and does not impede the City of Ocala's ability to investigate and respond to the complaints. All threats will be promptly investigated. All employees must cooperate with all investigations. No employee will be subjected to retaliation, intimidation or disciplinary action as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this policy.

If the City determines, after an appropriate good faith investigation, that someone has violated this policy, the City will take swift and appropriate corrective action.

If the employee is the recipient of a threat made by an outside party, that employee should follow the steps detailed in this section. It is important for the City to be aware of any potential danger in the workplace. Indeed, the City wants to take effective measures to protect everyone from the threat of a violent act by employees or by anyone else.

Section 2 - OPERATIONAL POLICIES

2-1 Employee Classifications

For purposes of this handbook, all the City of Ocala employees fall within one of the classifications below.

Full-time/Regular: An employee hired to work a minimum of 40 hours per week or applicable full-time work schedule, is eligible for City benefits, but the employee or the City may end the employment relationship at any time, with or without reason or explanation.

Full-time/Seasonal: An employee hired to work 40 hours or more per week to a maximum of less than 1560 hours during a rolling year is not eligible for City benefits.

Full-time/Temporary: An employee hired to work 40 hours or more per week for a temporary period of time, are eligible for City benefits. The employee or the City may end the employment relationship at any time, with or without reason or explanation.

Part-time/Regular: An employee hired to work less than 40 hours a week on a regular, year-round basis are not eligible for City benefits, other than a pro-rated share of safety hours. Part-time/Regular employees who work an average of 30 hours per week may be eligible for Health Insurance in accordance with the Affordable Care Act.

Part-time/Seasonal or Intern: An employee hired to work for not more than 1560 hours during a rolling year is not eligible for City benefits.

Volunteer: Any person who donates service without pay or other compensation, except community service workers.

Department Directors shall provide required volunteer information to the Human Resources/Risk Management Department, prior to the rendering of any volunteer services, to ensure proper worker's compensation and liability coverage.

In addition to the above classifications, employees are categorized as either "**exempt**" or "**non-exempt**" for purposes of federal and state wage and hour laws. Employees classified as exempt do not receive overtime pay; they generally receive the same weekly salary regardless of hours worked. The employee will be informed of these classifications upon hire and informed of any subsequent changes to the classifications.

2-2 Introductory Period

Except for employees specifically designated as executive and senior management staff, **the first six months** of employees' employment is an introductory period. Police Officers, Communications Technicians and Firefighters are subject to a twelve-month introductory period. This is an opportunity for the City of Ocala to evaluate the employee's performance. It also is an opportunity for employees to evaluate if the City is a good fit for them. The City may extend the introductory period if it desires. Employees who are promoted to a new position or transferred to another department are subject to a

six month introductory period. Completion of the introductory period does not alter the employee's at-will status. The City of Ocala will conduct a formal performance review at the end of the introductory period.

2-3 Your Employment Records

In order to obtain their position, employees have provided personal information, such as address and telephone number. This information is contained in their personnel file.

Employees should keep their personnel file up to date by informing Human Resources/Risk Management of any changes. Employees also should inform Human Resources/Risk Management of any specialized training or skills they acquire, as well as any changes to any required visas. Unreported changes of address, marital status, etc. can affect withholding tax and benefit coverage. Further, an "out of date" emergency contact or an inability to reach employees in a crisis could cause a severe health or safety risk or other significant problem. Please note that personnel files are subject to Florida's Records Law.

2-4 Working Hours, Schedule, Rest & Meal Periods

Employees will be assigned a work schedule and will be expected to begin and end work according to the schedule. To accommodate the needs of the business, at some point the City of Ocala may need to change individual work schedules on either a short-term or long-term basis.

Meal Periods - All employees who work eight or more hours in a day are required to take a minimum unpaid meal break of thirty (30) minutes. Meal breaks are not counted toward hours worked. Employees are to be completely relieved from duty during their meal break. If a non-exempt employee is required to perform any work duties while on his or her meal break period, the employee must be compensated for the time spent performing work duties. The time spent working during the meal break will be counted toward the total hours worked. Unused meal periods may not be accumulated, nor shall meal break time be utilized for early departures or late arrival during the normal workday.

Rest Periods - Employees may be allowed two 15-minute breaks during an 8-hour shift, subject to the discretion of the Department Director or designee. These breaks are considered a privilege and must not interfere with City business. Breaks cannot be accumulated or used for early departure or late arrival, and employees who voluntarily forgo breaks will not receive extra compensation. Additionally, employees working between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. without an 8-hour break after their regular shift, or those working 16 or more hours in a rolling 24-hour period, are entitled to an 8-hour rest period. If called in without receiving an 8-hour rest before their regular shift, they are also entitled to an 8-hour rest. Paid rest time applies only to the normal work schedule, ensuring employees are well-rested for their duties.

Notice for Schedule Changes - Employees must be given 48 hours' notice, whenever possible, for changes in their regular shift assignments. If this notice is not given, any additional hours assigned and worked beyond their regular shift will be paid at the overtime rate.

2-5 Timekeeping Procedures

All City employees must use the City's designated timekeeping system, **UKG Timekeeping**, to record time worked, leave usage, and attendance, unless otherwise authorized by Human Resources. Employees are responsible for accurately recording all hours worked and ensuring their time records are complete and correct. Employees must review and approve their time records for accuracy. Any errors must be reported promptly to a supervisor for correction.

Non-exempt employees must clock in and out in UKG at the beginning and end of every shift, including regular hours, overtime, call-back assignments, and compensable on-call work. All non-work-related departures must also be recorded. Non-exempt employees may not begin work before their scheduled start time without supervisory approval.

Exempt employees must record daily attendance and full-day absences in UKG.

Supervisors are responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and approving time records to ensure compliance with City policies and payroll procedures.

Altering, falsifying, or misrepresenting time records is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Failure to comply with timekeeping requirements may result in corrective action, up to and including discharge.

2-6 Overtime

It is the general policy of the City of Ocala to not have employees work overtime. The City of Ocala experiences periods of extremely high activity and, during these busy periods, additional work is required from all of us. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring business activity and requesting overtime work if it is necessary. Overtime must be pre-authorized by the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, department director, or their designee. Effort will be made to provide employees with adequate advance notice in such situations.

1. Overtime is payment received for time worked in excess of 40 hours per week for non-exempt employees and is paid at the rate of one and one-half times the regular rate of pay.
2. Overtime is calculated based on actual time worked; which does not include vacation leave, sick leave, paid military leave, or compensatory time; however, holiday hours are included.
3. Funding received per federal and state grants stipulated for time and a half compensation will be paid as such.
4. In situations where the City Manager or designee has declared a "Local State of Emergency," or in the event of a FEMA or other qualifying declared emergency, FLSA exempt employees whose work assists the response during the designated emergency will be paid time and a half for any emergency hours worked after having worked 50 hours during that work week.
5. Mutual Aid: If an agency requests mutual aid, the City of Ocala will treat the request as a declaration of a "Local State of Emergency" by the requesting agency. Employees will be paid under the established agreements.

Compensatory Time Provisions – The City may grant compensatory time instead of overtime wages to FLSA non-exempt employees when agreed upon by both the City and the employee. This time must be pre-authorized by the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, department director, or their

designee. Compensatory time accrual follows the same rules as overtime, with a maximum accrual of 50 hours for all employees. Employees with accrued compensatory time may use it within a reasonable period after requesting it, provided it does not unduly disrupt department operations, and the City reserves the right to require its use. If an employee is transferred between divisions or to an FLSA-exempt position, any accrued compensatory time will be paid before the transfer at the higher of the employee's straight-time rate or the rate at which the compensatory time was last accrued. Additionally, all accrued compensatory time will be paid if an employee is transferred to another department, laid off, or terminated. If an employee reaches the maximum compensatory time, any additional hours will be deducted before using vacation leave.

2-7 Travel Time for Non-Exempt Employees

Overnight, Out-of-Town Trips

Non-exempt employees will be compensated for time spent traveling (except for meal periods) during their normal working hours, on days they are scheduled to work and on unscheduled work days (such as weekends). Non-exempt employees also will be paid for any time spent performing job duties during otherwise non-compensable travel time; however, such work should be limited absent advance management authorization.

Out-of-Town Trips for One Day

Non-exempt employees who travel out of town for a one-day assignment will be paid for all travel time, except for, among other things: time spent traveling between the employee's home and the local railroad, bus or plane terminal; and meal periods.

Local Travel

Non-exempt employees will be compensated for time spent traveling from one job site to another job site during a workday. The trip home, however, is non-compensable when the employee goes directly home from the final job site, unless it is much longer than the regular commute home from the regular worksite. In such case, the portion of the trip home in excess of the regular commute is compensable.

Commuting Time

Under the Portal to Portal Act, travel from home to work and from work to home is generally non-compensable. However, if a non-exempt employee regularly reports to a worksite near their home, but is required to report to a worksite farther away than the regular worksite, the additional time spent traveling is compensable.

If compensable travel time results in more than 40 hours worked by a non-exempt employee, the employee will be compensated at an overtime rate of one and one-half (1-1/2) times the regular rate.

2-8 Safe Harbor Policy for Exempt Employees

It is the City of Ocala's policy and practice to accurately compensate employees and to do so in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws. To ensure proper payment and that no improper deductions are made, employees must review pay records promptly to identify and report all errors.

Those classified as exempt salaried employees will receive a salary which is intended to compensate them for all hours they may work for the City of Ocala. This salary will be established at the time of hire or classification as an exempt employee. While it may be subject to review and modification from time to time, the salary will be a predetermined amount that will not be subject to deductions for variations in the quantity or quality of the work performed.

Under federal and state law, salary is subject to certain deductions. For example, unless state law requires otherwise, salary can be reduced for the following reasons:

- full-day absences for personal reasons;
- full-day absences for sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide plan, policy or practice of providing wage replacement benefits for such absences (deductions also may be made for the exempt employee's full-day absences due to sickness or disability before the employee has qualified for the plan, policy or practice or after the employee has exhausted the leave allowance under the plan);
- full-day disciplinary suspensions for infractions of our written policies and procedures;
- Family and Medical Leave Act absences (either full- or partial-day absences);
- to offset amounts received as payment from the court for jury and witness fees or from the military as military pay;
- the first or last week of employment in the event the employee works less than a full week; and
- any full work week in which the employee does not perform any work.

Salary may also be reduced for certain types of deductions such as a portion of health, dental or life insurance premiums; state, federal or local taxes; social security; or voluntary contributions to a 401(a) or pension plan.

If employees believe they have been subject to any improper deductions, they should immediately report the matter to a supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or if the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person (or if the employee has not received a prompt and fully acceptable reply), they should immediately contact The Payroll Manager or any other supervisor in The City of Ocala with whom the employee feels comfortable.

2-9 Performance Review

Depending on the employee's position and classification, the City of Ocala endeavors to review performance annually. However, a positive performance evaluation does not guarantee an increase in salary, a promotion or continued employment. Compensation increases and the terms and conditions of employment, including job assignments, transfers, promotions, and demotions, are determined by and at the discretion of management.

In addition to these formal performance evaluations, the City encourages employees and supervisors to discuss job performance on a frequent and ongoing basis.

2-10 Job Postings

The City of Ocala is dedicated to assisting employees in managing their careers and reaching their professional goals through promotion and transfer opportunities. This policy outlines the on-line job posting program which is in place for all employees. To be eligible to apply for an open position, employees must meet the following requirements:

- be a current, regular, full-time, part-time or active seasonal employee;
- have been in current position for at least six (6) months when applying for a promotion or transfer outside their current department;
- maintain a performance rating of meets expectations or above;
- not be on a performance improvement plan; and
- meet the job qualifications listed on the job posting.

If employees find a position of interest on the job posting website and they meet the eligibility requirements, an on-line job posting application must be completed in order to be considered for the position. Not all positions are guaranteed to be posted. With the exception of certain bargaining unit positions, the City reserves the right to seek applicants solely from outside sources or to post positions internally and externally simultaneously.

For more specific information about the program, please contact Human Resources.

2-11 Call Back and On Call Compensation

Any FLSA non-exempt employee called back to work outside of their regular working hours will be entitled to call back compensation for the actual time worked. The following guidelines apply:

Minimum Call Back Compensation:

- a) Employees will receive a minimum of two (2) hours of compensation at the overtime rate, starting from the time the call is received. If the employee is called back again after being relieved from duty and returning home, they will receive an additional two (2) hours of call-back compensation, provided the second call occurs after the initial two-hour call-back window has expired.
- b) Non-Sworn Police Department employees will receive a minimum of three (3) hours of compensation at the overtime rate, starting from the time the call is received. If the employee is called back again after being relieved from duty and returning home, they will receive an additional three (3) hours of call-back compensation, provided the second call occurs after the initial two-hour call back window has expired.

Shift Differential: Shift differential will not be paid for call-back hours worked.

Call-In Provisions: If an employee is called in to work within one hour of their regularly scheduled start time, they will receive one hour of overtime instead of two hours of call-back pay. Any time exceeding one hour before the scheduled start time will fall under the call-back provisions.

Work-Related Communications: If an employee receives a work-related phone call outside of normal working hours, which lasts 15 minutes or less and requires no ongoing system monitoring, the employee will receive one hour of call-back pay. Further communication within the one-hour period will not result in additional compensation. If additional work is required after this one-hour period, a second hour of call-back pay will be awarded.

On Call Compensation: When required, a schedule of on-call FLSA non-exempt employees may be prepared in advance and maintained by the department director or their designee.

1. **Rotation:** On-call duties will be assigned on a one-week rotation basis.
2. **Response Time:** On-call employees must be able to respond to the work site within one hour of receiving the call, in compliance with the City's Drug/Alcohol Policy.
3. **On-Call Pay:** Employees required to remain on-call outside of their normal work schedule will receive one-half hour of straight-time pay for each 8-hour period (or portion thereof) they are on call.

Reporting Requirements: Employees on the call-back list who are called back to work are expected to report within one hour of receiving the call. All employees must comply with the City's Alcohol and Drug Policy when reporting for call-back duty.

2-12 Working Out of Classification and Interim Appointments

Working Out of Classification/Interim Appointments: When assuming the role and responsibilities of a higher classification due to a temporary vacancy for 40 hours or more consecutive hours, an employee shall be compensated at the minimum of the higher classification or 6%, whichever is greater, as approved by the City Manager, Deputy/Assistant City Manager, Chief of Police, or Mayor, depending upon the position. City-recognized holidays will count towards time spent assuming the role and responsibilities. Departments must ensure that their budget will support the temporary pay adjustment.

2-13 Compensation

Classification - The City utilizes an independent consulting service for its compensation program. The consultant assigns each position a classification pay grade and salary range, as established by the City's pay plans. The pay plan reflects internal and external equities, based upon assigned duties and responsibilities, and market comparisons.

Payroll - All employees are paid bi-weekly through direct deposit. Direct deposit is required as a mandatory condition of employment. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period or applicable work period.

1. Employees and supervisors are responsible for accurately recording and reporting time worked in the timekeeping system.
2. Employees are responsible for ensuring that the wages they receive are correct (including incentives, allowances, stipends, authorized deductions etc.).
3. Employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their paychecks to cover the costs of participation in City approved programs. Employees should review any discrepancies in payroll deductions with the Human Resources/Risk Management office.
4. Upon receipt of a valid garnishment, the City shall withhold wages from an employee's paycheck. The City shall continue to withhold the garnishment wages until a court order is

received indicating satisfaction of the indebtedness or until the City is ordered to surrender the monies to the court or its agent.

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) – Employees may receive a COLA as determined appropriate and according to availability of funds as allocated by the City Council through the budget process.

2-14 Employee Reduction in Force Policy

Due to budgetary restrictions, reduction in workload, or reorganization, the City Manager may determine that an employee reduction in force (RIF) is necessary. When it becomes necessary to reduce the workforce, full-time/regular employee(s) with the positions to be eliminated shall, when possible and determined to be feasible, be notified in writing of the reduction in force at least two weeks before the planned reduction in force.

2-15 Telework Policy

The City of Ocala maintains a limited telework policy for employees with temporary disabilities unable to perform the essential functions of their jobs in an office environment. The City of Ocala has a telework agreement that outlines the requirements for teleworking. All telework requires Chief of Staff approval.

2-16 Weapons

In the interest of safety for both City employees and citizens, employees are prohibited from possessing unlawful firearms on City property. Employees are prohibited from storing a firearm or other weapon in a City locker, desk, cabinet, or equipment and prohibited from storing a firearm or other weapon in a City owned vehicle. Firearms in private vehicles must be securely encased in accordance with Florida statutes.

Employees may open carry knives as allowed by statute when a supervisor determines it is required for their job. When carrying a knife is not a job requirement, open carry of a knife is limited to a folding knife encased in a pouch with a blade not longer than four inches in length. Concealed carry of all weapons is pursuant to Florida statutes.

Violations of this policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Sworn police officers and former and retired police officers certified under the Law Enforcement Officer Safety Act (LEOSA) are exempt from this policy. Employees must immediately report to their supervisor or department head all incidents of workplace violence.

Section 3 - BENEFITS

3-1 Benefits Overview

In addition to good working conditions and competitive pay, it is the City of Ocala's policy to provide a combination of supplemental benefits to all eligible employees. In keeping with this goal, each benefit program has been carefully devised. These benefits include time-off benefits, such as vacations and holidays, and insurance and other plan benefits. We are constantly studying and evaluating our benefits programs and policies to better meet present and future requirements. These policies have been developed over the years and continue to be refined to keep up with changing

times and needs.

The next few pages contain a brief outline of the benefit programs the City of Ocala provides employees and their families. Of course, the information presented here is intended to serve only as guidelines. For more detailed benefits information, refer to our Benefits at a Glance Handbook located on the intranet.

The descriptions of the insurance and other plan benefits merely highlight certain aspects of the applicable plans for general information only. The details of those plans are spelled out in the official plan documents, which are available for review upon request from the Benefits Administrator. Additionally, the provisions of the plans, including eligibility and benefits provisions, are summarized in the summary plan descriptions ("SPDs") for the plans (which may be revised from time to time). In the determination of benefits and all other matters under each plan, the terms of the official plan documents shall govern over the language of any descriptions of the plans, including the SPDs and this handbook.

Further, the City of Ocala (including the officers and administrators who are responsible for administering the plans) retains full discretionary authority to interpret the terms of the plans, as well as full discretionary authority with regard to administrative matters arising in connection with the plans and all issues concerning benefit terms, eligibility and entitlement.

While the City intends to maintain these employee benefits, it reserves the absolute right to modify, amend or terminate these benefits at any time and for any reason.

If employees have any questions regarding benefits, they should contact the Benefits Administrator.

The following benefits and/or programs will be provided and/or offered to all full-time/regular and regular full-time temporary employees:

1. **Health Insurance** – Comprehensive medical coverage for employees and eligible dependents.
2. **Retiree Health Insurance** – Continued health coverage for qualifying retirees.
3. **Onsite Health Center** – Available to eligible employees for primary care and wellness services.
4. **Vision Insurance (Optional)** – Coverage for eye exams, glasses, and contact lenses.
5. **Dental Insurance (Optional)** – Preventative, basic, and major dental care coverage.
6. **Long-Term Disability Insurance** – Provides income protection in case of extended illness or injury.
7. **Term Life Insurance** – Employer-provided life insurance policy with coverage amount based on salary.
8. **Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance** – Additional financial protection in case of severe injury or loss of life due to an accident.
9. **Optional Coverage** – Employees may opt into additional policies, including:
 - Dependent Life Insurance ● Accident Insurance ● Critical Care Insurance
 - Cancer Insurance ● Legal Services Coverage ● Pet Insurance
10. **401(a) Tax-Deferred Retirement Savings Plan** – Employer-sponsored retirement plan with contributions based on salary.
11. **457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan** – Voluntary retirement savings plan allowing tax-deferred contributions.
12. **ROTH IRA (Optional)** – Post-tax retirement savings option for employees.
13. **Vacation Leave, Paid Time Off, and Sick Leave** – Accrued leave for rest, personal matters, and illness.
14. **Paid Holidays (12)** – Recognized annual paid holidays.

15. **Tuition Reimbursement** – Financial assistance for job-related education, subject to approval and budget availability.
16. **Student Loan Reimbursement** – Employer contribution to assist with student loan repayment.
17. **Mileage Reimbursement** – Compensation for approved City-related travel using a personal vehicle.
18. **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)** – Pre-tax benefits for healthcare and dependent care expenses.
19. **Safety Award** – Recognition and incentives for maintaining a safe work environment.

In addition to the benefits and/or programs listed above, the following benefits will be provided and/or offered to employees designated as eligible for Modified Executive Benefits, as determined by the City Manager:

1. Term Life Insurance, plus additional \$50,000
2. Deferred Compensation Contribution (3%)
3. Vehicle Allowance or Assignment (Upon approval of City Manager)

In addition to the benefits and/or programs listed above, the following benefits will be provided and/or offered to employees designated as eligible for Executive Benefits, as defined by the City Manager:

1. Term Life Insurance, plus additional \$100,000
2. Vehicle Allowance or Assignment (upon approval of City Manager)
3. Deferred Compensation Contribution (5%)

Training/Continuing Education – Employees are encouraged to obtain training and continuing education through attendance at job-related seminars, classes, etc. The employee’s department head must pre-approve all leave for training and education purposes.

1. When the City requires an employee to attend a training activity, the City will provide the necessary time off with pay and will reimburse the employee for all associated travel costs and participation fees. There are several courses the City requires employees to take as a condition of employment. A list of the courses is available from the Staff Development and Training Administrator.
2. Employees are encouraged to further their education in areas that will enhance their job performance. Upon pre-approval by the employee’s department head and upon successful completion of relevant education courses, employees may be reimbursed for tuition fees, materials, and other necessary and approved expenses upon presentation of proper receipts. Proof of successful completion shall include one of the following:
 - A certificate indicating successful course completion, if applicable.
 - Documentation of receiving a class grade of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0/A scale.
 - Documentation of receiving a passing grade when a pass/fail grading system is used.

Education reimbursement funds must be pre-approved through the budget process.

The City shall pay 100% of all out-of-pocket expenses incurred for tuition, registration, books, and laboratory fees, excluding monies provided from other authorized sources, up to a maximum of \$3,000 per fiscal year. Employees who benefit from education at the expense of the City shall be required to enter into a contractual agreement to continue to work for the City for a designated period of time upon completion of the education.

Uniforms – The City will provide employee uniforms when uniforms are required to be worn as a condition of employment to fulfill job responsibilities. Uniforms will be maintained and worn in accordance with City and department policies. The City will clean, replace, or repair uniforms when it becomes necessary at no cost to the employee, when applicable.

Military Leave Benefit – Employees on military leave will remain enrolled in the City’s group insurance plans that they were currently enrolled in at the time of their activation, for a period of twelve (12) months. The City will continue to contribute premiums in the same manner as for active employees. The employee on military leave shall be responsible for any applicable premium contributions for employee and/or dependent coverage. After the twelve (12) month period, employees who remain on military leave will be offered continuation of insurance benefits through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). The employee is responsible for making arrangements with Human Resources/Risk Management for the payment of insurance premium contributions if they elect to retain these benefits.

Severance Pay - The City Manager may authorize severance pay and/or extended employment benefits pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of Florida Statutes.

3-2 Paid Holidays

Full-time employees will be paid for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Veterans’ Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day After Thanksgiving
Juneteenth	Christmas Eve
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	Floating Holiday

If a designated holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday or on an alternate date designated by the City Manager. Employees who are required to work on the actual calendar date of a holiday will receive holiday pay for that day or may elect to use the equivalent holiday hours on a floating basis. Floating holiday hours must be requested in advance and approved by the employee’s supervisor. The city-issued Floating Holiday is not eligible for payout upon separation from employment.

Full-time/Regular employees are eligible for their regularly scheduled work shift hours of holiday pay per holiday listed above.

Employees are not eligible for holiday pay when in an unpaid leave status, either before or after a holiday, including but not limited to unpaid leaves of absence or unpaid suspensions.

Unused holiday hours may not be carried from one calendar year to another unless approved by the City Manager; however, they must be used by the end of January of the ensuing calendar year.

3-3 Vacation Leave and Paid Time Off

The City of Ocala appreciates how hard employees work and recognizes the importance of providing time for rest and relaxation. The City of Ocala fully encourages employees to get this rest by taking paid time off. Time off under this policy includes extended time off, such as for a vacation, and incidental time due to sickness or to handle personal affairs.

Employees who were hired after March 1, 2012, are required to participate in the PTO program. All eligible full-time/regular employees hired prior to March 1, 2012, may remain in the vacation/sick leave program or may switch to the PTO program. An employee that chooses to switch to the PTO program is required to remain in the PTO program.

Vacation Leave— Vacation time off with pay is available to eligible employees to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits.

Eligible full-time/regular employees shall accrue annual vacation leave and be allowed to carry over vacation leave in accordance with the following:

Consecutive Years of Service	Hours of Vacation Accrued		Maximum Carryover
	PER Pay Period	Annually	
Fire/Rescue or 40-Hour Week Employee hired BEFORE March 1, 2012			
0 to 6 Years	3.08 hours	80 hours	80 hours
6 to 10 Years	4.62 hours	120 hours	120 hours
10 to 15 Years	5.38 hours	140 hours	140 hours
15 Years +	6.15 hours	160 hours	160 hours
Fire/Rescue 24-hour Shift Employees			
0 to 6 Years	4.62 hours	120 hours	228 hours
6 to 15 Years	7.38 hours	192 hours	300 hours
15 Years +	10.15 hours	264 hours	372 hours

Vacation leave shall be requested in the timekeeping system and pre-approved by the employee’s supervisor.

Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for 100% of their accrued vacation time. Employees may not use any leave time, unless it is for an illness, during the two-week notice period. Employees terminating from the City without giving a two-week notice, unless approved by the City Manager or designee, or employees who have been dismissed from employment as the result of a disciplinary action shall not be entitled to payment for accrued vacation time.

PAID TIME OFF

Paid Time Off (PTO) combines vacation and sick leave into a single bank of leave days. Any leave time previously taken from vacation and/or sick time will be taken from the PTO accrual. For employees who elect to participate in the PTO program, the following will apply:

Full-time/Regular employees shall earn Paid Time Off on a biweekly basis in accordance with the

following schedule:

Years of Service	Annually PTO Hours	PTO Hours Earned Bi-Weekly	Maximum Carry forward	Maximum Payout
40-Hour Week Employee hired BEFORE March 1, 2012				
0 to 5 Years	144	5.538	144	80
5 to 6 Years	144	5.538	240	200
6 to 10 Years	184	7.077	320	300
10 to 15 Years	204	7.846	400	350
15 Years +	224	8.615	480	400
40-Hour Week Employee hired AFTER March 1, 2012				
0 to 5 Years	128	4.92	128	80
5 to 6 Years	128	4.92	176	120
6 to 10 Years	168	6.46	256	200
10 to 15 Years	188	7.231	336	250
15 Years +	208	8	416	300

Seasonal and other part-time employees are not eligible to earn Paid Time Off.

At the discretion of the City Manager, for purposes of Senior Management recruitment, credit may be given to an eligible employee for previous time served in like or similar service related to the rate of PTO accrual.

The City Manager or designee has discretion to carry forward PTO time into the next calendar year in the event time off is cancelled due to an unplanned significant event as declared by the City (e.g. disasters, hurricanes, etc.).

Employees who have a combined total that exceeds the maximum accruals indicated above are encouraged and will be given the opportunity to utilize the time to get the balance down to become in compliance with the maximum carry forward. The excess PTO balance at the time of conversion will be tracked as a separate accrual balance.

Extended Leave Bank (ELB) – The ELB will accrue five (5) hours of ELB time per pay period with a 520 hour maximum accrual level. At the end of the calendar year, hours that exceed the maximum carry forward for PTO, shall be transferred to the ELB provided that the maximum of 520 hours has not been reached. The ELB has no cash value and there shall be no payout of ELB time upon termination of employment.

To use time from the ELB, employees must have an approved FMLA-qualifying event (see section 4-3 of this handbook). Before accessing ELB time, employees must use the lesser of 40 consecutive hours of regular PTO or their total available regular PTO for each absence period. Medical procedures are scheduled treatments or surgeries a licensed healthcare provider performs that are part of an approved FMLA-qualifying event. For regular FMLA requiring a continuous block of time and/or multiple medical procedures, employees only need to meet the 40-hour PTO requirement once, regardless of the intervals between procedures. However, the 40-hour PTO requirement resets with each new FMLA-qualifying event. ELB cannot be used for Intermittent FMLA, which covers sporadic absences taken in

small increments for medical reasons.

Leave Requests - Scheduled PTO Leave must be requested and approved by the department head or designee in accordance with the notification required by the respective department. Length of leave periods must be approved by the department head in keeping with the needs of the City. Every effort should be made to schedule PTO leave. Employees must provide notification of unscheduled absences in accordance with departmental policies.

Separation Pay - PTO balances shall be paid at the current rate of pay up to the maximum payout allowed.

Employees terminating from the City without giving two-weeks' notice, unless approved by the City Manager or designee, shall not be entitled to payment for banked paid time off. Employees may not use any leave time, unless it is for an illness, during the two-week notice period. Employees involuntarily terminated shall be entitled to eighty percent (80%) of banked paid time off.

In case of death of an employee, eligible leave payments shall be made at the current rate of pay to the employee's beneficiary, estate or as provided by law.

ANNUAL VACATION LEAVE/PTO BUY-BACK

As part of each annual budget, the determination will be made if monies are available to fund a vacation/PTO buy-back program. The provisions for the vacation/PTO buy-back program are as follows:

- Employees are required to maintain a minimum of 80 hours of accrued vacation/PTO after the sale of time.
- Employees must utilize a minimum of 40 hours during the calendar year of the request.
- Employees may sell back a minimum of 16 hours and a maximum of 40 hours in whole hour increments only.
- Payment will be processed and paid in a separate earnings code.
- This payment is considered gross wages and will be subject to payroll taxes, but will not be subject to retirement withholdings; however, employees who are grandfathered in the defined benefit pension plan will be subject to retirement withholdings.
- Employees in a collective bargaining unit position may participate only if authorized pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement.
- All requests must be submitted by no later than June 30th of each eligible year.

SICK LEAVE

This section only applies to employees who opted to remain in the traditional vacation and sick leave program. Sick leave time off with pay is available to eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illness, injury, or to obtain necessary medical care for themselves, or their immediate family as defined as the employee's parents, spouse, children, in-laws, all levels of grandparents and all levels of grandchildren and stepchildren. Note: Under certain conditions, the non-biological, non-adoptive person who reared the employee may qualify as a "parent". Consult with Human Resources/Risk Management if you have questions. Sick leave hours are intended primarily to provide income protection in the event of illness or injury and shall not be used for any other absence. An employee is prohibited from working secondary employment during the actual hours of sick leave. Sick leave is not counted as time worked.

Full-time/Regular employees shall accrue 3.69 hours of sick leave per pay period, until a maximum of 720 hours have been reached. Sick leave accruals may not exceed 720 hours.

Employees who work 24-hour shifts shall accrue 5.53 hours of sick leave per pay period until a maximum of 1100 hours has been reached. Sick leave accruals may not exceed 1100 hours. Employees shall be charged hour for hour when taking sick time.

Other employees shall not be eligible for sick leave.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury shall notify their direct supervisor before the scheduled start of their workday, if possible. The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence.

Upon meeting the eligibility requirements for City retirement, an employee would be entitled to the following sick leave payout:

YEARS OF SERVICE	ACCRUED SICK LEAVE ENTITLEMENT BASED ON: MAX OF 720 HOURS OR 1100 FOR 24-HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES
25 +	60%
20 to 24	45%
15 to 19	40%
10 to 14	35%
0 to 10	25%
<p>EMPLOYEES WHO BUY BACK SERVICE TIME UNDER THE PENSION ORDINANCE DO NOT RECEIVE CREDIT FOR ADDITIONAL YEARS OF SERVICE FOR THE ACCRUED SICK LEAVE ENTITLEMENT.</p> <p>SWITCHING FROM THE VACATION PLAN TO THE PTO PLAN: 40% OF SICK TIME WILL TRANSFER TO ELB AND 60% WILL TRANSFER TO PTO. 100% OF VACATION WILL BE ALLOCATED TO PTO.</p>	

3-4 Lactation Breaks

The City of Ocala will provide a reasonable amount of break time to accommodate employees desiring to express breast milk for their infant child, in accordance with and to the extent required by applicable law. The break time, if possible, must run concurrently with rest and meal periods already provided. If the break time cannot run concurrently with rest and meal periods already provided, the break time will be unpaid, subject to applicable law.

The City will provide employees with the use of a room or location other than a toilet stall to express milk in private. This location may be the employee's private office, if applicable. The City may not be able to provide additional break time if doing so would seriously disrupt the City's operations, subject to applicable law. Please consult Human Resources with questions regarding this policy.

Employees should advise management if they need break time and an area for this purpose. Employees will not be discriminated against or retaliated against for exercising their rights under this policy.

3-5 Workers' Compensation

On-the-job injuries are covered by the City of Ocala's Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy in accordance with F.S 440. If employees are injured on the job, no matter how slightly, they should report the incident immediately to their supervisor. Failure to follow City procedures may affect the ability of employees to receive Workers Compensation benefits.

Designated Medical Care Provider: The City of Ocala Employee Health Clinic is the medical care provider (“Medical Provider”) designated for work-related injuries or illnesses. Except in the case of life or limb threatening injuries, the City does not pay other medical providers or facilities for the treatment of industrial injuries, even if the injury is work related, unless the Employee Clinic refers the employee AND the referral is approved by the third party administrator or Human Resources/Risk Management prior to the treatment.

Employee Discipline: Failure by any employee to follow program reporting protocol, treatment policies, light-duty requirements, or any other law, policy or procedure related to the program in a timely and complete manner, shall result in employee disciplinary action up to and including termination.

3-6 Jury or Witness Duty

The City of Ocala realizes that it is the obligation of all U.S. citizens to serve on a jury or serve as a witness in court on behalf of another party when summoned to do so. All employees will be allowed time off to perform such civic service as required by law. Employees must provide the Jury or Witness Duty Summons to their supervisor as soon as possible.

Employees also are expected to keep management informed of the expected length of jury or witness duty service and to report to work for the major portion of the day if excused by the court.

The City pays an employee’s full salary when the employee is absent during a regularly scheduled shift for jury duty.

3-7 Bereavement Leave

The death of a family member is a time when employees wish to be with their families. Full-time employees that are not collective bargaining unit members may receive a maximum of three (3) days of paid bereavement leave per occurrence to be charged to administrative/bereavement leave following the death of a member of the employee’s immediate family. Upon the employee's request, the department director may approve up to two (2) additional days of sick leave or PTO, depending upon the circumstances of each case. The bereavement leave benefit is limited to one occurrence in a rolling 12-month period, with additional occurrences to be deducted from the employee’s sick leave or PTO accrual balance.

Immediate family means the following relatives of the employee or spouse (including in-laws or step-relatives):

1. spouse,
2. parents,

3. siblings,
4. children,
5. all levels of grandparents, or
6. all levels of grandchildren.

Section 4 - LEAVES OF ABSENCE

4-1 Personal Leave

If employees are ineligible for any other City leave, the City of Ocala, under certain circumstances, may grant a personal leave of absence without pay. A written request for a personal leave should be presented to management at least two (2) weeks before the anticipated start of the leave. If the leave is requested for medical reasons and employees are not eligible for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or any state leave law, medical certification also must be submitted. The request will be considered on the basis of staffing requirements and the reasons for the requested leave, as well as performance and attendance records. Normally, a leave of absence will be granted for a period of up to eight (8) weeks. However, a personal leave may be extended if, prior to the end of leave, employees submit a written request for an extension to management and the request is granted. During the leave, employees will not earn vacation, personal days or sick days. The City of Ocala will continue health insurance coverage during the leave if employees submit their share of the monthly premium payments to the City in a timely manner, subject to the terms of the plan documents.

When the employees anticipate returning to work, they should notify management of the expected return date. This notification should be made at least one (1) week before the end of the leave.

Upon completion of the personal leave of absence, the City will attempt to return employees to their original job or a similar position, subject to prevailing business considerations. Reinstatement, however, is not guaranteed.

Failure to advise management of availability to return to work, failure to return to work when notified or a continued absence from work beyond the time approved by the City will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment.

Personal leave runs concurrently with any City-provided Short-Term Disability Leave of Absence.

4-2 Military Leave

The City of Ocala provides military leave in compliance with **USERRA, Florida Statutes Chapter 115, and the Florida Administrative Code**. Employees must provide **advance notice** of service obligations unless prevented by military necessity.

Armed Forces, National Guard, and Reserves: Employees called to active duty are eligible for a military leave of absence for up to five cumulative years under USERRA. Those on **annual training or weekend drills** may request temporary military leave, with up to **30 days of paid leave per calendar year** for public employees, per Florida Statute § 115.07. Additional leave is unpaid unless PTO is used.

FEMA Reservists: FEMA Reservists are covered under **USERRA and the CREW Act**, ensuring job protection. However, **Florida law does not require paid leave** for FEMA service. Employees may use accrued PTO and should provide advance notice when activated.

Florida State Guard: Employees activated by the **Governor of Florida** are entitled to **30 days of paid military leave per calendar year**. Additional leave is unpaid unless PTO is used.

General Provisions:

Employees must notify management of military leave in advance and may be required to provide documentation for extended absences. **USERRA's reemployment timelines apply**, ensuring prompt return to work. Employees will retain **seniority-based benefits**, including pension accrual.

For any **unpaid military leave**, employees are responsible for arranging the **continuation of benefits**, including health insurance, before deployment. Failure to arrange payment for benefits may result in lapse of coverage. *For questions about military leave, employees should contact HR or management.*

4-3 Family and Medical Leave

The Leave Policy

Employees may be entitled to a leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This policy provides employees information concerning FMLA entitlements and obligations employees may have during such leaves. If employees have any questions concerning FMLA leave, they should contact Human Resources.

I. Eligibility

FMLA leave is available to "eligible employees." To be an "eligible employee," the employee must: 1) have been employed by the City for at least 12 months (which need not be consecutive); 2) have been employed by the City for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave; and 3) be employed at a worksite where 50 or more employees are located within 75 miles of the worksite.

II. Entitlements

As described below, the FMLA provides eligible employees with a right to leave, health insurance benefits and, with some limited exceptions, job restoration.

A. Basic FMLA Leave Entitlement

The FMLA provides eligible employees up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons during a 12-month period. The 12-month period is determined based on a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses his/her FMLA leave. Leave may be taken for any one, or for a combination, of the following reasons:

- To care for the employee's child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent (but not in-law) who has a **serious health condition**;
- For the employee's own serious health condition (including any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or childbirth) that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the employee's job; and/or
- Because of any **qualifying exigency** arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent is a military member on covered active duty or called to covered active

duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty) in the Reserves component of the Armed Forces for deployment to a foreign country in support of contingency operation or Regular Armed Forces for deployment to a foreign country.

A **serious health condition** is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents employees from performing the functions of their job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two (2) visits to a health care provider or one (1) visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, caring for the parents of the military member on covered active duty and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

B. Additional Military Family Leave Entitlement (Injured Servicemember Leave)

In addition to the basic FMLA leave entitlement discussed above, an eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a **covered servicemember** is entitled to take up to 26 weeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness. Leave to care for a servicemember shall only be available during a single-12 month period and, when combined with other FMLA-qualifying leave, may not exceed 26 weeks during the single 12-month period. The single 12-month period begins on the first day an eligible employee takes leave to care for the injured servicemember.

A "**covered servicemember**" is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status or is on the temporary retired list, for a serious injury or illness. These individuals are referred to in this policy as "current members of the Armed Forces." **Covered servicemembers** also include a veteran who is discharged or released from military services under condition other than dishonorable at any time during the five years preceding the date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness. These individuals are referred to in this policy as "covered veterans."

The FMLA definitions of a "serious injury or illness" for current Armed Forces members and covered veterans are distinct from the FMLA definition of "serious health condition" applicable to FMLA leave to care for a covered family member. Contact Human Resources with questions.

C. Intermittent Leave and Reduced Leave Schedules

FMLA leave usually will be taken for a period of consecutive days, weeks or months. However, employees also are entitled to take FMLA leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary due to a serious health condition of the employee or covered family member or the serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember. Qualifying exigency leave also may be taken on an intermittent basis.

D. No Work While on Leave

The taking of another job while on family/medical leave or any other authorized leave of absence is grounds for immediate discharge, to the extent permitted by law.

E. Protection of Group Health Insurance Benefits

During FMLA leave, eligible employees are entitled to receive group health plan coverage on the same terms and conditions as if they had continued to work.

F. Restoration of Employment and Benefits

At the end of FMLA leave, subject to some exceptions including situations where job restoration of "highly compensated employees" will cause the City substantial and grievous economic injury, employees generally have a right to return to the same or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms. The City will notify employees if they qualify as "highly compensated employees," if it intends to deny reinstatement, and of their rights in such instances. Use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an eligible employee's FMLA leave.

G. Notice of Eligibility for, and Designation of, FMLA Leave

Employees requesting FMLA leave are entitled to receive written notice from the City telling them whether they are eligible for FMLA leave and, if not eligible, the reasons why they are not eligible. When eligible for FMLA leave, employees are entitled to receive written notice of: 1) their rights and responsibilities in connection with such leave; 2) City's designation of leave as FMLA-qualifying or non-qualifying, and if not FMLA-qualifying, the reasons why; and 3) the amount of leave, if known, that will be counted against the employee's leave entitlement.

The City may retroactively designate leave as FMLA leave with appropriate written notice to employees provided the City's failure to designate leave as FMLA-qualifying at an earlier date did not cause harm or injury to the employee. In all cases where leaves qualify for FMLA protection, the City and employee can mutually agree that leave be retroactively designated as FMLA leave.

III. Employee FMLA Leave Obligations

A. Provide Notice of the Need for Leave

Employees who take FMLA leave must timely notify the City of their need for FMLA leave. The following describes the content and timing of such employee notices.

1. Content of Employee Notice

To trigger FMLA leave protections, employees must inform their Supervisor of the need for FMLA-qualifying leave and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave, if known. Employees may do this by either requesting FMLA leave specifically, or explaining the reasons for leave so as to allow the City to determine that the leave is FMLA-qualifying. For example, employees might explain that:

- a medical condition renders them unable to perform the functions of their job;
- they are pregnant or have been hospitalized overnight;
- they or a covered family member are under the continuing care of a health care provider;

- the leave is due to a qualifying exigency caused by a military member being on covered active duty or called to covered active duty status to a foreign country; or
- if the leave is for a family member, that the condition renders the family member unable to perform daily activities or that the family member is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

Calling in "sick," without providing the reasons for the needed leave, will not be considered sufficient notice for FMLA leave under this policy. Employees must respond to the City's questions to determine if absences are potentially FMLA-qualifying.

If employees fail to explain the reasons for FMLA leave, the leave may be denied. When employees seek leave due to FMLA-qualifying reasons for which the City has previously provided FMLA-protected leave, they must specifically reference the qualifying reason for the leave or the need for FMLA leave.

2. Timing of Employee Notice

Employees must provide 30 days' advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days' notice is not possible, or the approximate timing of the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must provide the City notice of the need for leave as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Employees who fail to give 30 days' notice for foreseeable leave without a reasonable excuse for the delay, or otherwise fail to satisfy FMLA notice obligations, may have FMLA leave delayed or denied.

B. Cooperate in the Scheduling of Planned Medical Treatment (Including Accepting Transfers to Alternative Positions) and Intermittent Leave or Reduced Leave Schedules

When planning medical treatment, employees must consult with the City and make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the City's operations, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider. Employees must consult with the City prior to the scheduling of treatment to work out a treatment schedule that best suits the needs of both the City and the employees, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider. If employees providing notice of the need to take FMLA leave on an intermittent basis for planned medical treatment neglect to fulfill this obligation, the City may require employees to attempt to make such arrangements, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider.

When employees take intermittent or reduced work schedule leave for foreseeable planned medical treatment for the employee or a family member, including during a period of recovery from a serious health condition or to care for a covered servicemember, the City may temporarily transfer employees, during the period that the intermittent or reduced leave schedules are required, to alternative positions with equivalent pay and benefits for which the employees are qualified and which better accommodate recurring periods of leave.

When employees seek intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule for reasons unrelated to the planning of medical treatment, upon request, employees must advise the City of the reason why such leave is medically necessary. In such instances, the City and employee shall attempt to work out a leave schedule that meets the employee's needs without unduly disrupting the City's operations, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider.

C. Submit Medical Certifications Supporting Need for FMLA Leave (Unrelated to Requests for Military Family Leave)

Depending on the nature of FMLA leave sought, employees may be required to submit medical certifications supporting their need for FMLA-qualifying leave. As described below, there generally are three types of FMLA medical certifications: an **initial certification**, a **recertification** and a **return to work/fitness for duty certification**.

It is the employee's responsibility to provide the City with timely, complete and sufficient medical certifications. Whenever the City requests employees to provide FMLA medical certifications, employees must provide the requested certifications within 15 calendar days after the City's request, unless it is not practicable to do so despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts. The City will inform employees if submitted medical certifications are incomplete or insufficient and provide employees at least seven calendar days to cure deficiencies. The City will deny FMLA leave to employees who fail to timely cure deficiencies or otherwise fail to timely submit requested medical certifications.

With the employee's permission, the City (through individuals other than the employee's direct supervisor) may contact the employee's health care provider to authenticate or clarify completed and sufficient medical certifications. If employees choose not to provide the City with authorization allowing it to clarify or authenticate certifications with health care providers, the City may deny FMLA leave if certifications are unclear.

Whenever the City deems it appropriate to do so, it may waive its right to receive timely, complete and/or sufficient FMLA medical certifications.

1. Initial Medical Certifications

Employees requesting leave because of their own, or a covered relation's, serious health condition, or to care for a covered servicemember, must supply medical certification supporting the need for such leave from their health care provider or, if applicable, the health care provider of their covered family or service member. If employees provide at least 30 days' notice of medical leave, they should submit the medical certification before leave begins. A new initial medical certification will be required on an annual basis for serious medical conditions lasting beyond a single leave year.

If the City has reason to doubt initial medical certifications, it may require employees to obtain a second opinion at the City's expense. If the opinions of the initial and second health care providers differ, the City may, at its expense, require employees to obtain a third, final and binding certification from a health care provider designated or approved jointly by the City and the employee.

2. Medical Recertifications

Depending on the circumstances and duration of FMLA leave, the City may require employees to provide recertification of medical conditions giving rise to the need for leave. The City will notify employees if recertification is required and will give employees at least 15 calendar days to provide medical recertification.

3. Return to Work/Fitness for Duty Medical Certifications

Unless notified that providing such certifications is not necessary, employees returning to work from FMLA leaves that were taken because of their own serious health conditions that made them unable to perform their jobs must provide the City with medical certification confirming they are able to return.

to work and the employees' ability to perform the essential functions of the employees' position, with or without reasonable accommodation. The City may delay and/or deny job restoration until employees provide return to work/fitness for duty certifications.

D. Submit Certifications Supporting Need for Military Family Leave

Upon request, the first time employees seek leave due to qualifying exigencies arising out of the covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of a military member, the City may require employees to provide: 1) a copy of the military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating the military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status and the dates of the military member's covered active duty service; and 2) a certification from the employee setting forth information concerning the nature of the qualifying exigency for which leave is requested. Employees shall provide a copy of new active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military for leaves arising out of qualifying exigencies arising out of a different covered active duty or call to covered active duty status of the same or a different military member.

When leave is taken to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, the City may require employees to obtain certifications completed by an authorized health care provider of the covered servicemember. In addition, and in accordance with the FMLA regulations, the City may request that the certification submitted by employees set forth additional information provided by the employee and/or the covered servicemember confirming entitlement to such leave.

E. Substitute Paid Leave for Unpaid FMLA Leave

Employees must use any accrued paid time while taking unpaid FMLA leave.

The substitution of paid time for unpaid FMLA leave time does not extend the length of FMLA leave and the paid time will run concurrently with the employee's FMLA entitlement.

Leaves of absence taken in connection with a disability leave plan or workers' compensation injury/illness shall run concurrently with any FMLA leave entitlement. Upon written request, the City will allow employees to use accrued paid time to supplement any paid disability benefits.

F. Pay Employee's Share of Health Insurance Premiums

During FMLA leave, employees are entitled to continued group health plan coverage under the same conditions as if they had continued to work. Unless the City notifies employees of other arrangements, whenever employees are receiving pay from the City during FMLA leave, the City will deduct the employee portion of the group health plan premium from the employee's paycheck in the same manner as if the employee was actively working.

If FMLA leave is unpaid, employees must pay their portion of the group health premium on a bi-weekly or monthly basis.

IV. Exemption for Highly Compensated Employees

The City may choose not to return key employees (highest paid 10% of employees at a worksite or within 75 miles of that worksite) to their former or equivalent positions following a leave if

restoration of employment will cause substantial economic injury to the City. (This fact-specific determination will be made by the City on a case-by-case basis.) The City will notify employees if they qualify as a key employee, if the City intends to deny reinstatement, and of the employee's rights in such instances.

V. Questions and/or Complaints about FMLA Leave

If you have questions regarding this FMLA policy, please contact Human Resources. The City is committed to complying with the FMLA and, whenever necessary, shall interpret and apply this policy in a manner consistent with the FMLA.

The FMLA makes it unlawful for employers to: 1) interfere with, restrain or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA; or 2) discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA. If employees believe their FMLA rights have been violated, they should contact Human Resources immediately. The City will investigate any FMLA complaints and take prompt and appropriate remedial action to address and/or remedy any FMLA violation. Employees also may file FMLA complaints with the United States Department of Labor or may bring private lawsuits alleging FMLA violations.

VI. Coordination of FMLA Leave with Other Leave Policies

The FMLA does not affect any federal, state or local law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights. For additional information concerning leave entitlements and obligations that might arise when FMLA leave is either not available or exhausted, please consult the City's other leave policies in this handbook or contact Human Resources.

4-4 Domestic Violence Leave

Employees who have worked for the City for at least three (3) months may be granted up to three (3) days of unpaid leave in any 12-month period if the employee or a family or household member of the employee is the victim of domestic violence.

Leave may be used to:

- seek an injunction for protection against domestic violence or an injunction for protection in cases of repeat violence, dating violence or sexual violence;
- obtain medical care or mental health counseling, or both, for the employee or a family or household member to address physical or psychological injuries resulting from the act of domestic violence;
- obtain services from a victim-services organization, including, but not limited to, a domestic violence shelter or program or a rape crisis center as a result of the act of domestic violence;
- make their home secure from the perpetrator of the domestic violence or to seek new housing to escape the perpetrator; or
- seek legal assistance in addressing issues arising from the act of domestic violence.

“Family or household member” means spouses, former spouses, persons related by blood or marriage, persons who are presently residing together as if a family or who have resided together in the past as if a family, and persons who are parents of a child in common regardless of whether they have been married. With the exception of persons who have a child in common, the family or household

members must be currently residing or have in the past resided together in the same single dwelling unit.

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of the employees or their family or household member, three (3) days advance notice of the need for leave is required. Sufficient documentation of the act of domestic violence, such as a restraining order, police report or order to appear in court, is also required. Requests for leave and documents in connection with this leave will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

Section 5 - GENERAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

5-1 Workplace Conduct

The City of Ocala endeavors to maintain a positive work environment. Each employee plays a role in fostering this environment. Accordingly, we all must abide by certain rules of conduct, based on honesty, common sense and fair play.

Because everyone may not have the same idea about proper workplace conduct, it is helpful to adopt and enforce rules all can follow. Unacceptable conduct may subject the offender to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, in the City's sole discretion. The following are examples of some, but not all, conduct which can be considered unacceptable:

1. Obtaining employment on the basis of false or misleading information.
2. Stealing, removing or defacing the City of Ocala property or a co-worker's property, and/or disclosure of confidential information.
3. Completing another employee's time records.
4. Violation of safety rules and policies.
5. Violation of the City of Ocala's Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy.
6. Fighting, threatening or disrupting the work of others or other violations of the City of Ocala's Workplace Violence Policy.
7. Failure to follow lawful instructions of a supervisor.
8. Failure to perform assigned job duties.
9. Violation of the Punctuality and Attendance Policy, including but not limited to irregular attendance, habitual lateness or unexcused absences.
10. Gambling on City property.
11. Willful or careless destruction or damage to City assets or to the equipment or possessions of another employee.
12. Wasting work materials.
13. Performing work of a personal nature during working time.
14. Violation of the Solicitation and Distribution Policy.
15. Violation of the City of Ocala's Harassment or Equal Employment Opportunity Policies.
16. Violation of the Communication and Computer Systems Policy.
17. Unsatisfactory job performance.
18. Sleeping on the job or leaving the job without authorization.
19. Any other violation of City policy.
20. Any other action or behavior contrary to the best interests of the City.

Obviously, not every type of misconduct can be listed. Note that all employees are employed at-will, and the City of Ocala reserves the right to impose whatever discipline it chooses, or none at all, in a particular instance. The City will deal with each situation individually and nothing in this handbook

should be construed as a promise of specific treatment in a given situation. The City of Ocala will endeavor to utilize progressive discipline but reserves the right in its sole discretion to terminate the employee at any time for any reason.

Performance Improvement Plan - As part of a disciplinary action, an employee may also be placed on a performance improvement plan, the length of which shall be determined by the supervisor.

Pre-Disciplinary Meeting – For employees that have completed their introductory period, the Department Head or designee shall provide and arrange for a pre-disciplinary meeting prior to the demotion, suspension, or termination of any full-time/regular employee. The Human Resources/Risk Management Director or designee shall attend all pre-disciplinary meetings.

- The employee shall be provided, in writing, with a notice of the alleged misconduct. The employee shall be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations, orally or in writing, as to why the proposed action should not be taken.
- The employee may not have legal counsel present at a pre-disciplinary meeting.

Should the department head determine to discipline following the pre-disciplinary meeting, written notice of discipline shall be given to the employee. Such notice shall include the allegations of misconduct against the employee, and where applicable, any required corrective action necessary for the employee to avoid further disciplinary action.

Waiver of Pre-Disciplinary Meeting - The employee may waive a pre-disciplinary meeting. Such waiver must be in writing, signed by the employee, and specifically acknowledge that the employee understands and accepts the proposed discipline, and acknowledges that the waiver also applies to the filing of a grievance.

Appeals - Any employee, excluding seasonal, interns, or introductory, who is demoted or suspended without pay may appeal such action by filing a written grievance in accordance with the City's grievance procedure. Employees subject to termination may appeal the decision at Step 2 of the grievance procedure. Any grievance shall be filed within ten (10) working days from the date of action against the employee. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement shall refer to the provisions of the respective agreements for further appeals procedures.

Exceptions - Neither Pre-disciplinary meetings nor the Grievance Procedure shall apply to any member of the Senior Management staff, or any Assistant or Deputy Department Director.

Removal of Disciplinary Records - Non-unionized employees can request the removal of disciplinary actions older than three years from their personnel files. Employees must have no other disciplinary actions within the last three years to be eligible. Requests should be submitted via email to the Director of HR/Risk Management, who, along with the Chief of Staff, will review each request individually. Requests for non-sworn positions within the Ocala Police Department (OPD) should be directed to the Director of Support Services. Employees are encouraged to reach out with any questions or to discuss the process further.

5-2 Grievance Procedure

A "grievance" shall mean a claim or dispute by an employee with respect to the interpretation,

meaning or application of the provisions of City's policies and procedures. It is the policy of the City of Ocala to afford all employees a means of obtaining further consideration of problems when they remain unresolved at the supervisory level, and to establish policies and procedures that provide for timely resolution of grievances. Strict adherence to the procedures outlined below is mandatory for all concerned, except that time limits may be extended for good cause unless other procedures are provided by Federal or state law regulations.

Grievance Process – The following process shall be followed in processing grievances made by City employees:

- **Step One** – An employee wishing to grieve an incident or action meeting the definition above must submit the grievance in writing to his/her department director within 10 business days of a decision or action. The written grievance should include at a minimum, the date, and description of the decision or action in question. The employee's department director shall respond to the employee's grievance in writing, detailing his/her decision, within 10 business days of receipt of the grievance. If the department director fails to respond within 10 business days of receipt of the grievance, the grievance shall proceed to step two.
- **Step Two** - If the employee is not satisfied with the response of the department director, the employee may submit a written request to the Assistant City Manager (or City Manager where applicable) responsible for the employee's department within 10 business days of receipt of the department director's response. The Assistant City Manager shall respond to the employee's grievance in writing, detailing his/her decision, within 10 business days of receipt of the grievance. The decision of the Assistant City Manager is final and not appealable.

Documentation - Copies of all grievances and responses shall be forwarded to Human Resources/Risk Management for filing upon receipt or issuance.

5-3 Punctuality and Attendance

Employees are hired to perform important functions at the City of Ocala. As with any group effort, operating effectively takes cooperation and commitment from everyone. Therefore, attendance and punctuality are very important. Unnecessary absences and lateness are expensive, disruptive and place an unfair burden on fellow employees and supervisors. We expect excellent attendance from all employees. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

We do recognize, however, there are times when absences and tardiness cannot be avoided. In such cases, employees are expected to notify supervisors as early as possible, but no later than the start of the work day. Employees should call, stating the nature of the illness and its expected duration, for every day of absenteeism.

Unscheduled Sick Leave and Unscheduled PTO Leave Abuse – Unscheduled Sick leave and unscheduled PTO leave are privileges extended to full-time regular employees whose absence from work is caused by illness or injury; it is not a benefit to be used arbitrarily.

To preclude abuse, the department head may take disciplinary action in the following situations:

- Employee working eight-hour shifts takes more than 48 hours, employee working ten-hour shifts takes more than 60 hours or employee working twelve-hour shifts takes more than

72 hours of unscheduled sick leave, unscheduled PTO, or leave without pay during a 12-month period. After review of the circumstances, the department head may require a physician's statement. Failure to produce such a statement may result in an unauthorized leave without pay for each occurrence in the succeeding 12-month period. Depending upon the circumstances, the department head may also put the employee on a three (3) month probation.

- If circumstances warrant a three (3)-month probation and additional unauthorized absences occur, the department head may terminate the employee.
- If the employee uses more than 96 hours of unscheduled sick leave, unscheduled PTO leave, or leave without pay during a 12-month period, after careful review, the department head may terminate the employee.
- Leave taken under the Family and Medical Leave Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act shall not be considered as sick leave or non-scheduled PTO leave abuse.

Unreported absences of three (3) consecutive work days generally will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment with the City.

5-4 Use of Communications and Computer Systems

The City of Ocala's communication and computer systems are intended primarily for business purposes; however limited personal usage is permitted if it does not hinder performance of job duties or violate any other City policy. This includes the voice mail, e-mail and Internet systems. Users have no legitimate expectation of privacy in regard to their use of the City of Ocala systems.

The City of Ocala may access the voice mail and e-mail systems and obtain the communications within the systems, including past voice mail and e-mail messages, without notice to users of the system, in the ordinary course of business when the City deems it appropriate to do so. The reasons for which the City may obtain such access include, but are not limited to: maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that City operations continue appropriately during the employee's absence.

Further, the City of Ocala may review Internet usage to ensure that such use with City property, or communications sent via the Internet with City property, are appropriate. The reasons for which the City may review employees' use of the Internet with City property include but are not limited to: maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that City operations continue appropriately during the employee's absence.

The City may store electronic communications for a period of time after the communication is created. From time to time, copies of communications may be deleted.

The City's policies prohibiting harassment, in their entirety, apply to the use of City's communication and computer systems. No one may use any communication or computer system in a manner that may be construed by others as harassing or offensive based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

Further, since the City's communication and computer systems are intended for business use, all

employees, upon request, must inform management of any private access codes or passwords.

Unauthorized duplication of copyrighted computer software violates the law and is strictly prohibited.

5-5 Use of Social Media

It is the policy of the City of Ocala to have adopted a methodology or discipline to guide all interaction with social media technology. This policy provides guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

PURPOSE - City of Ocala departments may use social media tools, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube to reach a broader audience. While the City's website, www.ocalafl.org, is the City's primary Internet presence, the City recognizes that social media, when used appropriately, is useful in furthering the goals of the City and the missions of its departments.

All official City presences on social media sites or services are considered extensions of the City's information networks and are governed by the responsibilities and rules set forth in this and related policies and procedures and in the City's standards of Employee Conduct found in the City's Handbook. Violations of this policy shall be considered misconduct and may result in discipline up to and including termination.

Additionally, the City recognizes that many City employees use social media tools such as Facebook in their personal lives; therefore, this policy provides guidelines for City employees when they communicate on social media sites as private citizens.

SCOPE - This policy, and its provisions, apply and serve as a guide to all City employees, including contract employees and volunteers for the City of Ocala when working with social media tools on behalf of the City and applies to the extent specified herein with regard to personal social media sites. This does not apply to social media sites of the City's elected officials used solely for campaign or personal purposes. Nothing within this policy is intended to restrict City of Ocala employees from exercising their First Amendment right to speak freely on matters of public concern and to engage in other lawful concerted activities for the purposes of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection as defined and interpreted by applicable law. Personnel should be mindful, however, that free speech rights are not absolute, but rather must be viewed in the context and the particular circumstances of the speech and balanced against the City's interests in promoting the effective and efficient delivery of its public services. Additionally, nothing in this policy is intended to create a public forum for expressive activities on the City's social media platforms.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Social Media** are various forms of user-created content tools such as social networks, blogs, video sharing, pod casts, wikis, message boards and online forums. Technologies include, but are not limited to: picture and video sharing, wall postings, email, instant

messaging and music sharing. Examples of social media applications include, but are not limited to: Google and Yahoo Groups (reference, social networking); Wikipedia (reference); Facebook and Instagram (social networking); You Tube (social networking and video sharing); Flickr (photo sharing); Twitter (social networking and microblogging); Skype (instant messaging and webcam chat); LinkedIn (business networking); and news media comment sharing/bloggging. This policy covers all social media tools, both current and future.

2. **Social Networking** is the practice of expanding one’s business and/or social contacts by making connections using a range of social media tools including blogs, video, images, tagging, lists of friends, and forums/messages that use the Internet to promote such connections through Web-based groups for that purpose.
3. **Social Media Account** shall mean any registration, login credential, toll, forum, website or network that is created or maintained by a City Department for the purpose of establishing or perpetuating a social media presence.
4. **Authorized User** shall mean any employee, or any person acting on their behalf, which has been authorized by their Department Head and approved by the Office of Strategic Engagement and Information Technology to establish, create, edit and/or maintain any social media Account, and the posts it may contain, in the transaction of official business of the City of Ocala.
5. **Post** shall mean any email, message, picture, graphic, image, advertisement, notification, feed, stream, transmission, broadcast, podcast, video, instant message, text message, blog, microblog, status update, wall post, comment, and any and all other forms, means or attempts at collaboration and communication that is uploaded, posted to or otherwise displayed on or transmitted by, any social media account.
6. **External Entity** shall mean any person or party not employed by, or not an authorized representative of, the City of Ocala.
7. **External Information** shall mean any social media post by any External Entity, and the information or substance it may contain.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Department

1. Before establishing a social media account, departments must contact the Office of Strategic Engagement to discuss objectives and desired outcomes for utilizing social media to help determine its effectiveness in reaching the communication objectives.
2. When establishing a social media account and during the maintenance of the social media account:
 - a. Include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and topical scope of the social media presence. When possible, Department social media Accounts shall link back to www.ocalafl.gov for the purpose of downloading any forms, documents and other information.
 - b. Conspicuously post the City’s Social Media Terms of Use. The Terms of Use shall clearly indicate that any post is subject to public records disclosure.
 - c. Enable features for public comments, if such capability exists, and comply with and enforce the posted Terms of Use.
 - d. Make available to the Office of Strategic Engagement all content such as text,

images and video placed on the social media accounts for possible placement on www.ocalafl.org.

- e. Maintain compliance with all applicable Federal, State and City requirements, policies and procedures relating to records retention and public records requests.

Office of Strategic Engagement

1. Review proposals for new social media projects and provide formal approval or denial.
2. Provide counsel to Departments as to the appropriate use of the social media tool and guidance as to the types of information that should be released.
3. Along with the designated Department representative(s), monitor content on each Department social media account to ensure adherence to the policy guidelines.

PROHIBITED ON/OFF-DUTY ACTIVITIES

1. The transmitting, sharing and/or divulging any Personal Health Information (PHI), whether clearly stated or implied.
2. The posting of photos, videos or images of any kind that potentially identify patients, addresses, vehicle license plate numbers or any other PHI.
3. Using language that could reasonably be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, defamatory, discriminatory, or engaging in unlawful harassment or bullying of someone served by the City of Ocala government.
4. Endorsing any commercial product, service or entity in any way that depicts the individual as an employee of the City of Ocala without the expressed written permission of the employee's department head.
5. City employees, contract employees for the City and City volunteers shall not post images, files, or text depicting City property, equipment or personnel in any manner that would disrupt the workforce, interfere with working relationships or efficient work flow, or undermine public confidence in the City or a City department.

GENERAL USE

1. Review and understand the Code of Conduct and prohibited activities enforced by the City of Ocala as outlined in the Employee Handbook. Violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action.
2. Do not edit posts. Any post violating the Terms of Use should be documented for records retention and then deleted from public view. The comment maker shall then be notified that he/she has violated the Terms of Use, specifying any and all Terms of Use that were violated.
3. Any published content is persistent in the public domain. When speaking on behalf of the City of Ocala, it should be assumed that all communications are in the public domain and available for publishing and discussion in all forms of media.
4. Consult the Office of Strategic Engagement before discussing City related matters on social media accounts or in the public domain. All employees shall understand the perception of their association with the City of Ocala as it relates to online Social Networks.
5. Ensure all content posted by Authorized Users to City Social Networking Accounts

represents the City's point of view and not those of individual employees. The Office of Strategic Engagement shall serve as a resource to this end. Exercise caution while interacting with any External Entity, both known and unknown to the user, and be cautious of the information the Entity may provide or post.

6. Remain focused on the City's mission, values and customer service. Do not allow social media to interfere with primary job responsibilities unless such use is a primary duty or an essential job function.
7. Respect copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws. Always protect sensitive and personally identifiable information. Do not publish or report on conversations that are intended to be pre-decisional or internal to the City unless management has authorized the release of such information.
8. Ensure social media account implementation and use complies with applicable mandates, including but not limited to: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Chapter 119 Florida Statutes, records retention and public records requests, and any other applicable City, State or Federal requirements.
9. Employees are not permitted to use City or Department logos, seal, insignias, badges, or other graphics on their personal social media pages as their profile or picture or in any manner that would have the reasonably foreseeable potential of appearing to be an official City of Ocala outlet.

PERSONAL USE

1. City of Ocala employees are free to participate and engage in social media use during their off-duty hours on their personal computers or internet-accessible devices.
2. Employees may post or comment on issues of general public concern (as opposed to personal grievances) so long as the comments do not disrupt the workforce, interfere with important working relationships or efficient workflow, or undermine public confidence in the City of Ocala. Instances will be judged on a case-by-case basis.
3. Where a connection to the City of Ocala is apparent (i.e. pictures, video personal information, etc.), employees should make it clear that they are speaking on behalf of themselves and that they are in no way speaking for or with the approval of the City of Ocala.
4. The following disclaimer is recommended for any blog or website maintained by any employee: "The views expressed on this (blog/website) are my own and do not in any way reflect the views of my employer."
 1. Volunteers may substitute "City of Ocala" in lieu of "my employer".
 2. Employees should consider adding the same language in an "About Me" section of their blog or social networking website.
 3. This disclaimer does not by itself exempt members from a special responsibility when blogging or using social media applications. Members should remember that their online behavior should still reflect the same manner of behavior as would be expected from simply being out in public.
5. When there is any doubt as to whether or not posting in a public forum is appropriate, employees are strongly encouraged to seek guidance from their respective department

heads or human resources.

TERMS OF USE

IMPORTANT: The City of Ocala's social media platforms are intended to be used for informational purposes only. If you wish to contact City Council or Administration or to request City services, please visit the City's official website: www.ocalafl.org.

Anyone posting comments contrary to this Terms of Use policy may be prohibited from future participation. The City of Ocala reserves the right to update these Terms of Use. By participating on these platforms, users agree to send and receive messages that are both proper and related to the posting, discussion, or forum topic. The following actions are unacceptable practices:

Defaming, harassing, threatening, or otherwise violating the legal rights of others, including their privacy (see below); Misrepresenting one's person, background, or character; Posting any defamatory, obscene, false, or unlawful material; Selling, advertising, or exchanging any goods or services unless expressly allowed; Posting any copyrighted material owned by a third party; Spamming (duplicate postings) and ramming (posting off-topic responses to another posting).

In addition to the above, you agree to use any official site of the City of Ocala, Florida forum at your own risk. While championing proper use of such forums, the City of Ocala cannot guarantee violations of the above code will not occur. Under Florida law, the City of Ocala's social media platforms are public record. If you do not want your name or posting released in response to a public records request, do not post to these platforms.

5-6 Smoking, Vaping & Dipping

Smoking, vaping and dipping is prohibited in all City buildings, within 25 feet of building entrances and in all City vehicles.

5-7 Solicitation and Distribution

To avoid distractions, solicitation by the employee of another employee is prohibited while either employee is on work time. "Work time" is defined as the time the employee is engaged, or should be engaged, in performing his/her work tasks for the City of Ocala. Solicitation of any kind by non-employees on City premises is prohibited at all times.

Distribution of advertising material, handbills, printed or written literature of any kind in working areas of the City is prohibited at all times. Distribution of literature by non-employees on City premises is prohibited at all times.

5-8 Bulletin Boards

Important notices and items of general interest are continually posted on the City of Ocala bulletin boards. Employees should make it a practice to review bulletin boards frequently. This will assist employees in keeping up with what is current at the City of Ocala. To avoid confusion, employees

should not post or remove any material from the bulletin board.

5-9 Integrity and Ethics

INTEGRITY - One of the City of Ocala's most important assets is the reputation of its employees for honesty and integrity. Preserving your integrity demands continuous commitment. Each employee must avoid any activity or relationship that might reflect unfavorably on the City whether as a result of a possible conflict of interest, the appearance of such a conflict, or any other impropriety.

Although no written code can take the place of personal integrity, the following general guidelines should serve as minimum standards of proper conduct. Any violation of existing ordinances, policies, rules or regulations may subject the employee involved to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or possible civil or criminal penalties.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST - In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest, every appointed or elected officer or municipal employee of the City of Ocala who is an officer, director, agent, or employee or the owner of a substantial interest in any business entity which does or anticipates doing business with the City of Ocala or is subject to regulation by the City must complete an "Officer and Employee Disclosure Statement" and file the statement with the required procurement documents submitted to the respective purchasing agent. The purpose of this form is to identify any actual or potential conflicts of interest which may exist between an employee's public duties with the City and personal interests.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Employees shall be honest in word and conduct and never use their position to benefit themselves personally, or another party, through the disclosure of or by acting on confidential information, award of work, procurement of supplies, or use of City facilities, equipment, or resources. Employees will not disclose confidential information under any circumstances, except as provided by law.

GIFTS & GRATUITIES - City of Ocala employees are prohibited from knowingly receiving, accepting, taking, seeking, or soliciting, directly or indirectly any gift of substantial value or a substantial economic benefit which would tend to improperly influence a reasonable person in the person's position to depart from the faithful and impartial discharge of the person's public duties. This section does not apply to the following:

- an occasional non-pecuniary (not cash) gift having a value of less than \$50;
- an award publicly presented in recognition of public service;
- any bona fide transaction made in the ordinary course of business; or
- a political campaign contribution.

PERSONAL USE OF CITY PROPERTY - Personal use of City office items is generally discouraged; however, any such use may be permitted only upon pre-approval by the department or division director. An employee's use of a City owned cell phone is restricted to the calling plan assigned. Any overage due to personal use will be reimbursed to the City within 30 days of notification.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY - City employees shall not use City owned property (including vehicles and uniforms), work time or influence of position while engaging in any political activity.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT - Employment with the City of Ocala shall be an employee's primary employment. City employees are permitted to engage in outside employment upon completion and

department head approval of an employee's Notice of Outside Employment form. Employees are required to obtain approval prior to commencing any outside employment.

REPORTING FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE OR OTHER ILLEGAL ACTS - Any City employee who has reason to believe that there may have been an instance of fraud, waste, abuse or other illegal act in connection with a City program, function or activity, shall report it immediately to their supervisor or Department Head, the Internal Auditor's Office, the City Manager's Office, or the confidential Integrity Hotline (352-629-8555) as soon as possible.

Reports will be investigated as expeditiously as possible. Where an investigation confirms that fraud or another illegal act has occurred, appropriate corrective action will be taken. Fraud or other illegal acts will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The law in Florida protects employees from retaliatory or adverse personnel action for disclosing violations of law which present a danger to the public's health, safety or welfare and suspected acts of gross mismanagement or gross waste of public funds. Employees who report incidents of fraud or illegal activities or who assist in an investigation shall be protected from retaliation of any sort. However, any employee who assists in an investigation, and is found to have participated in the illegal act or fraud being investigated remains subject to appropriate disciplinary action. In addition, if it is determined that a report was not made in good faith, or that an employee intentionally provided false information regarding an allegation, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment may occur.

Any employee who believes that he/she has experienced retaliation for making a report or assisting in an investigation shall report this as soon as possible to the appropriate supervisor, manager, Department Head or the Human Resources/Risk Management Director.

FINANCIAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES - The City of Ocala shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, state laws, and city ordinances and resolutions regarding the procurement of goods, services and contracts. A complete copy of the purchasing policy may be obtained from the Finance Department.

Credit Cards - City credit cards shall be used for official City business only and all use shall comply with the purchasing policy.

Travel Policy – The City of Ocala shall comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, City ordinances and resolutions regarding travel related to City business. A complete copy of the travel policy is available on the intranet or may be obtained from the Finance Department.

5-10 Use of Facilities, Equipment and Property, Including Intellectual Property

Equipment essential in accomplishing job duties is often expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines.

Employees should notify their supervisor if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of loss, damages, defects and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. Supervisors can answer any questions about the employees' responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job.

Employees also are prohibited from any unauthorized use of the City's intellectual property, such as audio and video tapes, print materials and software.

Improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment can result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

Further, the City is not responsible for any damage to employees' personal belongings unless the employee's supervisor provided advance approval for the employee to bring the personal property to work.

5-11 Health and Safety

The health and safety of employees and others on City property are of critical concern to the City of Ocala. The City intends to comply with all health and safety laws applicable to our business. To this end, we must rely upon employees to ensure that work areas are kept safe and free of hazardous conditions. Employees are required to be conscientious about workplace safety, including proper operating methods, and recognize dangerous conditions or hazards. Any unsafe conditions or potential hazards should be reported to management immediately, even if the problem appears to be corrected. Any suspicion of a concealed danger present on the City's premises, or in a product, facility, piece of equipment, process or business practice for which the City is responsible should be brought to the attention of management immediately.

The City of Ocala is committed to preventing the spread of COVID in the workplace. All employees are expected to fully comply with all state, local and federal health and safety rules. This includes social distancing and masking rules, as well as symptom reporting. The City will keep you informed of the latest rules and how the City will apply them.

Periodically, the City may issue rules and guidelines governing workplace safety and health. The City may also issue rules and guidelines regarding the handling and disposal of hazardous substances and waste. All employees should familiarize themselves with these rules and guidelines, as strict compliance will be expected.

Any workplace injury, accident, or illness must be reported to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident.

5-12 Hiring Relatives/Employee Relationships

A familial relationship among employees can create an actual or at least a potential conflict of interest in the employment setting, especially where one relative supervises another relative. To avoid this problem, the City of Ocala will not hire or place a relative in a position where the potential for favoritism or conflict exists.

In other cases, such as personal relationships where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties will be separated by reassignment or discharged from employment, at the discretion of the City. Accordingly, all parties to any type of intimate personal relationship must inform management.

If two employees marry, are or become related, or enter into an intimate relationship, they may not

work in the same department (or the same division in departments with separate and distinct chains of command in each division). The City generally will attempt to identify other available positions, but if no alternate position is available, the City retains the right to decide which employee will remain with the City. On a case-by-case basis, the City reserves the right to waive the prohibition on related employees working in the same department for certified firefighter and Ocala Police Department positions.

For purposes of this policy, a relative is an individual who is related to the employee as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother or half-sister.

5-13 Employee Dress Code and Grooming

The City of Ocala requires all employees to maintain a professional appearance and high standards of personal hygiene to reflect positively on the City. These guidelines apply to all employees during working hours or when representing the City:

1. **Personal Hygiene and Grooming:**

Employees are expected to maintain high personal hygiene standards. Hair must be clean, groomed, and free from offensive odors. A neat and clean personal presentation is essential at all times.

2. **Appropriate Clothing:**

- Employees must wear attire suitable for their job functions. Appropriateness may vary depending on the nature of the work, safety concerns, and public contact.
- All clothing should be clean, neat, and free from tears or fraying. Clothing that is overly revealing or inappropriate for a professional environment is not permitted.

3. **Inappropriate Attire:**

Torn or frayed clothing, overly casual items such as athletic wear, offensive images or slogans, and flip-flops are prohibited. Revealing or immodest clothing is not allowed in any work environment. Jewelry should be conservative and safe for the work environment. Tattoos should be covered if they are offensive or inappropriate. Visible facial piercings, other than small, discreet nose or ear studs, are generally discouraged in public-facing roles. Employees may be asked to remove or cover piercings if deemed inappropriate or unprofessional for the work environment.

4. **Compliance:**

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance. Violations may result in being sent home to change, and repeated offenses may lead to disciplinary action. Accommodations for religious, cultural, or medical reasons can be requested through supervisors or HR.

5. **Uniforms:**

- When uniforms are required as part of the job, the City will provide them at no cost. Uniforms must be maintained and worn in accordance with City and departmental policies.
- The City will replace, repair, or clean uniforms as necessary at no cost to employees.

6. **Footwear and Eyewear:**

- Office employees must wear professional, closed-toe shoes or dress sandals appropriate for an office setting.
- For employees requiring safety footwear and eyewear, the City provides both. Refer to Protective Footwear Policy #15-025 and Protective Eyewear Policy #15-026 for details.

5-14 Publicity/Statements to the Media

All media inquiries regarding the position of the City as to any issues must be referred to the Marketing Communications Manager. Only The Marketing Communications Manager, and when appropriate the Public Information Officers employed by the Ocala Police Department and Ocala Fire Rescue, are authorized to make or approve public statements on behalf of the City. No employees, unless specifically designated by The Manager, Marketing & Communications, are authorized to make those statements on behalf of City. Any employee wishing to write and/or publish an article, paper, or other publication on behalf of the City must first obtain approval from the Marketing Communications Manager.

5-15 Operation of Vehicles

All employees authorized to drive City-owned or leased vehicles or personal vehicles in conducting City business must possess a current, valid driver's license and an acceptable driving record. Any change in license status or driving record must be reported to management immediately.

Employees must have a valid driver's license in their possession while operating a vehicle off or on City property. It is the responsibility of every employee to drive safely and obey all traffic, vehicle safety, and parking laws or regulations. Drivers must demonstrate safe driving habits at all times. City-owned or leased vehicles may be used only as authorized by management.

Vehicle Condition and Modifications

Employees are required to always maintain City vehicles in a clean and presentable condition, both inside and outside. Vehicles must remain free of trash, debris, and personal items that could interfere with a professional appearance or safe operation. Any modification, alteration, or addition to a City vehicle is strictly prohibited. Failure to maintain cleanliness or making unauthorized modifications may result in progressive disciplinary action.

Electronic Device Use While Driving

Employees who drive on City business must abide by all state or local laws prohibiting or limiting electronic device use, including cell phones or tablets, while driving. Further, even if use is permitted, employees may choose to refrain from using any electronic device while driving. "Use" includes, but is not limited to, talking or listening to another person or sending an electronic or text message via the electronic device.

Regardless of the circumstances, employees shall proceed to a safe location off the active roadway and safely stop the vehicle before handling an electronic device. If acceptance of a call is absolutely necessary while the employees are driving, and permitted by law, they must use a hands-free option.

Under no circumstances should employees feel that they need to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs.

Since this policy does not require any employee to use an electronic device while driving, employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of electronic devices while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

Texting and e-mailing while driving is prohibited in all circumstances.

5-16 Business Expense Reimbursement

Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable approved expenses incurred in accordance with the City's Travel Policy. These expenses must be approved by the employee's Supervisor, and may include air travel, hotels, motels, meals, cab fare, rental vehicles, or gas and car mileage for personal vehicles. All expenses incurred should be submitted to the Finance Department along with the receipts in a timely manner.

Employees are expected to exercise restraint and good judgment when incurring expenses. Employees should contact their supervisor in advance if they have any questions about whether an expense will be reimbursed.

5-17 References

The City of Ocala will respond to reference requests through Human Resources/Risk Management Department. The City will provide general information concerning the employee such as date of hire, date of discharge, and positions held. Please refer all requests for references to Human Resources/Risk Management Department.

Only Human Resources/Risk Management may respond to a job reference inquiry.

5-18 If You Must Leave Us

Should any employees decide to leave the City, we ask that they provide a supervisor with at least two weeks advance notice of departure. Thoughtfulness will be appreciated. Employees may not use any leave time, unless it is for an illness, during the two-week notice period. All City, property including, but not limited to, keys, security cards, parking passes, laptop computers, fax machines, uniforms, etc., must be returned at separation. Employees also must return all of the City's confidential information upon separation. To the extent permitted by law, employees will be required to repay the City (through payroll deduction, if lawful) for any lost or damaged City property. As noted previously, all employees are employed at-will and nothing in this handbook changes that status.

5-19 Exit Interviews

Employees who resign are **expected to participate** in an exit interview with Human Resources to provide valuable feedback and insights regarding their experience with the City. HR will schedule this interview once a resignation is received.

5-20 A Few Closing Words

This handbook is intended to give employees a broad summary of things they should know about the City of Ocala. The information in this handbook is general in nature and, should questions arise, any member of management should be consulted for complete details. While we intend to continue the policies, rules and benefits described in this handbook, the City of Ocala, in its sole discretion, may always amend, add to, delete from or modify the provisions of this handbook and/or change its

interpretation of any provision set forth in this handbook. Employees should not hesitate to speak to management if they have any questions about the City or its personnel policies and practices.

GENERAL HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This Employee handbook is an important document intended to help employees become acquainted with the City of Ocala. This document is intended to provide guidelines and general descriptions only; it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention.

Because the City's operations may change, the contents of this handbook may be changed at any time, with or without notice, in an individual case or generally, at the sole discretion of management.

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgment of this handbook.

I have received and read a copy of the City of Ocala's Employees handbook. I understand that the policies, rules and benefits described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of the City at any time.

I further understand that my employment is terminable at will, either by myself or the City, with or without reason or notice, regardless of the length of my employment or the granting of benefits of any kind.

I understand that no representative of the City of Ocala other than City Manager may alter "at will" status and any such modification must be in a signed writing.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and that I have received a copy of the City's Employee Handbook.

Employee's Printed Name: _____

Employee's Signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

The signed original copy of this acknowledgment should be given to management - it will be filed in your personnel file.

RECEIPT OF NON-HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the City of Ocala's policy to prohibit intentional and unintentional harassment of any individual by another person on the basis of any protected classification including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation or age. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate our employees' personal morality, but to ensure that in the workplace, no one harasses another individual.

If the employee feels that he or she has been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, he or she should immediately report the matter to Human Resources. If unable for any reason to contact Human Resources, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of what the employee perceives to be harassment, the employee should contact any member of management. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, the employee should contact any higher-level manager in his or her reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the City will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. If the employee feels he or she has been subjected to any such retaliation, he or she should report it in the same manner in which the employee would report a claim of perceived harassment under this policy. Violation of this policy including any improper retaliatory conduct will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

I have read and I understand the City of Ocala's Non-Harassment Policy.

Employee's Printed Name: _____

Employee's Signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

The signed original copy of this receipt should be given to management - it will be filed in your personnel file.

RECEIPT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the City of Ocala's policy to prohibit harassment of any employee by any supervisor, employee, customer or vendor on the basis of sex or gender. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate personal morality within the City. It is to ensure that at the City all employees are free from sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what types of conduct could constitute sexual harassment, examples of prohibited behavior include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, obscene gestures, displaying sexually graphic magazines, calendars or posters, sending sexually explicit e-mails, text messages and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as uninvited touching of a sexual nature or sexually related comments. Depending upon the circumstances, improper conduct also can include sexual joking, vulgar or offensive conversation or jokes, commenting about the employee's physical appearance, conversation about one's own or someone else's sex life, or teasing or other conduct directed toward a person because of their sex or gender which is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an unprofessional and hostile working environment.

If the employees feel they have been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, they should immediately report the matter to Human Resources. If unable for any reason to contact Human Resources, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of perceived harassment, the employee should contact any member of management. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, the employee should contact any higher-level manager in their reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated, and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the City will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. If the employees feel they have been subjected to any such retaliation, they should report it in the same manner in which a claim of perceived harassment would be reported under this policy. Violation of this policy including any improper retaliatory conduct will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

I have read and I understand the City of Ocala's Sexual Harassment Policy.

Employee's Printed Name: _____

Employee's Signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

The signed original copy of this receipt should be given to management - it will be filed in your personnel file.