

TOWN OF SOUTHLINGTON



Employee Policy Handbook

REVISED
January, 2024

WELCOME!

Welcome to the Town of Southington! Whether you have just joined our team or have been with the Town for a while, we are confident that you will find our organization a rewarding place to work. We are delighted that you have chosen to join the team and hope that you enjoy a long and successful career with us. We consider the employees of the Town to be one of our most valuable resources and we look forward to a productive and successful partnership.

This handbook is prepared for you to serve as a guide for the employer/employee relationship. The topics covered apply to all employees of the Town. Our employees use their creativity and talent to invent new solutions, meet new demands, and offer the most effective services to the Southington Community. With your active involvement, creativity, and support, the Town of Southington will continue to achieve its goals. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being an important part of the Town's success.

This Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces all previous policies and procedures including, but not limited to, all memoranda or written policies which may have been issued on the subjects covered in this handbook. The policies included in this handbook are guidelines only and are subject to change as the Town of Southington deems appropriate and necessary. From time to time you may receive notice of new or modified policies, procedures, benefits, or programs.

Please take time to review the policies and procedures contained in this handbook. If you have questions, feel free to ask your supervisor or to contact the human resource department.

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TOWN AND GOVERNMENT FACTS

History of Southington, Connecticut

Although Southington was formally established as a town separate from Farmington in 1779, its roots go back to a much earlier time. Samuel Woodruff moved from Farmington to the area then known as "Panthorne." The settlement grew, prospered, and came to be known as "South Farmington" and then later, the shortened version, "Southington."

A meeting house, independent of the Farmington parish, was first constructed here in 1726 and was used until 1757. Its location on the site of the present Oak Hill Cemetery is commemorated by the First Meeting House stone and plaque.

Southington became a thriving community with the construction of dwellings, taverns, and stores. Industry flourished rapidly. In 1767, Atwater's grist mill was established and by 1790, Southington had a button factory, sawmills, a brass foundry, and potash works. In addition, the first machines to make carriage bolts were developed in Southington.

Southington played a part in this country's military heritage. Important town visitors during the Revolutionary War include Washington, Lafayette, and Count Rochambeau.

Southington today is a growing community, once described as "A Microcosm of America." The town is in Hartford County, within 20 miles of Hartford and 9 miles of Waterbury, and includes the sections of Plantsville, Milldale, and Marion. The geographic area of the town is 36.8 square miles, ranking it 40th out of 169 Connecticut towns and its population is approximately 43,000. While today it is a modern residential, commercial, and industrial community, Southington is proud of its history.

Town Council

The Town of Southington adopted the Council-Manager form of government in 1966. The Town has a nine-member Town Council, elected to two-year terms. The Council appoints one of its members to serve as Chairman. The Town Council is responsible for setting policy through the enactment of ordinances and resolutions.

Town Council Meetings

The Town Council conducts regular business meetings on the second and fourth Mondays of every month, excepting holidays. In July and August there is only one meeting on the second Monday of the month. Special meetings are called, as necessary. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. Check the agenda for individual meetings.

TOWN AND GOVERNMENT FACTS

Town Departments

Assessors Department
Board of Education
Building Department
Calendar House
Community Services
Economic Development
Elections Department / Registrar of voters
Engineering Department
Finance Department
Fire Department
Health Department
Highway/Parks Department
Housing Authority
Human Resource
Library & Barnes Museum
Planning and Zoning Department
Police Department
Recreation Department
Sewer Department
Tax Collector
Town Attorney
Town Clerk
Town Manager
Water Department
Water Pollution Control Facility
Youth Services

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Equal Opportunity

The Town of Southington provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), parental status, national origin, age, disability, family medical history or genetic information, political affiliation, military service, or other non-merit-based factors. These protections extend to all management practices and decisions, including recruitment and hiring practices, promotions, training, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, and career development programs.

The Town of Southington expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment or discrimination based on any of the characteristics mentioned above. Improper interference with the ability of other employees to perform their expected job duties is not tolerated.

Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the HR manager. The Town will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of equal employment opportunity. If an employee feels he or she has been subjected to any such retaliation, he or she should bring it to the attention of the HR manager.

Retaliation means adverse conduct taken because an individual reported an actual or perceived violation of this policy, opposed practices prohibited by this policy, or participated in the reporting and investigation process described below. "Adverse conduct" includes but is not limited to:

1. Shunning and avoiding an individual who reports harassment, discrimination, or retaliation.
2. Express or implied threats or intimidation intended to prevent an individual from reporting harassment, discrimination, or retaliation.
3. Denying employment benefits because an applicant or employee reported harassment, discrimination or retaliation or participated in the reporting and investigation process.

Complaints of discrimination should be filed according to the procedures described in the Harassment and Complaint Procedure.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government programs and services. As it relates to employment, Title I of the ADA protects the rights of both employees and job seekers.

To ensure equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, the Town will make reasonable accommodations for the known disability of an otherwise qualified individual, unless undue hardship on the operation of the business would result. Employees who may require a reasonable accommodation should contact the human resource department.

Commitment to Diversity

The Town of Southington is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all employees have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the success of the organization and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspectives. This commitment is embodied in the way we service the Southington Community and is an important principle of sound business management.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a federal law that prohibits employers from discriminating against employees. It is the policy of the Town of Southington that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law is prohibited, whether by employees or third parties subject to the control of the Town. It is also the policy of the Town of Southington to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or veteran status.

For the purposes of this policy, “gender identity or expression” means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.

For the purposes of this policy, “veteran” means any person honorably discharged from, or released under honorable conditions from active service in, the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Air Force and any reserve component thereof, including the Connecticut National Guard.

Discrimination in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination. Any individual wishing to file a complaint regarding discrimination may obtain a copy of the Town’s complaint procedures (Addendum A) which is included on the website within the human resource department webpage.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

Employment Guidelines

The human resource department is responsible for the development, implementation and administration of all employment policies, procedures, rules, and regulations for Town employees.

The employment functions of the human resource department shall include, without limitation, the following functions:

- Recruitment.
- Employment eligibility determinations, testing and assessment.
- Administration of classification and compensation processes.
- Administration of the hiring process and procedures.
- Implementation of terms and conditions of employment as established from time to time through the collective bargaining process.
- Administration of employee performance review plans and recommendation of modifications to employee performance review plans and procedures.
- Administration of employee discipline and termination in accordance with collective bargaining agreements and Town personnel policies.
- Staff development, personnel training, and retention processes.
- Employee assistance and employee relations services.
- Maintenance of human resource records and documents.
- Compliance review as to all applicable laws in the area of personnel.
- Affirmative action.

Every appointment, transfer, promotion, demotion, dismissal, change in salary, absence from duty, and other temporary or regular change in the status of employees shall be reported to the human resource manager at such time, in such form, and with such supporting or pertinent information as the human resource manager may prescribe.

Every effort will be made to find suitable candidates both from within the Town organization and from outside the Town organization. Open or promotional, competitive recruitment postings will include the job descriptions and specifications.

Department heads and appointing authorities may employ any full-time candidate from the applicable eligibility list certified by the human resource manager, following satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment tests, including the pre-employment medical examination, reference checks and/or background investigation, and the review with the human resource manager to ensure conformance with any collective bargaining agreement and Town personnel policy. To the extent that there is a conflict between a collective bargaining agreement and this policy, the collective bargaining agreement shall be the controlling document.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND APPOINTMENT

Request to Fill Positions

Department heads are required to submit a request for all regular, full-time, and part-time positions and temporary full-time or part-time positions (fewer than six months) to the human resource department. The human resource manager (or designee) will review all requests in detail including classification, salary, and budget.

Employment Application

All applicants are required to complete an employment application through the Town's online application system, <http://www.applitrack.com/southingtonschools/onlineapp>, and sign the Town's Application for Employment form as a prerequisite for employment consideration. Only applications for currently posted positions will be considered.

Applications must be received in the human resource department by close of business on the closing date for the opening.

Applications and resumes forwarded to department heads by the human resource manager (or designee) should be acted upon promptly, following job related guidelines.

The application is a critical component of the examination process and must be fully completed. All information and questions on the application form should be answered. An applicant's electronic signature certifies that all statements and information are true, complete, and correct. False, incomplete, or inaccurate information may result in the rejection of the application or dismissal if employed.

When an applicant completes and signs the required Town Employment application form, the form is considered personal and confidential. Under no circumstances shall anyone make a copy, take, or send the application outside of the human resource department without prior approval of the human resource manager. All outside requests for such forms or related information should be referred to the human resource manager.

Through the submission of the application, the applicant gives approval for the Town to check employment references and agrees to undergo a job-related pre-employment examination, as well as a drug screening test. No applicant should be considered or interviewed unless the employment application is fully completed and is signed and submitted to the human resource department prior to the closing date.

No original employment records are to be removed from the human resource department.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND APPOINTMENT

Interviewing Candidates

All interviewing procedures will conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA).

- After the establishment of the eligibility list, the Appointing Authority or designee conducts interviews for all positions to evaluate a candidate. Questions used in an interview assess only job requirements, skills, knowledge, and abilities which are in alignment with the competencies identified in the job description. They reflect as nearly as possible the content of the job and are geared to the appropriate complexity level of the job to eliminate any bias.
- Interview questions will make no reference to applicant's age, religion, sex, color, race, ancestry or national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, present or past history of mental disorder, mental retardation, learning or physical disability, medical conditions, prior workers compensation claims or arrangements for children's care at home.
- The human resource department is available to assist with question development or training prior to the actual interview. The final decision, pending satisfactory completion of all pre-employment testing, rests with the Appointing Authority.
- Interviews may be arranged at the convenience of the Appointing Authority or designee; however, enough time should be allowed for outside candidates to plan their schedule.
- It is recommended that the Appointing Authority or designee interview at least three candidates for each position, however, there may be a need to interview more. The process is limited only by union preference to a position in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Reference Checks

Prior to making an offer to an applicant, a minimum of two (2) previous employer references are required, preferably by telephone, and the following data checked:

1. Position Title
2. Dates of Employment
3. Performance
4. Reason for Leaving
5. Eligibility for Rehire

In the event significant unfavorable information is obtained, the applicant should be removed from further consideration unless the Town official has reason to believe there is discrimination.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND APPOINTMENT

The human resource department will make the necessary contacts for the purpose of checking references for unrepresented management positions.

Department Heads are responsible for completing reference checks for all other full-time positions, temporary and part-time employees. For full-time regular employees, the completed references and the Request for Approval signed by the appointing authority are then forwarded to the human resource manager for review. Once approved and following the candidate's successful completion of all required tests, interviews, and reference checks, and prior to and pending the successful completion of the pre-employment medical exam and drug screening test and background screening a conditional offer of employment, including the approved starting wage rate, will be made by the appointing authority to the candidate shown on a current, applicable eligibility list.

Employment Background Screening

The Town conducts background checks on all job candidates pre- and post-offer (contingency offer) as appropriate. Specific background checks administered during the hiring process will be job related and may vary depending on the essential functions of the job and work location. The Town may also use a third-party vendor to administer part or all the background screening. Background screening will include but is not limited to prior employment verification, medical, drug screening, criminal background check, education verification, social security verification, motor vehicle records check, or other background screening related to the position. The Town shall assume the costs of such screening. The purpose of such examinations is to determine that the Town has taken reasonable steps to ensure that a job candidate is not a threat to third parties or co-workers and that the prospective employee is physically and mentally capable of performing the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. The Town will, upon application/request, make every effort to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability prior to original employment, reassignment, reclassification, demotion, or dismissal. The human resource department will ensure that all background screening is completed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Note:

- You cannot ask the applicant to provide high school graduation dates, medical histories, birth dates, sexual orientation, previous salary, etc. A substantial number of employers limit the answers given on reference checks to employment dates, job title and the officially stated reason for leaving. Some will also verify the compensation rate.
- All reference checks will be considered of a confidential nature in order not to jeopardize the candidate's present employment status.

Military Service

When an applicant's most recent background is military service, details of this service will be verified through the applicant's discharge or separation papers to verify the type of service and discharge.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND APPOINTMENT

Pre-employment Medical Screening

Once a conditional offer of employment has been made and accepted, the candidate will be required to submit to a pre-employment medical examination and a drug screening test, at Town expense. Rejection of an applicant after the pre-employment medical exam must be based upon job-related reasons. Refusal to undertake the required pre-employment medical examinations or return a signed release form for a background investigation, if required of the applicant, will result in termination of the applicant's candidacy. Pre-employment medical examinations are considered "confidential." Related documentation will be filed separately from other employment related documentation by the human resource manager. The human resource manager must pre-approve all requests for the information based on a "need to know" basis and an employee's release.

All new regular full-time employees and rehired employees, who have not worked for the Town during the last twelve (12) months, shall be given a pre-placement medical examination. Such examination shall be given as part of the entrance examination for the position if it is job related, as determined by the human resource manager. New employees shall not be placed on the payroll until written approval is obtained from the human resource manager. The human resource department will assist in making appointments with Concentra for this exam process. Upon the discovery of some physical defect which impairs the applicant's ability to perform the job, the employee concerned shall be expected to correct the defect within a reasonable time to prevent its further development and subsequent loss of time or sign a waiver acknowledging same and releasing the Town of any and all liability. An applicant may be excluded from employment when the defect would preclude performing the job satisfactorily after the Town has made requested reasonable accommodations.

Pre-employment Drug Screening

Applicants are required to take a drug screening test at the time of a job offer. Drug users can endanger the safety of others and the employer can be held liable for injuries to other employees. All positive tests must be verified. All medical and drug screening tests must be kept confidential. The human resource manager will determine who may see the exam results on a "need to know" basis.

Protection of Confidential Information

If an applicant is rejected for employment based on reference information that is directly job related, it is important that the source of this information be protected.

There is a Connecticut statute which prohibits "Black-listing," defined as "publishing information" which would prevent someone from obtaining employment; however, when there is a complete disparity between the facts provided by the applicant and the dates, etc., on a reference check, there is probable cause to verify these details.

EMPLOYMENT OFFERS AND APPOINTMENT

Procedures

All approvals for employment decisions and placement will be in accordance with the terms of this policy. The human resource department may make inquiries of employees and supervisors to enforce the terms of this policy. The policy applies to initial hires, transfers, and promotions. When in the best interest of the Town, the human resource department will make reasonable efforts to relocate an employee to adhere to the terms of this policy. The human resource manager, for good cause and for the benefit of the Town, may make exceptions to this policy subject to the provisions of the Town of Southington Code of Ethics.

New Hire Processing

Each new full-time, regular, and part-time represented employee will be processed and given orientation by the human resource department and shall receive written and oral descriptions of the Town policies, rules, and practices. All employees will be provided with information pertaining to the appropriate bargaining unit contract (if applicable).

All newly hired employees, including full-time, part-time, seasonal, and temporary, will be responsible for completing any or all the following forms, depending upon the position being filled:

1. An employment application (online).
2. State and Federal Withholding forms.
3. I-9 (Eligibility to Work) form.
4. Benefit documents.
5. Direct deposit form.
6. Background check signature form.
7. Copy of driver's license and social security card.

Employees will not be added to the payroll until orientation has been completed and all benefit information has been signed and returned to the human resource department.

Position Requirements/Job Descriptions

It is the responsibility of an employee to meet and maintain the posted minimum requirements of their position that is indicated on the appropriate job description, if applicable. Supervisor must be notified immediately if they no longer meet the minimum requirements. This includes any special necessary requirements such as driver's licenses, commercial driver's licenses, and all other licenses and certificates.

EMPLOYMENT OFFERS AND APPOINTMENT

Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis, however, employees who no longer possess the minimum requirements for their position may be disciplined up to and including termination.

Seasonal, Temporary, and Unrepresented Part-Time Employees

Department Heads that plan to hire seasonal, temporary, or unrepresented part-time employees will offer hourly wage rates, which are dictated by the annual budget.

Online applications must be completed in full, and a copy of the applicant's social security card is required before payroll will be processed to any employee. Paychecks will not be drawn without social security numbers and verification that the new hire has been properly orientated by the human resource department.

Notification of separation/termination date must be sent to the human resource department as soon as the date is known.

The use of seasonal, temporary, and unrepresented part-time help is limited to six months in one position/department as outlined in this Policy Manual and collective bargaining agreements with the Town.

All hours worked by seasonal, temporary, and unrepresented part-time employees must be recorded on a timesheet and approved by the supervisor.

The employment of seasonal, temporary, and unrepresented employees is on a voluntary at-will- basis and is not for a specific time, and may be terminated, with or without notice or cause, at any time by the Town or by the employee. No one in the Town is authorized to make any representation or promise to a seasonal, temporary, or unrepresented employee other than that of an at-will-employee.

Seasonal, temporary, and unrepresented part-time employees are not eligible for sick, vacation or personal leave time.

Employment of Relatives

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that relatives or unmarried partners of employees are not placed in positions in the workplace that would result in any of the following situations:

- A supervisory/subordinate relationship or administrative association of one employee over the other.
- An administrative relationship between the relatives or unmarried partners that creates a conflict of interest or ethical impropriety.
- An administrative relationship between the relatives or unmarried partners that creates the appearance of conflict or impropriety as viewed by colleagues, co-workers, or the public.

EMPLOYMENT OFFERS AND APPOINTMENT

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, a relative is a spouse, father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, child, spouse of a child, grandparent, uncle, aunt or any relative or step relative or an unmarried partner domiciled in the employee's household. An unmarried partner is an individual who is a co-habitant with the employee. The term employee as used in this policy includes appointed Town Officials.

No person shall be considered for full-time, part-time, seasonal, or temporary employment with the Town who is related (as defined above) to a supervisory employee or an employee in an administrative capacity over the new position or seeking a position in the same Town division or organizational hierarchy with the relative, such that doing so creates the appearance of a conflict of interest or an impropriety.

Examples may include but are not limited to:

- An applicant may not be under the direct or indirect supervision of the employed relative or unmarried partner.
- The employed relative or unmarried partner of an employee may not be able to influence the applicant's salary, benefits, working conditions, leave accruals, personal activities such as disciplinary actions or other terms and conditions of employment.
- An applicant will not be placed into such proximity in the workplace to the employed relative or unmarried partner that the appearance of a conflict of interest or impropriety is apparent.

Promotions, Transfers, and Marriages

The Town will consider and will deal individually with any situation wherein a promotion or transfer is in the Town's interest or the marriage of an employee results in a potentially conflicting situation. No transfer will be made at an employee's request that results in a conflict of interest.

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION

Bargaining Units

Classification by position titles and pay schedules by grade exist for the following groups:

- Local 1303-Unit 26 of Council #4, AFSCME AFL-CIO (Public Works)
- Local 4240-Unit 81, UPSEU (Southington Dispatchers)
- Local 424-Unit 11, UPSEU (Supervisors)
- Local 424-Unit 35, UPSEU (Municipal Employees)
- Local 2033, International Association of Firefighters
- Law Enforcement Alliance of Southington

The wage and salary ranges on these schedules serve several purposes. The salary rate or range expresses the internal relationship of various positions, thereby providing greater compensation opportunity for positions that have an increased level of responsibility. The rate or range provides a means of control as it indicates a minimum or hire rate and a maximum or job rate salary which should be paid to positions classified into a particular pay grade.

Pay rates and ranges provide adequate opportunity for employees to progress in terms of compensation, based upon their contribution to the Town organization, provide internal equity among employees and should maintain external equity to the municipal marketplace. To preserve the internal and external equity, the job rate and/or salary range maximum is the highest level of earnings that should be paid for a position classified in that pay grade.

Class Revision

Whenever the creation, abolition, subdivision, or consolidation of classes in the present Classification Plan appear necessary, (i.e., due to the creation of new positions, changes in organization, or changes in functions or duties of individual positions), the human resource manager shall make recommended revisions to the class specifications for the classes affected. Such revisions shall be presented to the Town Manager for review and approval.

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION

Position Allocation

When a new position is established and allocated to an established class then the position may be filled.

Position Reallocation

Whenever the organizational structure of a department, or the duties of a position are changed, or a position appears to have been allocated incorrectly, the human resource manager may, upon the request of a department head, or appointing authority, investigate the duties of the positions affected. After conferring with the officials concerned and completing an analysis of the position, the human resource manager may recommend allocating or reallocating the position(s) to an established new class. If the reallocation results in a change of union representation for the position, representatives of the effected collective bargaining unit will also be informed of the Town's recommendation. Such revisions shall be presented to the Town Manager for review and approval.

Effect of Position Reallocation

If a position is reallocated to a higher class, the incumbent may be deemed eligible to continue in the position based upon a review of the incumbent's qualification requirements. If a position is reallocated to a lower class, the incumbent shall be eligible to remain in the position at the same salary or wage rate (grandfathered in) but may be placed on the appropriate re-employment list for the class to which the position was previously allocated and the individual may be eligible for transfer.

Use of Class Titles

The class titles set forth are used to designate positions in all official human resources and financial records within the Town management system.

Use of Class Specification

Class specification shall not necessarily prescribe the complete duties of any position, nor limit the authority of administrative officers to prescribe or alter the duties of any position. Any substantial and permanent change considered must be reported by the appointing authority to the human resource manager in a timely fashion.

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION

Federal and State Minimum Wages

The Town will pay no less than the federal and state legally required wage to all regular positions.

Timekeeping

The Town maintains hours of work, which are compatible with State and Federal legislation, collective bargaining agreements, and the maintenance of an effective and efficient operational schedule of work. For represented employees, the regular workweek is defined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. For unrepresented full-time employees, the usual workweek is at least 35 hours per week, Monday through Friday.

The employee should enter all overtime hours worked.

The employee is responsible for signing his or her time record to certify the accuracy of all time recorded and submits the time record, according to department practice to the supervisor or manager for review and approval.

The supervisor or manager is responsible for ensuring employees complete the timesheet and for reviewing and approving the timesheet by signing and forwarding to the payroll department.

Definitions

- *Exempt* refers to employees who are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act's (FLSA) overtime pay provisions.
- *Non-exempt* refers to employees who are covered by the overtime pay provisions of the FLSA.

All employees, exempt and non-exempt are required to provide an accurate daily record of work time. The Town currently uses several timekeeping methods including time sheets, timecards, and time clock systems.

Exempt Employees

Time records will be completed according to the process within their individual department. Time records should indicate daily arrival and departure times, standard work hours, sick, personal or vacation time used during each weekly period.

The employee is responsible for signing his or her time record to certify the accuracy of all time recorded and submitting the time record to the supervisor or manager for review and approval.

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION

The supervisor or manager is responsible for ensuring employees complete the timesheet according to the schedule set forth by the payroll department and for reviewing and approving the timesheet by signing and forwarding to the payroll department.

Non-exempt Employees

Non-exempt employees must accurately record their time according to the process within their individual department. Time records should indicate daily arrival and departure times, standard work hours, sick, personal or vacation time used during each weekly period.

Garnishments

Garnishment action against an employee's wages or salary is permitted by law in Connecticut. Federal laws also permit the preferential attachment of wages by the Internal Revenue Service for delinquent Federal Taxes and child support before other garnishments.

Notices of garnishment, levy, or attachment actions to be taken against any employee are to be sent to the Payroll Department. The Payroll Department will notify the employee upon receipt of the wage execution and will process the deduction for the following pay period. Questions regarding this process should be directed to the Payroll Administrator.

Overtime Payments and Compensation Time

The Town compensates non-exempt (not exempt from the FLSA and State Wage and Hour Law) employees for overtime in accordance with federal and state legislation and collective bargaining agreements, making every effort to carefully plan required overtime with due regard for its impact on employees and the service needs of the Town. Town employees represented by bargaining unit agreements will be compensated for such overtime in accordance with the union contracts. If any discrepancy occurs between this policy and the collective bargaining agreement, the collective bargaining agreement will take precedent.

Exempt/non-represented employees may receive compensatory time off, at a rate of not less than one and one-half hours for each overtime hour worked, instead of cash overtime pay.

Employees in both categories may accrue up to 105 hours and will be permitted to use compensatory time on the date requested unless doing so would unduly disrupt the operations of the department.

Documentation and Process for Submission of Compensatory Time ~ Non-exempt Employees

1. Quarterly submission of the *Compensatory Time Form* to the payroll office.
2. Obtain preapproval for all overtime hours from their supervisor.
3. Document all overtime hours on the designated spreadsheet.
4. Document the overtime hours on the employee's timesheet.

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION

Voluntary Separation

Voluntary separations are defined as the decision to separate from employment at the request of the employee. To be eligible for future consideration, employees are required to provide at least two weeks' notice of their intention to separate from Town employment.

This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, nor does it guarantee employment for any specific length of time. Although we hope our employment relationship will be long term, either the Town of Southington or you can end the relationship at any time, with or without notice, with or without reason, to the extent allowed by law.

BENEFITS

Employee Benefits

All full-time and regular part-time Town employees are entitled to certain benefits as outlined in the collective bargaining agreement for represented employees.

Civil Unions and Same Sex Marriage

Connecticut's Civil Union statute, effective October 1, 2005, provides that parties to a civil union are entitled to all the same benefits under the law as married couples. Any benefit provided by state law, policy, or collective bargaining agreement is covered by this law. Consistent with the Connecticut Supreme Court decision officially released on October 28, 2008, same sex married partners now receive health care benefits under the Town's marriage/spousal benefits offerings. Connecticut's Same Sex Marriage law, passed into law on December 13, 2008, provides that parties in a same sex marriage are entitled to all the same benefits under the law as married couples. Any benefit that is provided by state law, policy, or collective bargaining agreement is covered by this law.

***NOTE:** Civil unions will not be provided after October 1, 2010. However civil unions before then will be kept and if the couples wish to change their status to marriage they can do so. Same-sex marriages and civil unions will be recognized as marriages in Connecticut.*

Eligibility Requirements

New Staff: The Town will require same-sex partners either be married or joined in a civil union to be eligible to enroll in the Town's health care program. The Town recognizes civil unions or marriages valid in other states. The United States Supreme Court issued a decision on June 26, 2015 that guarantees that marriages of same-sex couples will be recognized anywhere in the United States.

Existing civil union same-sex couples: For those same-sex couples enrolled under an existing civil union or same-sex marriage Town health care program, coverage will continue under the terms of that program and no action is required. As with all qualifying events under our health care plan, if an employee currently does not have a same-sex spouse or partner covered under the Town's health care plan and wishes to add a same-sex partner outside of the annual enrollment period, an employee may do so by attesting to the marriage or civil union within 30 days from the date of the marriage or union.

BENEFITS

FMLA

Family and Medical Leave of Absence ~ FMLA

Overview

In general, the Family and Medical Leave Act allows “eligible” employees of any public employer or a private employer with at least 50 employees to take **unpaid, job-protected leave** for up to a total of twelve (12) workweeks in a twelve-month period, while maintaining health insurance coverage. As a public employer, the Town is a “covered” employer under the Act and is subject to all rules and regulations of the **Federal** Family and Medical Leave Act but is **exempt** from the State of Connecticut FMLA statute and regulations.

Eligibility

Employees who have worked for the Town for at least twelve (12) months, and who have worked at least 1,250 actual work hours, during the twelve (12) months immediately preceding the start of a leave, are eligible for unpaid leave under the FMLA.

Qualifying Reasons

The Town will grant an employee up to a total of twelve workweeks of unpaid leave in a twelve-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- Incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or childbirth.
- To care for the employee's newborn child.
- The placement of a child with the employee by adoption or for foster care.
- To care for the employee's spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition.
- To care for the employee's own serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her position.
- To care for an injured or ill service member.
- A qualifying exigency arising out of a family member’s military service, including one or more of the following reasons.
 - short notice deployment
 - military events and related activities
 - childcare and school activities
 - financial and legal arrangements
 - counseling
 - rest and recuperation
 - post-deployment activities
 - parental care leave for military member’s parent who is incapable of self-care and care is necessitated by the member’s covered active duty.
 - additional activities that arise out of the active duty or call to active-duty status of a covered military member, provided that the Board and the employee agree that such leave qualifies as an exigency and agree to both the timing and the duration of such leave.

BENEFITS

FMLA

Serious health conditions are those requiring an absence of three or more workdays and continuing medical care, care in a hospice or some residential medical facility. Examples of a serious condition include heart attacks, most cancers, strokes, kidney dialysis, and complications of pregnancy. For employees, a serious health condition requires absence from work for three or more consecutive days, and you must be under the care of a physician.

Length of Leave

Basic Leave Entitlement Under FMLA

- If a leave is requested for one of the above-listed reasons, each eligible employee may take up to a total of twelve (12) weeks unpaid family or medical leave in any 12-month entitlement period.
- We will calculate the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period, measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy. Each time an employee takes leave, the Town will compute the amount of leave the employee has taken under this policy and subtract it from the 12-weeks of available leave. The balance remaining is the amount of time the employee is entitled to take.
- If the Town of Southington makes the determination to change calculation methods, employees will be provided at least sixty (60) days' notice, and no reduction in rights will be made at the time of transition for employees using/requesting leave at the time of transition.

Leave to care for an Injured or Ill Service member

- In addition to the reasons for leave listed above, an eligible employee may take up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of FMLA leave during a 12-month period to care for (a) an injured or ill service member who is the employee's spouse, parent, child or next of kin, and who incurred the injury or illness in the line of duty and while on active duty in the Armed Forces or had a pre-existing injury or illness prior to beginning active duty that was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces; or, (ii) an injured or ill covered veteran who is the employee's spouse, parent, child or next of kin.
- For service members, the injury or illness must render the service member medically unable to perform the duties of his/her office, grade, rank, or rating. This provision applies to service members who are undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, are in outpatient status, or who are on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness.
- For covered veterans, the veteran must be undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness and s/he (1) was a member of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard or Reserves); (2) was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable; and (3) was discharged within the five-year period before the eligible employee first takes FMLA military caregiver leave to care for the veteran.

BENEFITS

FMLA

- For covered veterans, serious injury or illness means any of the following:
 - (i) a continuation of a serious injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated when the covered veteran was a member of the Armed Forces and rendered the servicemember unable to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating; or
 - ii) a physical or mental condition for which the covered veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service-Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50 percent or greater, and such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave.
 - (iii) a physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the covered veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service or would do so absent treatment.
 - (iv) an injury, including a psychological injury, based on which the covered veteran has been enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

When combined with any other type of FMLA qualifying leave, total leave time may not exceed twenty-six (26) weeks in a single twelve (12) month period. Standard FMLA leave procedures described below apply to all requests for and designation of leave for this purpose. *However*, in the case of leave to care for an injured or ill service member, the 12-month period begins on the day such leave commences.

Types of Leave

Full-time, Intermittent, Reduced Schedule

1. **Full-time unpaid leave** may be taken for any of the reasons permitted by the FMLA. Full-time leave excuses the employee from work for a continuous period.
2. **Intermittent leave** means leave taken in separate periods of time rather than for one continuous period. Examples of intermittent leave include leave taken one day per week over a period of a few months; or leave taken on an occasional/as-needed basis for medical appointments.
3. **Reduced schedule leave** is leave that reduces the employee's usual number of work hours per day for some period. For example, an employee may request half-time work for several weeks, so the employee can assist in the care of a seriously ill parent.

An employee may take full-time, intermittent, or reduced schedule leave whenever it is medically necessary for a serious health condition of the eligible employee, his or her spouse, child, or parent. Intermittent leave or reduced schedule leave for other reasons will be permitted only with the approval of the Town Manager or his/her designee.

BENEFITS

FMLA

If intermittent or reduced schedule leave is medically required, the Town may, in its sole discretion, temporarily transfer the employee to another job with equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodates the type of leave requested.

Both Spouses Working for the Same Employer

If both spouses are employees of the Town and request leave for the birth, placement of a child by adoption or for foster care, or to care for a seriously ill parent, they only will be entitled to a maximum combined total leave equal to twelve (12) weeks in any 12-month entitlement period. If either spouse (or both) uses a portion of the total 12-week entitlement for one of the purposes in the preceding sentence, each is entitled to the difference between the amount he or she has taken individually and the 12 weeks for FMLA leave for their own or their spouse's serious health condition in the 12-month entitlement periods.

Requests for Leave

Requests for a family or medical leave must be submitted to the human resource department at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to commence, if possible. If thirty (30) days' notice is not possible, requests must be submitted as soon as practicable under the circumstances.

For leaves taken because of the employee's or a family member's serious health condition, the employee must submit a completed "Physician or Practitioner Certification" form before the leave begins if possible. This form may be obtained from the human resource department. If such advance certification is not possible, the medical certification must be provided by the employee within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Town's request for the medical certification.

If an employee takes leave to care for his or her own serious health condition, immediately upon return to work the employee must provide medical certification that the health condition which created the need for the leave no longer renders the employee unable to perform the functions of the job. This certification must be submitted to the human resource department.

Use of Paid Leave

Union contract will dictate the use of accrued sick, personal, and vacation time. However, where the leave is for the employee's own serious health condition, accrued paid sick leave shall be substituted for unpaid portions of family or medical leave prior to the substitution of accrued paid personal and accrued paid vacation leave. The amount of unpaid family or medical leave entitlement is reduced by the amount of paid leave that is substituted.

BENEFITS

FMLA

A workers' compensation absence that also qualifies as FMLA leave due to the employee's own serious health condition may be designated by the employer as FMLA leave and counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. In addition, in cases involving absences due to a Workers' Compensation injury that also qualifies as an FMLA serious health condition, and if the employee agrees with the Town to do so, the Town will apply the employee's available accrued paid leave in increments as a supplement to the Workers' Compensation weekly benefit in an appropriate amount so that the employee can maintain his or her regular weekly income level.

Medical Insurance and Other Benefits

Employee will continue to pay for all benefits for which you had a payroll deduction while actively at work. The Town will continue to pay for health insurance that the employee had received as an active employee. If a contribution is being made to the health insurance by the employee, they will be expected to continue that payment, or reimburse the Town upon return to work. Other non-mandatory insurance will be continued only if the employee makes their premium contributions.

Reinstatement

Except for circumstances unrelated to the taking of a family or medical leave, an employee who returns to work following the expiration of a family or medical leave is entitled to return to the job held prior to the leave or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay and benefits.

BENEFITS

WORKER INJURY POLICY

The Town of Southington is committed to reducing and controlling the frequency and severity of work-related incidents. It is the responsibility of every employee to report all accidents, incidents, and occupational illnesses. Prompt reporting allows medical attention when necessary, awareness of hazards within the work environment and the implementation of procedures to prevent further occurrences. In the event of employee injury, the following procedure should be observed.

An employee must immediately notify their supervisor of their injury, explaining the nature of the injury and detailing how and when the injury was sustained. At the time of reporting, it should be assessed if the employee requires medical attention.

Initial treatment Centers

In order to provide the injured employee with prompt and effective medical treatment, the Town of Southington has made arrangements for each employee to obtain immediate treatment from ***Concentra, 972 West Main Street, New Britain, or Hospital of Central Connecticut Occupational Health Network, 440 New Britain Ave, Plainville, CT 06062.*** Thereafter, the employee may seek treatment from any of the providers listed in the directory. If the employee refuses the initial employer-provided medical care or fails to obtain treatment, they may risk entitlement to Workers' Compensation benefits. Medical assessment should identify any injury/illness sustained and the capacity of the employee to resume work-related duties.

Employees may receive prescriptions as part of their medical treatment. To relieve employees of utilizing their own medical insurance, the Town has *'First Script'* cards. *First Script* cards are prescription cards issued to employees to present to pharmacies in which the cost of the prescription will be paid directly through the workers' compensation carrier.

Following an employee injury, the CIRMA Care Injury Reporting Hotline form should be completed. The employee, along with their supervisor, should collaborate in completing the form and capturing all pertinent details. Each section of the form should be addressed, identifying detailed information surrounding the incident. It is important to note any witnesses to the incident and obtain a written witness statement of their observations. Witnesses should complete "Accident Witness Statement" form) and submit to their supervisor.

Completed forms, along with incident documentation, should be submitted to the appropriate department: *Police Chief, Fire Chief, Town Manager's Executive Secretary, and/or Human Resource* office in the following timeframe:

1. life-threatening/hospitalization, notification should occur immediately.
2. non-serious injury notification should be reported within one business day.

A report will then be filed with CIRMA. At the time of reporting, a claim number will be issued for reference.

BENEFITS
WORKER INJURY POLICY

All employee injuries will be reviewed quarterly by the Safety Review Committee. At this time, department supervisors should identify preventive solutions to further such incidents to the committee.

If the employee sustains a serious medical condition, 9-1-1 should be called. The employee should be transported to the nearest hospital. In the face of a serious or threatening condition, OSHA mandates reporting. All work-related fatalities require reporting within eight hours and work-related inpatient hospitalizations, amputations, and losses of an eye within 24 hours.

OSHA 's phone number at 1-800-321-6742

To report a fatality or catastrophe

Local (860) 263-6946

Toll Free (866) 241-4060

Nearest office – Hartford:

OSHA ~ Hartford Office
William R Cotter Federal Building
135 High Street, Suite 361
Hartford, CT 06103
Ph: (860) 240-3152
Fx: (860) 240-3155

CT office – Wethersfield

CT Department of Labor
Occupational Safety & Health Division
38 Wolcott Hill Road
Wethersfield, CT 06109
Ph: (860) 263-6900
Fx: (860) 263-6940

LIGHT DUTY

The Workers' Compensation Act requires employers to offer their employees light duty work, if such work is available, whenever an employee is recovered enough from a work-related injury to do light-duty work (CGA § 31-313). If the employee refuses the work or, in situations where the employer does not have appropriate work, does not submit proof of weekly job search contacts, then the employee's wage-replacement benefits can be cut. Benefits covering medical costs of work-related injuries are not affected.

Claimants who receive WC benefits for a temporary partial disability must accept any “light-duty” work that their current employers offer if a physician has cleared them for such work. If no appropriate light duty work is available, claimants must look for such work in their geographic area and report weekly “employment contacts” to demonstrate a job search and keep receiving benefits.

Claimants continue to receive benefits until they (1) are recovered enough to return to their normal jobs or (2) reach their maximum medical improvement and may seek permanent partial disability status under WC.

BENEFITS

Personal Leave of Absence

Personal Leave of Absence

Employees requiring time off for a serious personal matter or responsibility for a period from one week to six months may request a personal leave of absence.

It is the policy of the Town that an appointing authority may grant a personal leave of absence to a full or part-time regular employee that does not exceed ten (10) working days if the request complies with the provisions below. If it is in the interest of the Town, the Town Manager may approve an application for a leave of absence for a period not to exceed six (6) months. Upon the expiration of an approved personal leave of absence, the employee shall be reinstated in the same or equivalent position held at the time the leave was granted. Failure of the employee to inform the employer of a change in circumstances during the leave period or to promptly report to work at the expiration of the leave may be cause for dismissal.

Provisions

- A. **Eligibility:** Full or Part-time regular employees in good standing with three years of Town service.
- B. **Qualifying Reasons:** A personal leave of absence may be granted for the following reasons not otherwise provided by Town policy: illness or injury for oneself or a close family member after all accrued sick and/or family medical leave has been exhausted; pursue education or certification that is job related and cannot reasonably be accomplished while working; other unique or extraordinary personal reasons, other reasons as the Town determines to be in its best interest.
- C. **Limitations/Conditions:**
 - 1. An employee with accumulated compensatory time and/or vacation leave who is granted a personal leave of absence shall first exhaust all accrued compensatory time followed by accrued vacation leave at the start of the leave and upon exhausting such compensatory time and vacation leave be placed on unpaid leave.
 - 2. The reason for the leave is not covered by another Town policy i.e., Military, FMLA, etc.
 - 3. In no instance shall the leave extend past six (6) consecutive months.
 - 4. Employees on paid or unpaid personal leave will cease to accrue sick and/or vacation time.
 - 5. Employee shall not engage in other employment during the leave of absence unless such employment has received prior approval by the Town Manager.
 - 6. Failure of the employee to inform the employer of a change in circumstances during the leave period or failure to return to work immediately following the expiration of the leave may result in termination (see section F).
- D. **Notification:** All requests for a personal leave of absence for a period more than ten (10) workdays shall be submitted to the department head on the “*Request for Personal Leave*” form. If approved by the department head, the request shall be signed and submitted to the human resource manager. The human resource manager shall act on all requests for personal leave more than ten working days

BENEFITS

Personal Leave of Absence

and will submit a letter to the employee, department head, and union (if applicable) identifying the agreed upon details of the request.

- E. **Benefits:** During the period of leave that is charged against unused vacation leave the employee shall continue to receive all benefits similar to an employee on vacation except that sick and vacation accruals will cease. During the unpaid portion of the leave, the employee **shall not** earn any paid leave time or accrue benefits. An employee on unpaid leave may elect to continue medical, prescription, dental, basic life, or supplemental life provided the employee coordinates with the finance department to pay the full cost of such benefits. The required payment for such benefits must be received in the payroll department by the 15th day of the month for the following month's coverage. In the event payment is not received by the 15th day of the month the employee will be notified that benefits will be terminated at the end of the calendar month and the employee will be provided with COBRA information. During the period of leave the employee will not be accruing credited service in the retirement system. The employee's seniority shall not include any periods for which the employee was on unpaid personal leave.
- F. **Job Restoration and Employee Status Following Expiration of Leave:** Upon the expiration of the leave of absence the employee shall be restored to the same or equivalent position and to the extent possible in the same department. In the event the employee's position has been eliminated the employee will be offered another vacant position for which the employee is qualified. In the event there is no vacant position for which the employee is qualified the employee will be laid off in accordance with Town policy and applicable collective bargaining agreements. The employee is required to report to work immediately at the expiration of his/her leave. The employee shall have restored any unused sick leave that had been accrued prior to the personal leave. An employee who does not keep the employer informed of any change in circumstances that may affect their employment during the leave or who fails to report to work immediately following the expiration of his/her leave will be considered as having voluntarily resigned and separated from Town employment.

BENEFITS

Holidays, Vacations, Personal, Bereavement, Jury Duty

Holidays

The holiday schedule is determined by the Town Manager and the employee's respective collective bargaining agreement.

Town of Southington offices are closed on the following holidays:

Martin Luther King Day	Thanksgiving Day
Presidents Day	Thanksgiving (Friday)
Good Friday	Christmas Eve Day ~ ½ Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	New Year's Eve Day ~ ½ Day
Columbus Day	New Year's Day
Veterans Day	

Vacations

Represented employees should refer to their respective collective bargaining agreement. Non-represented employee's will refer to their contract or new hire letter.

Personal

Represented employees should refer to their respective collective bargaining agreement. Non-represented employee's will refer to their contract or new hire letter.

Bereavement

Represented employees should refer to their respective collective bargaining agreement. Non-represented employee's will refer to their contract or new hire letter.

Jury Duty

Employees must inform their department head immediately if selected for jury duty and submit documentary evidence from the court showing the period of duty. Employees are to report to work any day the court is not in session. The Town will pay for the employee his/her regular pay to the extent required by law, and should the employee be paid by the court, the employee is required to reimburse the Town by submitting a personal check to their department payroll clerk in an amount equal to the court check. Conn. Sec. 51-247a states that an employer shall not deprive an employee of his employment or threaten or otherwise coerce him in connection with jury service. Effective September 1, 1986, the exemption from jury duty accorded Police Officers by virtue of Conn. Sec. 51-219 of the General statutes was repealed.

BENEFITS

Holidays, Vacations, Personal, Bereavement, Jury Duty

Conn. Sec. 51-247 requires the Town to pay regular wages to all full-time employees (employed over 90 days) scheduled to work thirty (30) or more hours per week for the first five (5) days of jury duty served by an employee in those areas where the one-day or one-trial system is in effect. The following employees are excluded:

1. Part-time employees who are scheduled to work fewer than 30 hours per week, or as specified in a union contract.
2. Temporary employees who have not worked continuously for more than 90 days.
3. The employee works in a seasonal or casual capacity and includes an employee holding a position through a temporary help service as defined in Conn. Sec. 31-129.

BENEFITS

Emergency Closings

It is assumed in all cases that all offices and facilities of the Town will be open as scheduled for the full workday unless the Town Manager specifically notifies employees otherwise. The decision to close, based upon local conditions, will be made by the Town Manager or Town official in case of absence. The closing may apply to all Town departments or the Town Manager may approve designated locations. The Superintendent of Schools will be responsible for school closings and delayed openings.

The decision by the Town Manager to close or delay opening Town facilities will be made as soon as possible to minimize inconvenience to employees via Everbridge.

Unless the Town Hall and other Town facilities are officially closed by the Town Manager, employees are required to report to work.

If an employee does not report to work, they may elect to charge their earned but unused vacation or personal day, or earned compensatory time, if available, or the employee may elect not to be paid for the day. Sick days are not to be charged.

If an employee comes to work in the morning when the Town Hall is open and works one-half (½) of the day and decides to leave at noon or comes in after lunch and works one-half (½) of the day, the employee shall be charged one-half (½) day of earned vacation, personal, or compensatory day, if available, or the employee may elect not to be paid for the period of absence.

If an employee comes to work and works more than one half (½) day and the Department Head approves closing the department in the afternoon, the employee may leave work without charging his/her accumulated vacation or personal day, for the remaining portion of the daily work schedule

Employees who are classified in **emergency essential positions** will be required to work during the emergency period and will be paid as outlined in the respective collective bargaining agreements. Those employees include: Police, Fire, Public Works (non-clerical), Water Pollution Control (non-clerical), other positions as deemed essential by the Town Manager.

If a regular, full-time employee has given proper notification to the supervisor that he or she will not report to work due to illness, the absence will be charged to illness pay. If an employee's record indicates a past practice of not reporting to work on the day of a storm, or a pattern of sick leave abuse, the department head may request written verification of the illness from a physician.

If an employee is absent due to a pre-approved vacation, personal day or other approved reason, and the Town is closed due to an emergency, the employee will be paid for the pre-approved absence only and will not receive additional paid time-off for vacation, personal day, etc.

Represented employees should refer to their collective bargaining agreements for additional information.

BENEFITS

Retirement

Retirement

Connecticut Municipal Retirement Plan B, with a contribution as determined by the Connecticut Municipal Retirement Commission.

Town of Southington employees who are planning to retire, should contact the human resource office. Represented and non-represented employees may also refer to their collective bargaining agreement or contract.

BENEFITS

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Town is committed to the preservation of the well-being of its employees. The Town recognizes that a wide range of problems not always directly associated with one's job function can influence an employee's job performance. Through early intervention many of these problems can be resolved and the potential impact on job performance and an employee's general health minimized. Towards that end, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) has been established to provide professional expertise for the benefit of employees and their family members when dealing with problems of a personal/professional nature. The program is available to all full-time employees and their dependents as well as all regular part-time employees. All aspects of the Town's EAP service system will operate within the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines regarding all aspects of case management.

Eligible employees are encouraged to use the program on a self-referral basis for a wide range of personal problems including but not limited to substance abuse, marriage and family concerns, stress induced issues, emotional or psychological concerns, interpersonal/relationship matters, and/or legal and financial issues. Participation in the EAP will not negatively impact an employee's position or employment reputation in the worksite. Since employee work performance can be affected by the problems of their spouse or other dependents, the program is available to families of employees as well. Assessment, short-term counseling, referral, and case management services are provided to eligible employees at no charge. When referral is made for care outside the established EAP network, costs associated with such services are the employee's responsibility. In most instances the employee's health insurance plan will cover such treatment. Employees should review the health care plan document to determine any conditions and limitations in relationship to EAP services.

EAP services are confidential. No information about the use of these services will be released without written consent, except as required by law. The EAP, however, only requires verbal permission from the employer when the communication involves contact with treatment professionals to facilitate employee care for cases other than alcohol and drugs.

In most circumstances, the use of the services of the EAP is voluntary. It is the employee's responsibility to follow the recommendations of the EAP counselor. The responsibility to correct any problem situation(s) remains with the employee.

SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Town of Southington that every employee is entitled to work under the safest possible conditions in the many occupations we represent. To this end, every reasonable effort will be made to provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace, safe equipment, proper materials and to establish and always insist upon safe methods and practices.

Accidents which injure people, damage machinery or equipment and destroy materials or property cause needless suffering, inconvenience, and expense.

It is a basic responsibility of everyone to make safety realization a part of their daily, hourly concern. Employees are obligated to conduct themselves in a safe manner and to properly use the safety equipment provided.

HARASSMENT AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Sexual Harassment

It is illegal for any individual to harass any employee or person seeking employment with the Town on the basis of sex.

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the as the basis for any employment decision affecting such individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment, including, but not limited to, the display or circulation of written material or pictures degrading to gender.

If you feel you have been harassed on the basis of sex you should:

- Inform your immediate supervisor or any appropriate supervisory personnel, who will immediately investigate and curtail any such harassment found; or contact the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

No employee shall be subject to retaliation for filing a complaint of sexual harassment.

Complaints, Grievances, and Discipline

This policy applies to all Town employees. The Town Appointing Authorities, Elected Officials and Administrators, Department Heads and all employees are responsible for creating a productive work environment in which matters of discrimination, offensive conduct, harassment, hostile work environment and retaliation is completely out of place. The Town is committed to providing an immediate and appropriate means of redress and corrective action in response to any confirmed violation of workplace laws and assuring that no reprisals are taken against those who complain or against corroborating witnesses. The Town is committed to addressing each complaint which shall be undertaken through conciliation and/or full investigation as appropriate depending on the nature of the case. The human resource manager or his/her designee is responsible for monitoring the operation of this policy, providing support and investigative direction to Town Appointing Authorities and Town Department Heads and managerial staff members as needed. In addition, the human resource department will assure employees are informed on the use and procedures included in this policy for all members of the workforce.

HARASSMENT AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Complaint Procedures

It is the policy of the Town of Southington that complaints concerning unlawful discrimination/harassment/ hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace must be brought to the attention of the Town. This is required to be done in the following ways:

1. First, if the employee believes that s/he is subject to unlawful discrimination/harassment/ hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace, the employee must promptly notify the Department Head, Human Resource Manager (or designee) concerning such conduct. Note that if an employee fails to give the notification required by this paragraph, or to give notification in a timely fashion, the Town's rights are reserved with respect to the effect of that failure in connection with any action purported to be asserted against the Town concerning alleged unlawful discrimination/harassment/ hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace.
2. In addition, if the employee is represented by a collective bargaining unit (union), the employee is encouraged to notify his or her collective bargaining representative of the occurrence promptly. In certain cases, depending on the nature of the alleged unlawful discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace, the collective bargaining agreement will allow for a grievance to be filed. If this is so, the employee may, through the employee's collective bargaining representative, file a grievance concerning such alleged conduct. Note that if an employee, through his or her collective bargaining unit, fails to file a grievance in this situation in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement, the Town's rights are reserved with respect to the effect of that failure in connection with any other action purported to be asserted against the Town concerning alleged unlawful discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace.

Other Reporting Requirements

All employees, including supervisors, managers or directors and other employees, who become aware of possible mistreatment or harassment of an employee, either as a result of having received a complaint directly from the employee or from any other reliable source of information, or from his/her personal observations, must report the situation to the appropriate department head, or the human resource manager or his/her designee at the time that they become aware of the matter or incident.

HARASSMENT AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Investigatory Process and Expectations

The investigatory and hearing process as to a grievance filed asserting unlawful discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace will be governed by the collective bargaining agreement. The following process shall be undertaken by the human resource department with respect to notifications/complaints of unlawful discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace.

The human resource manager and/or his/her designee will work to undertake conciliation efforts to find an equitable solution if possible and/or investigate complaints of discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace as appropriate. Every effort shall be made to resolve the difficulty at the lowest level practicable and some cases will be resolved without the need for full investigation.

The confidentiality of information disclosed during investigations or informal resolution efforts will be respected to the extent practical and/or as permitted by law. Information about the complaint and the incidents giving rise to the complaint will be revealed only as investigatory processes require.

Information about the complaint is shared only with those individuals who “need to know” to effectively investigate and/or resolve the complaint. Parties with a need to know may include witnesses or Department Heads that need to be informed of the complaint to cooperate with an investigation or to implement resolution. These parties will be advised that they should keep all information confidential in the best interest of all parties.

Employees are required to identify themselves and any alleged wrongdoers. This is required, mindful that the law and Town policy prohibit retaliation against employees who complain about discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace, and/or against witnesses. Without such identification information, a full and fair investigation of misconduct cannot be undertaken.

When an employee provides the required information, it is the policy of the Town of Southington to investigate complaints of discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace to the full extent appropriate in cases where conciliation efforts have failed. This should be done reasonably promptly and thoroughly.

An employee may withdraw a complaint referred to the human resource manager before investigation is undertaken in two situations: 1) If conciliation efforts have been successful; 2) The employee does not wish to proceed for some other reason if the employee certifies in writing that the withdrawal is voluntary, and he or she has not been the subject of retaliation or intimidation. Absent such a certification, no withdrawal shall be permitted.

HARASSMENT AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Required dismissal: If conciliation or investigation is not possible because the employee does not wish to provide names to the investigator or does not cooperate as required as set forth below, the complaint shall be dismissed, and the matter will be closed without any further action.

If the employee's bargaining representative files a grievance on behalf of the employee pursuant to the terms of the employee's collective bargaining agreement in addition to a complaint to be investigated by the human resource department, the human resource manager shall defer processing the complaint until the grievance has been fully adjudicated pursuant to the terms of the collective bargaining agreement.

Cooperation in Conciliation Efforts and Investigations

All employees are expected to comply fully with all Town-related investigatory matters and with conciliation efforts concerning allegations of discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace. The duty to cooperate applies in all contexts: When a complaint has been made to the department head, human resource manager, or and when a grievance has been filed by a collective bargaining unit (union) on behalf of an employee as to such allegations.

The duty of cooperation means a duty to speak truthfully and make a good-faith effort to provide the information requested in a timely, ethical, and honest fashion, providing all details, documentation and information requested during the investigatory process to the best of the employee's ability. The duty to cooperate applies to the employee complaining of mistreatment and to any witnesses requested to participate in the investigation. Employees shall be informed that a meeting or request is part of an "investigation" or "conciliation efforts" or a "grievance". Failure to cooperate in an investigation in good faith shall be grounds for progressive discipline up to and including termination.

Potential Disciplinary Consequences

If a Town's investigation determines that an employee has engaged in unlawful discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the offending employee, up to and including termination. This applies in any context where an appropriate investigation has been undertaken by any Town authority.

If, after investigating any complaint of unlawful discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace, the Town determines that the complaint was not made in good faith or that an employee has provided false information regarding the complaint, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual who filed the complaint/notification or who gave the false information, up to and including termination.

HARASSMENT AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Related Links:

- ***Federal Laws relating to discrimination or retaliation:***
 - Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Complaint Procedure: <http://www.eeoc.gov/employees>
 - Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA): <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vets/userra/mainmenu.asp>
 - National Labor Relations Board: <http://www.nlr.gov>
 - Worker's Compensation: <http://www.dol.gov/owcp/>
 - Family Medical Leave Act: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/index.htm>
- ***State Laws relating to discrimination or retaliation:***
 - Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) <http://www.ct.gov/chro/cwp/view.asp?a=2523&Q=315854>
 - CHRO Employment Discrimination Complaint Procedures <http://www.ct.gov/chro/cwp/view.asp?a=2524&Q=315892>
 - CHRO Whistleblower Retaliation Complaints <http://www.ct.gov/chro/cwp/view.asp?a=2528&Q=316246&chroPNavCtr=#45688>
 - Connecticut Discriminatory Employment Practices Act (CONN. GEN. STAT. § 46a-60 http://search.cga.state.ct.us/dtsearch_pub_statutes.html

GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOR IN OUR WORKPLACE

The Town of Southington takes great pride in the quality of its services to residents and visitors. We all must strive to maintain a positive and productive work environment. Our purpose in defining expectations of behavior and adopting certain work rules is to minimize conflict and the need for corrective action among employees.

While we generally follow the concept of progressive discipline as outlined in applicable collective bargaining agreements, depending on the nature of the conduct, a serious infraction may lead to suspension or termination of employment. Any list of rules cannot possibly cover all situations that may arise. In all cases, disciplinary actions remain within the sole discretion of the Town.

Expected Behaviors

- Treating fellow employees, residents, visitors, and others with courtesy and respect.
- Performing job duties and assignments to meet or exceed performance standards.
- Following instructions and directions given by supervisor.
- Knowing and complying with safety rules and ethical standards.
- Complying with Town policies.
- Not speaking disparagingly about other employees.
- Communicating openly about issues, ideas, and problems.
- Collaboration, teamwork, and mutual support for colleagues.

Customer Service Training and Expectations (Addendum B)

All new employees to the Town of Southington will receive a Customer Service Expectation document, which will be reviewed with the employee with their immediate supervisor. The expectation is that employees are aware of the expectations and incorporate the customer service guidelines into their daily routine.

NO TOLERANCE

The Town of Southington is committed to a safe and healthy environment for our staff and residents to conduct business. It is the policy of the Town of Southington that there shall be fair treatment in workplace matters. Unlawful discrimination, harassment, hostile work environment and retaliation shall not be tolerated. The Town prohibits all unlawful discrimination/harassment/hostile work environment/retaliation in the workplace to the full extent of state and federal law. Unlawful discrimination and retaliation are considered serious misconduct and, where there is a finding of such misconduct, employees shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

No reprisals of any kind by an employee or a member of any management level or the organization will be permitted against an employee because that employee has asserted a complaint or against any witness because that individual has reported or has assisted in any way in the investigation of a complaint of unlawful discrimination/harassment/ hostile work environment/retaliation.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

All employees, customers, vendors, and business associates should always be treated with courtesy and respect. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting (verbal or physical), "horseplay" or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, resident or vendor will not be tolerated. The Town's resources may not be used to threaten, stalk, or harass anyone at or outside the workplace. Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of actual violence and suspicious individuals or activities should be reported as soon as possible to the employee's supervisor, human resource department, and/or, depending on the circumstances, the Southington Police Department.

When reporting a threat or incident of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible. Employees should not place themselves in peril, nor should they attempt to intercede during an incident. Employees should promptly inform the HR department of any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area. Employees are encouraged to report safety concerns regarding intimate partner violence. The Town will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports. Additionally, the Town is committed to supporting victims of intimate partner violence by providing referrals to the Town's Employee Assistance Program and community resources and providing time off for reasons related to intimate partner violence.

INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

Immediately following a communication of a threat, insinuation, or event of violence, a prompt and thorough investigation will begin with the human resource department and/or Southington Police Department. All reports of threats of violence, incidents of violence, suspicious individuals, or activities will be investigated. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected to the extent possible. Reporting individuals will not suffer retaliation upon making good-faith reports of violence, threats, or suspicious individuals or activities. To maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the Town may suspend employees suspected of workplace violence or threats of violence, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone found to be responsible for violence, threats of violence, or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The Town of Southington encourages employees to bring their disputes to the attention of their supervisors or the HR department before the situation escalates. The Town will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish a workplace that is free of the effects of alcohol and second-hand smoke, and free from drug abuse. The Town also seeks to promote a safe, healthy working environment for all employees and to reduce absenteeism, tardiness, and other job performance problems that may be caused by alcohol and/or drug abuse. This policy is in accordance with state law and the Drug Free Workplace Act.

Employees shall not be involved with the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession or use of an illegal drug, a controlled substance, or alcohol, and shall not be under the influence of such substances while on Town property or while conducting Town business on or off Town property. Any employee who discovers illegal drugs, a controlled substance, or alcohol on Town property shall notify the Town Manager or the Human Resource Manager who shall investigate the matter.

As a condition of your employment, an employee must report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off Town property to your immediate supervisor within five (5) calendar days after the conviction.

Employees shall only use prescription drugs on Town property, or during the conduct of Town business, that have been prescribed to them by a licensed medical practitioner, and such drugs shall be used only as prescribed. However, in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-408a through 408q, the Town specifically prohibits the palliative use of marijuana on Town property or during the conduct of Town business, and specifically prohibits employees from being under the influence of intoxicating substances, including marijuana used for palliative purposes, during work hours.

The Town prohibits smoking, including smoking using an electronic nicotine delivery system (e.g., e-cigarettes), electronic cannabis delivery system, or vapor product, and the use of tobacco products in any area of a Town building, on Town property, including property owned, leased, contracted for, or utilized by the Town. Exception to the non-smoking policy is during snowstorms when employees are confined to their trucks.

While Connecticut law allows for the legal use of marijuana under certain circumstances, because marijuana use is still prohibited under federal law, the use of marijuana at work, or outside of work if it impairs an employee's ability to perform their job, constitutes a violation of this policy.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

DEFINITIONS

“Any area” means the interior of a Town building and the outside area within twenty-five feet of any doorway, operable window or air intake vent of a Town building.

“Cannabis” means marijuana, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-240.

“Controlled substance” means a controlled substance in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 812), including marijuana.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

“Electronic cannabis delivery system” means an electronic device that may be used to simulate smoking in the delivery of cannabis to a person inhaling the device and includes, but is not limited to, a vaporizer, electronic pipe, electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other component of such device.

“Electronic nicotine delivery system” means an electronic device used in the delivery of nicotine to a person inhaling from the device, and includes, but is not limited to, an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe or electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other component of such device, including, but not limited to, electronic cigarette liquid or synthetic nicotine.

“Smoke” or “smoking” means the burning of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe or any other similar device, whether containing, wholly or in part, tobacco, cannabis or hemp.

“Vapor product” means any product that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit or other electronic, chemical or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, to produce a vapor that may or may not include nicotine or cannabis and is inhaled by the user of such product.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

In appropriate circumstances, the Town shall provide an employee with an opportunity for rehabilitation in overcoming addiction to, dependence upon or other problem with alcohol or drugs.

Employees who feel they have developed an addiction to, dependence upon, or other problem with alcohol or drugs are encouraged to seek assistance. Certain benefits for alcoholism or drug addiction are provided under the Town's group medical insurance plan. An employee may be given an opportunity to participate in a rehabilitation program that requires absence from work for bona fide treatment. Such absence may be charged to the employee's accrued and unused sick leave, subject to the provisions of the employee's collective bargaining agreement.

Any request for assistance with a drug or alcohol problem will be treated as confidential and only those persons "needing to know" will be made aware of such request.

PERSONAL USE OF PHONE/CELL PHONE

The Town recognizes that occasionally, it is necessary for employees to make or receive personal calls or send text messages during working hours. Employees are to restrict their personal phone usage to reasonable local incidental calls/texts that do not interfere with the employee's work. Excessive personal telephone/cell phone usage may result in discipline.

TOWN VEHICLES

The purpose of these procedures is to define conditions under which the Town assigns vehicles to specific positions and employees to assist them in fulfilling their position responsibilities; specify the Town standards for employees who operate vehicles on Town business; control use so that it is restricted to municipal business only; and reduce the Town's liability exposure from the use of such vehicles. As a public agency, it is important that all reasonable measures be taken to mitigate the frequency and severity of all accidental losses, including losses that arise out of the operation of motor vehicles.

This policy pertains to all employees of the Town whether full-time, part-time, temporary, or seasonal employees who drive any vehicle on Town business. This policy also includes volunteers working for the Town.

How each vehicle is operated affects the image of the Town and influences the Town's liability exposures. The Town strives to project a professional image to the community and have all Town employees represent the Town in a professional manner and to prevent accidents and injuries whenever possible.

Vehicle Use Policy

1. It is the policy of the Town to provide vehicles to employees to be used to assist them in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities and to provide reimbursement to employees as outlined in this policy when they use their personal vehicles to conduct Town business.
2. It is the policy of the Town for all employees utilizing a vehicle to conduct Town business to eliminate conditions that adversely affect the well-being of employees or the Town or that lead to a waste of economic resources through accidental loss.
3. Employees shall operate all vehicles used for Town business in a safe, courteous, and lawful manner. The following practices will be followed:
 - a. All drivers will have a current, valid driver license for the type of vehicle operated. Connecticut statutes will apply to determine whether out of state licenses are valid in this state.
 - b. All applicable motor vehicle laws will be obeyed. This includes complying with the laws governing the use of cell phones or texting devices while driving. Any traffic or parking citations shall be the responsibility of the driver. Moving violations while driving on Town business may be cause for discipline.
 - c. No unauthorized passengers will be allowed to ride in a Town-owned vehicle without the advance approval of the department head. "Unauthorized passenger" means a passenger who has no Town business or reason for being in the vehicle (i.e., family, friends, etc.). Only Town employees are authorized to drive Town-owned vehicles. In an emergency, a Town employee may authorize another Town employee or licensed adult family member of the employee to drive a Town-owned vehicle. Examples of emergencies where delegation of the driving may be appropriate are, when the employee has been injured or has taken ill while on a trip and the employee believes it would be safer for another driver to operate the vehicle.

TOWN VEHICLES

- d. Seat belts will always be worn pursuant to Connecticut Law.
 - e. Vehicle operations resulting in personal injury or property damage will be reported immediately to the Town Manager's office.
 - f. Town-owned vehicles are for official use only. Department Heads or supervisors should be informed of and approve any requests to conduct incidental personal errands in a Town owned vehicle while in route to or from Town business.
 - g. Town-owned vehicles shall not be taken home overnight except with the advance approval of the Department Head or Town Manager.
 - h. Town-owned vehicles may be used for travel to meals when an employee is on business and driving to obtain his or her personal vehicle would result in an unnecessary and wasteful expenditure of time and money.
4. The privilege of operating a Town vehicle on official business may be revoked if the operator fails to drive in a safe, courteous, and lawful manner or conducts him/herself in a manner unbecoming to the image of the Town.
 5. Employees operating Town-owned vehicles must notify his/her supervisor and the human resource department immediately upon receipt of a notification that his/her driver license is or will be expired, canceled, suspended, or revoked, or if there is a change in the license Class status. A 24-hour automatic DUI suspension is considered a change in license status and must be reported. The period between an automatic suspension and an administrative DMV hearing, when a license is not technically suspended, will be enforced as a period when driving permissions on Town business will be suspended until a decision has been made by the DMV. No disciplinary action will be taken on an employee during the waiting period before the administrative hearing other than a suspension of an employee's permission to drive on Town business. If a change in license status is enacted by a license holder's State DMV, such a person may be able to continue driving on Town business depending upon the reason for the change in the driver license status and if he or she is able to obtain an occupational permit from the Motor Vehicles Division. Failure to report such information may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 6. The Town will conduct annual checks of all applicable States' Department of Motor Vehicles records on employees authorized to drive on Town business. Such records will be available upon request to the driver, the driver's supervisors, and the department head.

TOWN VEHICLES

Employees who operate Town vehicles as part of their job duties are subject to the Town's insurance underwriter guidelines. The guidelines identified below pertain to employees who, because of any of the unacceptable violations listed below, will not be able to operate Town vehicles during their job duties.

Unacceptable operators are defined by those with the following

- Type A violations within the last three years (see list below).
- Any combination of accidents and Type B violations (see below) will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will only be enforced with the most serious of these violations.
- Any operator license suspended or revoked within the last three years resulting from moving violations.

Type A Violations

1. Driving while intoxicated within the last three years.
2. Driving under the influence of drugs.
3. Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle (gross negligence).
4. Operating a motor vehicle during a period of suspension or revocation.
5. Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony.
6. Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle.
7. Operating a motor vehicle without the owner's authority.
8. Permitting an unlicensed person to drive.
9. Reckless driving.
10. Speeding contest.
11. Hit and run (BI and PD) driving.

Type B Violations

All moving violations not listed as Type A violations.

Our insurance provider may at any time obtain knowledge of traffic violations through an independent auditor or some other notification. Employees in violation of these provisions may be barred from being covered under the Town's automobile liability insurance for a period of three years.

TOWN VEHICLES

GPS VEHICLE TRACKING

GPS is a valuable tool to promote safer driving habits and alleviate risks associated with the use of Town of Southington vehicles. In addition, it will be used to manage Town of Southington vehicles more efficiently and cost effectively while fostering safe operation of Town vehicles. The data will be used to notify supervisory personnel of vehicle trouble codes, engine and battery health, mileage, vehicle location, vehicle idling time, speed, routing, service intervals, etc. It is understood that disciplinary actions against and excessive monitoring of employees is neither a primary purpose nor an intended result of utilization of GPS equipment. The Parties agree that GPS equipment may be used to verify the guilt or innocence of an employee that the employer had a bona-fide reason to suspect the employee of misconduct. Such equipment will not be utilized to harass employees but will be used to monitor employee's work progress and work locations. The Company agrees that it shall not troll the database to randomly review information available through the system or utilize such information for disciplinary purposes unless a review has been prompted by a bona-fide reason to suspect the employee of misconduct.

Operational Guidelines Under GPS Tracking

Town of Southington employees operate Town-owned vehicles on behalf of the Town. The Town's commitment to safety and employee welfare, in addition to the wellbeing of the public, are the driving factors for utilization of GPS tracking.

Device Tampering

Any tampering with or attempts to remove or disable the GPS equipment is prohibited. Employees must report any malfunction of the GPS tracking devices immediately to their supervisor.

Responsibility Assignments

Employees are responsible for compliance with all the provisions of this policy when using Town vehicles to conduct Town business. The actual operator of each vehicle shall be the responsible employee.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring the requirements of this policy are understood by all employees under their management. In the event of a violation of this policy, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to consult with Human Resources and then administer any disciplinary action deemed necessary, up to and including termination.

DISTRACTED DRIVING POLICY

To increase employee safety and eliminate unnecessary risks behind the wheel, the Town of Southington has enacted a Distracted Driving Policy. The Town is committed to eliminating distracted driving and has created the following rules, which apply to any employee operating a Town vehicle. *Southington Police and Fire employees will continue to follow departmental policies. Where there is not a departmental policy, employees will follow the information provided in this manual.*

- Town employees per Connecticut state law are prohibited from the use of two types of equipment while driving. These are (1) a hand-held mobile telephone, if used to engage in a call and (2) a mobile electronic device. A hand-held mobile telephone is a cellular, analog, wireless, or digital telephone a person uses to engage in a call while using at least one hand. "Engage in a call" means talking into or listening on a hand-held mobile telephone but does not include holding the telephone to turn it on or off or to initiate a function of the telephone. A mobile electronic device is any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment that can provide data communication between two or more persons. This includes a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, laptop computer, equipment that can play a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital photographs are taken or transmitted. (CGS Sec. 14-296aa).
- The use of such devices is prohibited while operating a Town vehicle - whether the Town vehicle is in motion or stopped at a traffic light. This includes, but is not limited to, answering, or making phone calls, engaging in phone conversations, and reading or responding to emails, instant messages, and text messages.
- If Town employees need to use their phones, they must pull over safely to the side of the road or another safe location. Exceptions will be Public Works employees carrying out town functions during their duties, such as snow removal or emergency road services.
- Additionally, Town employees are required to:
 - Turn cell phones off or put them on silent or vibrate before starting the car.
 - Consider modifying voice mail greetings to indicate that you are unavailable to answer calls or return messages while driving.
 - Inform clients, associates, and business partners of this policy as an explanation of why calls may not be returned immediately.
- Failure to follow the Distracted Driving Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including separation, along with the employee being barred from using town vehicles.

HELMET

Helmets required when Operating Motorcycles on Town Time

Purpose:

To require protective helmets for operators of motorcycles, mopeds and bicycles while being covered by Workers Compensation policy. All paid town employees are covered by the CT Workers' Compensation Act. This personal protective equipment may minimize injuries sustained to the employee should an accident occur.

Directive:

The Town of Southington requires that any employee operating a motorcycle or moped wear a DOT approved safety helmet or operating a bicycle wear a CPSC approved safety helmet while being covered under the CT Workers' Compensation policy.

REPORTING ARRESTS AND /OR CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

The Town of Southington recognizes its ethical responsibility to the community it serves. To fulfill this responsibility, we must project a positive image and exhibit the highest professional presentation and demeanor. By stipulating ethical business practices, the Town will provide a consistent and ethical framework of operations.

Town of Southington employees are required to inform the human resource department of an arrest within 24 hours of the occurrence or sooner, if able. Failure to notify human resources of such an incident may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

BUSINESS CASUAL DRES CODE POLICY

The Town of Southington has established a Business Casual Dress Code Policy, which defines dress and grooming guidelines. The purpose of this policy is to promote a consistent, professional image throughout the Town. Proper dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business and Town image. Town employees should project a professional image for external customers, residents, co-workers, and community partners.

This policy shall be followed by all non-uniform employees of the Town during the course of their assigned business hours or otherwise representing the Town. Each Department Head has the authority to formally set additional dress code expectations to meet department needs that are consistent with those noted in this policy.

Departments requiring uniforms (Police, Fire, Highway/Parks, Water Pollution Control) will follow department specific protocols in regards to dress code.

- A business casual dress code is appropriate for Administrative Town employees Monday through Thursday.
- Jeans may only be worn on dress down Fridays. Jeans must not be ripped or have any holes.
- Acceptable Business Casual Attire includes, but it not limited to slacks, khakis, capris, golf shirts, and shirts with finished neckline, skirts, dresses, turtlenecks, or sweaters. Clothing and shoes must be neat and clean.
- Unacceptable attire includes, but is not limited to tee shirts; sweat pants, shorts, sweatshirts, or workout attire; cutoffs, beach attire, halter and spaghetti strap dresses, tight fitting and/or revealing clothing, hats of any kind, tank tops, miniskirts, and short skirts.

Request for Reasonable Accommodation ~

Any employee that requires a reasonable accommodation or exception to this Policy for reasons based on religion, disability, or other grounds protected by federal, state or local laws should contact the Human Resource Department. A reasonable accommodation will be granted unless it would cause an undue hardship on the Town. The Town prohibits any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation or retaliation for requesting a reasonable accommodation for grounds protected by federal state, or local law.

Non- compliance~

We are confident that each employee will use their best judgment with complying with this policy. If there is any doubt regarding the appropriateness of particular attire, it should be discussed with the immediate supervisor.

If an employee reports to duty in attire that does not comply with the established business dress code policy, the employee's supervisor shall ask the employee not to wear the inappropriate item to work again. If compliance with the Policy persists, the employee will be asked to go home and change, utilizing accrued annual leave. If accrued annual leave is not available, the employee will not be paid for the time taken to change clothing and return, unless pay is otherwise required by applicable law. For subsequent offenses, the supervisor may initiate appropriate disciplinary procedures consistent with the Personnel Rules.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Town of Southington understands that many employees engage in the use of social media. However, use of social media may present risks and carries certain responsibilities. To assist in responsible decisions about your use of social media, the Town has established these guidelines. *Social Media* includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether associated or affiliated with Town of Southington, as well as any other form of electronic communication. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks that are involved.

- Be respectful to fellow coworkers, town residents and affiliates of the Town of Southington. Avoid using statements, photographs, video, or audio that can be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, intimidating, or disparaging of others. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law or Town policy.
- When discussing matters, policies, or practices of the Town of Southington, never represent yourself as a spokesperson for the Town. Be clear that your content is your view and does not represent the Town of Southington. It is best to include a disclaimer such as, "The postings on this site are my own and do not reflect the views of the Town of Southington."
- Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment the Town provides unless it is work-related and is authorized by your manager or department head. Do not use Town of Southington email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.
- The Town prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

COMPUTER USE POLICY

Internet

Users should have no expectation of privacy while using the Town 's Internet/Email. The Town may monitor users' online activities and reserves the right to access, review, copy, store or delete any electronic communications or files. This includes any items stored on town-provided devices, such as files, emails, cookies, or internet history.

Internet use, on Town time, is authorized to conduct Town of Southington business. Incidental usage is acceptable (check home email, school website, etc.). Internet use brings the possibility of breaches to the security of confidential Town information. Internet use also creates the possibility of contamination to our system via viruses or spyware. Spyware allows unauthorized people, outside the Town, potential access to Town passwords and other confidential information.

Removing such programs from the Town network requires IT staff to invest time and attention that is better devoted to progress. For this reason, and to assure the use of work time appropriately for work, we ask staff members to limit internet use to work-related needs.

Additionally, under no circumstances may Town computers or other electronic equipment be used to obtain, view, or reach any pornographic, or otherwise immoral, unethical, or nonbusiness-related internet sites.

Email Usage

Email is also to be used for Town business. Town confidential information must not be shared outside of the Town, without authorization, at any time. You are also not to conduct personal business using the Town computer or email.

Please keep this in mind, also, as you consider forwarding non-business emails to associates, family or friends. Non-business-related emails waste Town time, attention, and resources.

COBRA

Cobra Notification - (Initial)

It is important that all covered individuals (employee, spouse, and dependent children) take the time to read this notice and become familiar with its contents. If there is a covered dependent who is not living at the home address on file for the employee, please provide written notification to the human resource office and a notice will be sent.

Under federal COBRA law, the Town of Southington is required to offer covered employees and/or covered family members the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage (Continuation Coverage) at group rates when coverage under the health plan would otherwise end due to certain qualifying events. This notice is intended to inform you, and any covered dependents, of the potential future options and obligations under the continuation coverage provisions of COBRA. Should an actual qualifying event occur in the future, the plan administrator will send you additional information and the appropriate election notice at that time.

YOUR OBLIGATIONS

Qualifying Event for Covered Employee

If you are the covered employee, you may elect continuation coverage if you lose group health coverage because of a termination of your employment or a reduction in your hours of employment.

Qualifying Event for Covered Spouse

If you are the covered spouse of an employee, you may elect continuation coverage for yourself if you lose group health coverage under on the Town's group health plans for any of the following reasons:

1. Termination of your spouse's employment or reduction in your spouse's hours of employment with the Town of Southington.
2. The death of your spouse.
3. Divorce or legal separation from your spouse.
4. Your spouse becomes entitled to Medicare.

Qualifying Events for Covered Dependent Children

If you are the covered dependent child of an employee, you may elect continuation coverage for yourself if you lose group health coverage under one of the Town 's group health plans for any of the following reasons:

1. A termination of the employee's employment or reduction in the employee's hours of employment with the Town of Southington.
2. The death of the Town of Southington employee.
3. Parents' divorce or legal separation.
4. The employee of the Town of Southington becomes entitled to Medicare.
5. You cease to be a *dependent child* under the terms of the health plan.

COBRA Cobra Notification - (Initial)

Important Employee, Spouse and Dependent Notifications Required

Under the law, the employee, spouse, or other family member has the responsibility to notify the Town Manager and/or designee, of a divorce, legal separation, or a child losing dependent status under one of the Town of Southington's group plans. This notification must be made within 60-days from whichever date is later...*the date of the event, or the date on which health plan coverage would be lost under the terms of the insurance contract because of the event.*

The employee, spouse, or dependent will notify the Town Manager in writing. The notification will be sent to the human resource office and will include the *name of the individual, the event, and the date of the occurrence.* **If this notification is not completed according to the above procedures and within the required 60-day notification period, then the right to continuation coverage will be forfeited.**

Be sure to carefully read the dependent eligibility rules contained in the summary plan description so that all members are familiar with what happens when a dependent member ceases to be a dependent under the terms of the plan.

The Town of Southington will notify the Town Manager of the employee's termination of employment, reduction in hours, death, or Medicare entitlement.

Election Period and Coverage

Once the plan administrator learns that a qualifying event has occurred, covered individuals (also known as qualified beneficiaries) will be notified of their rights to elect continuation of coverage. Each qualified beneficiary has independent COBRA election rights and will have 60-days to elect continuation coverage. The 60-day election window is measured from the later of the date health plan coverage is lost due to the qualifying event or from the date of COBRA notification. This is the maximum period allowed to elect COBRA as the plan does not provide an extension of the election period beyond what is required by law. If a qualified beneficiary does not elect continuation coverage within this election period, then rights to continue health insurance will end.

If a qualified beneficiary elects continuation coverage, he/she will be required to pay the entire cost for the health insurance, plus a possible 2% administration fee. The Town of Southington is required to provide the qualified beneficiary with coverage that is identical to the coverage provided under the plan to similarly situated employees and/or covered dependents. Should coverage change or be modified for a similarly situated active employee, then the change and/or modification will be made to your coverage as well.

Length of Continuation Coverage

If the event causing the loss of coverage is a termination of employment or reduction in work hours to an amount below 20-hours per week, such employees will have the opportunity to continue coverage for as long as they continue to make timely monthly payment of premiums from the date of the qualifying event.

COBRA

Cobra Notification - (Initial)

Social Security Disability

If a qualified beneficiary is determined disabled according to Title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, it is the qualified beneficiary's responsibility to obtain this disability determination from the Social Security Administration and provide a copy of the determination to Town Manager and/or designee, within 60-days after the date of determination. It is also the qualified beneficiary's responsibility to notify Town Manager and/or designee, within 30-days if a final determination has been made that they are no longer disabled.

Secondary Events

If a secondary event occurs (divorce, legal separation, Medicare entitlement, or a dependent child ceasing to be a dependent), the insured (spouse, child, or employee entitled to Medicare) shall be entitled to 18-months of coverage under COBRA from the date of the secondary qualifying event for the qualified beneficiary, spouse and/or dependent children. If a secondary event occurs, it is the qualified beneficiary's responsibility to notify the Town Manager in writing within 60-days of the secondary event. In no event, however, will continuation coverage last beyond 36-months from the date of the event that originally made the qualified beneficiary eligible for continuation coverage.

Length of Continuation Coverage ~ 36-months

If the original event causing the loss of coverage was the death of the employee, divorce, legal separation, Medicare entitlement, or a dependent child ceasing to be a dependent child under the group plan, then each qualified beneficiary will have the opportunity to continue coverage for 36-months from the date of the qualifying event.

Eligibility, Premiums, and Potential Conversion Rights

A qualified beneficiary does not have to show they are insurable to elect continuation cover; however, they must have been covered by the plan at the time of the qualifying event to be eligible for COBRA continuation coverage. The plan administrator reserves the right to verify COBRA eligibility status and termination continuation coverage retroactively for the beneficiary to determine whether the beneficiary is ineligible or if there has been a material misrepresentation of the facts.

A qualified beneficiary will have to pay all the applicable premiums, plus a 2% administration charge for continuation coverage. These premiums will be adjusted in the future if the applicable premium amounts change. If a qualified beneficiary is considered disabled under a Social Security determination, coverage may continue until Medicare entitlement.

There will be a maximum grace period of thirty days for the regular scheduled monthly premiums. At the end of the period of eligibility for continuation coverage, a qualified beneficiary must be allowed to enroll in an individual conversion health plan provided under Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Connecticut if an individual conversion plan is available at that time.

COBRA **Cobra Notification - (Initial)**

Cancellation of Continuation Coverage

The law-provided COBRA continuation coverage will end prior to the maximum continuation period for any of the following reasons:

1. The Town of Southington ceases to provide any group health plan to the employee group from which the eligible member was separated.
2. Any required premium for continuation coverage is not paid in a timely manner.
3. A qualified beneficiary becomes covered under another group health plan that does not contain any exclusion or limitation with respect to any pre-existing condition of such beneficiary other than such an exclusion or limitation, which does not apply to (or is satisfied by) such beneficiary by reason of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996*.
4. A qualified beneficiary becomes entitled to Medicare.
5. A qualified beneficiary extended continuation coverage to 29-months due to a Social Security disability and a final determination has been made that the qualified beneficiary is no longer disabled.
6. A qualified beneficiary notified Town Manager and/or designee that they wish to cancel COBRA continuation coverage.

**Additional information on how the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act coordinates with COBRA will be provided to you at the time of a COBRA qualifying event.*

Notification of Address Change

To ensure all covered individuals receive information properly and efficiently, it is important you notify the Town Manager of any address change, as soon as possible. Failure to notify will result in delayed COBRA notifications or a loss of continuation of coverage options.

Town Manager
Town of Southington
75 Main Street
Southington, CT 06489

Questions

If any covered individual does not understand any part of this summary notice, has questions regarding the information, or questions regarding obligations, please contact the office of Town Manager, at (860) 276-6200.

DISPOSITION OF PUBLIC RECORDS

State of Connecticut
Connecticut State Library
Office of the Public Records Administrator

www.cslib.org/publicrecords
Public Records Policy 05:

Date Issued: November 28, 2011

Supersedes: General Letter #5: Destruction of Public Records (Revised 07/25/1995), Disposition of Local Government Records (1999), and Disposition of Education Records (1999).

I. Scope and Authority

Scope

This policy provides guidance for the disposition of public records, including destruction or transfer. It applies to all employees of state agencies within the executive department, towns, cities, boroughs, districts, and other political subdivisions of the state.

Authority

The office of the Public Records Administrator is authorized to approve disposition of public records, under the authority by §11-8, §11-8b, and §7-109 of the *General Statutes of Connecticut* (CGS).

Definitions

"Agency" is a state agency, municipality, or political subdivision falling under the authority of records management administered by the Connecticut State Library as referred to in CGS§ 11-8.

"Public record" means any recorded data or information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, received, or retained by a public agency, or to which a public agency is entitled to receive a copy by law or contract under section 1-218, whether such data or information be handwritten, typed, tape-recorded, printed, photo stated, photographed, or recorded by any other methods. [(Source: CGS§ 1-200(5).]

"Official record copy" means the original or official copy of a record that is retained for legal, operational, or historical purposes. For example, if records are kept in both electronic and hard copy format, the agency must identify the official record copy. [Source: ARMA International. *Glossary of Records and Information Management Terms*, 3rd ed. Lenexa, KS: ARMA International, 2007]

"Non-Record" means any item that is not usually included within the scope of official records. Examples of non-records are extra (duplicate) copies kept only for convenience, reference materials, and blank forms. [Source: ARMA, Glossary.]

DISPOSITION OF PUBLIC RECORDS

II. Policies

Agency Responsibility

Agencies are responsible for providing all employees with a copy of this policy, obtaining a signed acknowledgment of receipt from each employee, and keeping the signed acknowledgement on file.

Retention of Records

Records must be retained for the established retention periods as listed on published records retention schedules, available at www.cslib.org/publicrecords. Retention requirements apply only to the official record copy.

Disposition of Records

Disposition of records refers to either **destruction** of records or **transfer** of records to the custody of another entity. Records may not be destroyed or transferred until the Office of the Public Records Administrator has returned a signed *Records Disposition Authorization* form to the requester. If a record does not appear on a records retention schedule, it does *not* mean that an agency may dispose of the record without permission from this office. Please contact the office for guidance.

HIPPA/NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information.

The Town of Southington Group Health Plan (the "Plan") is required by law to take reasonable steps to ensure the privacy of your personally identifiable health information. The term "Protected Health Information" (PHI) includes all individually identifiable health plan information transmitted or maintained by the Plan, regardless of form (oral written, electronic).

Section 1. PHI Uses and Disclosures.

Required PHI Uses and Disclosures

Upon your request, the Plan is required to give you access to certain PHI to inspect and copy it.

Use and disclosure of your PHI may be required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine the Plan 's compliance with the privacy regulations.

Uses and disclosures to carry out treatment and healthcare operations.

The Plan and its business associates will use PHI without your consent, authorization, or opportunity to agree or object to carry out treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. The Plan also will disclose PHI to the Plan Sponsor, Town of Southington and the Town of Southington Self-Insurance Committee for purposes related to treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. The Plan sponsor has amended its plan documents to protect your PHI as required by federal law.

Treatment is the provision, coordination, or management of healthcare and related services. For example, the Plan may disclose to a treating orthodontist the name of your treating dentist so that the orthodontist may ask for your dental x-rays from the treating dentist.

Payment includes but is not limited to actions to make coverage determinations and payment. For example, the Plan may tell a doctor whether you are eligible for coverage or what percentage of the bill will be paid by the Plan.

Healthcare operations include, but are not limited to, quality assessment and improvement, reviewing competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, underwriting, premium rating, and other insurance activities relating to creating or renewing insurance contracts. For example, the Plan may use information about your claims to refer you to a disease management program, project future benefit costs or audit the accuracy of its claims processing functions.

Uses and disclosures that require that you be given an opportunity to agree or disagree prior to the use or release.

HIPPA/NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Disclosure of your PHI to family members, other relatives and for your close, personal friends are allowed if:

- The information is directly relevant to the family or friend's involvement with your care or payment for that care; and,
- You have either agreed to the disclosures or have been given an opportunity to object and have not objected.

Uses and disclosures without your authorization.

1. When required by law.
2. When permitted for purposes of public health activities.
3. When authorized by law to report information about abuse, neglect, or domestic violence to public authorities if there exists a reasonable belief that you may be a victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.
4. The Plan may disclose your PHI to a public health oversight agency for oversight activities authorized by law.
5. The Plan may disclose your PHI when required for judicial or administrative proceedings. For example, your PHI may be disclosed in response to a subpoena or discovery request provided certain conditions are met.
6. When required for law enforcement purposes (for example, to report certain types of wounds).
7. For law enforcement purposes, including for the purpose of identifying or locating a suspect, fugitive, material witness or missing person. Also, when disclosing information about an individual who is or is suspected to be victim of a crime.
8. When required to be given to a coroner or medical examiner for the purpose of identifying a deceased person, determining a cause of death or other duties as authorized by law. Also, disclosure is permitted to funeral directors, consistent with applicable law, as necessary to carry out their duties with respect to the decedent.
9. The Plan may use or disclose PHI for research subject to conditions.
10. When consistent with applicable law and standards of ethical conduct if the Plan, in good faith, believes the use or disclosure if necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public and the disclosure is to a person reasonably able to prevent or lessen the threat, including the target of the threat.
11. When authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with workers' compensation or other similar programs established by law.

HIPPA/NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Section 2: Rights of Individuals.

Right to Request Restrictions on PHI Uses and Disclosures.

You may request the Plan to restrict uses and disclosures of your PHI to carry out treatment, payment, or health of operations, or to restrict uses and disclosures to family members, relatives, friends, or other persons identified by you who are involved in your care of payment for your care. However, the Plan is not required to agree to your request.

The Plan will accommodate reasonable requests to receive communications of PHI by alternative means or at alternative locations.

You or your personal representative will be required to complete a form to request restrictions on uses and disclosures of your PHI.

Right to Inspect and Copy PHI

You have a right to inspect and obtain a copy of your PHI contained in a “designated record set” for as long as the Plan maintains the PHI.

“Protected Health Information” (PHI) includes all individually identifiable health information transmitted or maintained by the Plan, regardless of form.

“Designated Record Set ” includes the medical records and billing records about individuals maintained by or for a covered healthcare provider; enrollment, payment, billing, claims adjudication and case or medical management record systems maintained by or for a health plan or other information used in whole or in part by or for the covered entity to make decisions about individuals. Information used for quality control or peer review analyses and not used to make decisions about individuals is not in the designated record set.

The requested information will be provided within 30 days if the information is maintained on site or within 60 days if the information is maintained offsite. A single 30-day extension is allowed if the Plan is unable to comply with the deadline.

You or your personal representative will be required to complete a form to request access to the PHI in your designated record set.

If access is denied, you or your personal representative will be provided with a written denial setting forth the basis for the denial, a description of how you may exercise those review rights and a description of how you may complain to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

HIPPA/NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Right to Amend PHI.

You have the right to request the Plan to amend your PHI or a record about you in a designated record set for as long as the PHI is maintained in the designated record set.

The plan has 60 days after the request is made to act on the request. A single 30-day extension is allowed if the Plan is unable to comply with the deadline. If the request is denied in whole or part, the Plan must provide you with a written denial that explains the basis for the denial. You or your personal representative may then submit a written statement disagreeing with the denial and have that statement included with any future disclosures of your PHI.

The Right to Receive an Accounting of PHI Disclosures.

At your request, the Plan will also provide you with an accounting of disclosures by the Plan of your PHI during the six years prior to the date of your request. However, such accounting need not include PHI disclosures made:

- 1) to carry out treatment, payment, or healthcare operations
- 2) to individuals about their own PHI
- 3) prior to the compliance date
- 4) based on your written authorization

If the accounting cannot be provided within 60 days, an additional 30 days is allowed if the individual is given a written statement of the reasons for the delay and the date by which the accounting will be provided.

If you request more than one accounting within a 12-month period, the Plan will charge a reasonable, cost-based fee for each subsequent accounting.

The Right to Receive a Paper Copy of this Notice

You have the right to receive a paper copy of this notice upon request. To exercise any of the above individual rights, please contact the following:

Town of Southington
Human Resource Department
200 North Main Street
Southington, CT 06489
Phone: (860) 628-3248

HIPPA/NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

A Note about Personal Representatives.

You may exercise your rights through a personal representative. Your personal representative will be required to produce evidence of his/her authority to act on your behalf before that person will be given access to your PHI or allowed to take any action for you. Proof of such authority may take one of the following forms:

- A power of attorney for healthcare purposes; notarized by a notary public.
- A court order of appointment of the person as the conservator or guardian of the individual; or
- An individual who is the parent of a minor child.

The Plan retains discretion to deny access to your PHI to a personal representative to provide protection to those vulnerable people who depend on others to exercise their rights under these rules and who may be subject to abuse and neglect. This also applies to personal representatives of minors.

Special Rules Regarding Disclosure of Substance Abuse and HIV Related Information.

Under state or federal law, additional restrictions may apply to disclosures of health information that relate to care for substance abuse or HIV related testing and treatment. This information may not be disclosed without your specific written permission, except as may be specifically required or permitted by applicable state or federal law. The following are examples of disclosures that may be made without your specific written permission:

HIV Related Information: We may disclose HIV related information for purpose of treatment or payment.

Substance Abuse Treatment: We may disclose information obtained from a substance abuse program in an emergency.

Section 3: The Plan's Duties.

The Plan is required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide individuals (participants and beneficiaries) with notice of its legal duties and privacy practices.

This notice is effective beginning April 30, 2004 and the Plan is required to comply with the terms of this notice. However, the Plan reserves the right to change its privacy practices and to apply the changes to any PHI received or maintained by the Plan prior to that date. If a privacy practice is changed, a revised version of this notice will be provided (to all past and present participants and beneficiaries) for whom the Plan still maintains PHI.

Any revised version of this notice will be distributed within 60 days of the effective date of any material change to the uses or disclosures, the individuals' rights, the duties of the Plan or other privacy practices stated in this notice.

HIPPA/NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Minimum Necessary Standard.

When using or disclosing PHI or when requesting PHI from another covered entity, the Plan will make reasonable efforts not to use, disclose or request more than the minimum amount of PHI necessary to accomplish the intended purpose of the use, disclosure, or request, taking into consideration practical and technological limitations. However, the minimum necessary standard will not apply in the following situations:

- Disclosures to or requests by a healthcare provider for treatment.
- Uses or disclosures made to the individual.
- Disclosures made to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Uses or disclosures that are required by law.
- Uses or disclosures that is required for the Plan's compliance with legal regulations.

This notice does not apply to information that has been de-identified. De-identified information is information that does not identify an individual and with respect to which there is not reasonable basis to believe the information can be used to identify an individual is not individually identifiable health information.

In addition, the Plan may use or disclose summary health information to the plan sponsor for obtaining premium bids or modifying, amending, or terminating the group health plan, which summarizes the claims history, claims expenses or type of claims experienced by individuals for whom a plan sponsor has provided health benefits under a group health plan; and from which identifying information has been deleted in accordance with HIPAA.

Section 4. Your Right to File a Complaint.

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you may document your complaint with the human resource department:

Town of Southington
Human Resource Department
200 North Main Street
Southington, CT 06489
Phone: (860) 628-3248

Additionally, an insured has a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights:

US Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights Medical Privacy ~ Complaint Division
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201
Toll Free: 877-696-6775
Phone: 866-627-7748
TTY: 888-788-4989
Email: www.hhs.gov/ocr

HIPPA/NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

The Plan will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Section 5. Whom to Contact at the Plan for More Information

If you have any questions regarding this notice or the subject addressed in it, you may contact the human resource department for the Town of Southington at the address set above.

Conclusion.

PHI use and disclosure by the Plan is regulated by a federal law known as HIPPA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). You may find these rules at 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 160 and 164. This notice attempts to summarize the regulations. The regulations will supersede any discrepancy between the information in this notice and the regulations.

Effective Date of Notice - 4/30/2004

Amended - 1/26/2055

Updated – 8/17/2015

Military Service

Sec. 7-434, 7-436b

If you are a member and join a branch of the armed forces while the United States is at war or in a national emergency, and are re-employed within six months of your discharge, you will be credited with that period of service for retirement purposes as if you were continuously employed by the municipality. If you are disabled because of military service, the six-month period for re-employment may be extended.

In addition, you will receive credit in calculating the amount of your benefit for certain periods of time you were in the military service before you become a member if you make contributions for the period. The contributions required are 2% of your first year's salary as a member for each year of credit. Interest for the period is at 5% per year, and you have one year from your date of employment to make these contributions. If you were a prisoner of war during part of the time you were in the military service, your municipality will pay your required contributions for that specific period. The Retirement Commission will help you to determine which periods of your military service are covered and to compute the amount that you need to contribute to get full or partial credit for your years of military service.

Service with Other Municipalities or the State of Connecticut

Sec. 7-442a, 7-442b

If you previously worked for a municipality covered by MERS, and later work for another municipality that is also covered becomes covered within two years of your employment date, credit will be given for both periods of employment. If you withdrew your contributions from the fund when you left the municipality, you must repay them with interest to receive credit for your prior years of service.

If you were employed previously with another municipality not participating in MERS, you may receive credit under MERS for that period of employment if you arrange a transfer of your contributions plus the employer's contribution and interest. If you have worked for the State, you can receive credit for that service by having your employee contributions (plus interest) transferred to MERS.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Southington Code of Ethics was adopted at a meeting of the Southington Town Council held on February 17, 1989. The Code was amended on July 10, 1995 and on April 24, 2006.

Article I Generally

§28-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and referred to as the *Code of Ethics of the Town of Southington*.

§28-2. Statement of Purpose. [Added 4/24/2006]

Public office is a public trust. The trust of the public is essential for government to function effectively. Public policy developed by government officials and employees affects every citizen of the Town of Southington, and it must be based on honest and fair deliberations and decisions. This process must be free of threats, favoritism, undue influence, and all forms of impropriety so that the confidence of the public is not eroded. With this code, the Town of Southington seeks to avoid any loss of trust and to maintain and increase the confidence of our citizens in the integrity and fairness of their government.

§28-3. Definitions. [Amended 4/24/2006]

The following words, terms, and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

- **Agency.** Includes all departments, boards, commissions, committees, and the Town Council.
- **Complainant.** The person filing a written, verified complaint under oath.
- **Employee.** Every person employed by the Town in any capacity, whether as a classified employee, unclassified employee, full-time employee or part-time employee, and all employees of the Board of Education.
- **Financial Interest.** Any interest with a monetary value of \$100 or more or which generates a financial gain or loss of \$100 or more per person in a calendar year.
- **Member of any Board, Commission or Agency.** Every person appointed by the Town Council or by the Town Manager to any authority, board, commission, or agency, whether autonomous or not, of the Town.
- **Personal interest.** An interest in any action taken by the municipality in which an individual will derive a non-financial benefit or detriment, which will result in the expenditure of municipal funds.
- **Private Financial Interest.** Includes the private financial interest of oneself, a spouse, minor child, a person who is or has been one's partner or joint venture within the prior year, of a Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, employee of the Town, or an interest in which the official, member of a board, commission or agency or employee is a silent partner or has an interest held by a trustee.
- **Referral individual or Board.** The person or board to whom a report by the Board of Ethics has been referred pursuant to § 28-14.
- **Respondent.** The person against whom an allegation has been made pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

CODE OF ETHICS

- **Town Officials.** Members of the Town Council, the Town Manager, Deputy Town Manager, Town Attorney, Assistant Town Attorney, boards, commissions, committees, departments, or other agencies, whether the officers, officials and members are elected or appointed, but shall not mean Justices of the Peace.

§28-4. General rules of conduct. [Amended 4/24/2006]

No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, or employee of the Town shall engage in any business or transaction or shall have a private, financial, or personal interest, direct or indirect, which conflicts with the proper discharge of his/her official duties in the public interest and would tend to impair his/her independence or judgment of action in the performance of his/her official duties. This section shall not apply to contracts awarded to the lowest responsible bidder after public advertisement, nor to governmental tasks which are merely ministerial in character.

§ 28-5. Conflicts of interest. [Amended 4/24/2006]

- A. *Private business or professional enterprise.* A conflict of interest exists if the officer, official, employee, or member of any Town agency has a private financial or personal interest in the outcome, or is the owner, shareholder, member, partner, officer, employee, or other participant of or in, a private business or professional enterprise that will be affected by the outcome of any matter under consideration before him/her.
- B. *Speculative or investment activities.* A conflict of interest exists if the officer, official or employee, or any member of any town agency has such interest in any matter as it relates to investment activities that shall benefit from use of confidential information gained from such officer, official or employee, or member of any Town agency.
- C. *Town employees (full-time, part-time).* All full-time employees of the Town shall devote all their time and effort in the fulfillment of their assigned duties during those hours when it is customary for the Town to conduct business, such hours to include meetings held outside of customary business hours where the employee's presence is necessary to facilitate Town business and is job-related. All part-time employees of the Town shall be available at times necessary to fulfill their duties or at the convenience of their supervisor or other departments to facilitate Town business during hours in which Town business is customarily conducted. No full-time employee shall engage in any activities other than Town business during hours in which the Town customarily conducts its business, unless such activity conforms with established Town policies set by any board, commission or agency, or the Town Manager, the Deputy Town Manager, Town Planner, Assistant Town Planner, Town Engineer or Assistant Town Engineer, Building Inspector or Zoning Enforcement Officer is specifically prohibited from engaging in any activity (in which he/she has a personal interest or private financial interest as herein defined) relating to the purchase and sale or development of land or buildings (other than his/her personal residence).

CODE OF ETHICS

D. *Duty to Disclose and abstain.* Any Town official, member of a board, commission or agency or employee who has a private financial or personal interest in any action, legislative or otherwise, by any Town agency and who is a member of, participates in discussion with, or gives an official opinion to such Town agency, shall disclose on the written records of such agency the true nature and extent of such interest and refrain from a comment or vote on the matter and remove himself/herself from the panel until the matter has been dispensed. The failure of any officer, official, or employee or member of any Town agency to disqualify himself or herself from action if any situation where a conflict of interest exists shall constitute a violation of this chapter. This section shall not apply to:

- 1) Contracts awarded to the lowest responsible bidder after public advertisement.
- 2) Unpaid appointed officials during a declared state of emergency.
- 3) Matters requiring disclosure to, or approval by, a court.
- 4) Interests by virtue of ownership of stock in a publicly held corporation in an amount less than ten percent of the corporation's issued and outstanding stock.

E. *Litigation.* No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency or employee of the Town shall appear in behalf of private interests before any agency of the Town nor shall he/she represent private interests in any action or proceeding against the Town in any litigation when such appearance or representation would be in conflict with or would tend to impair his/her independence of judgment and action in the performance of his/her official duties as such Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, or employee. An elected Town official shall not appear before a Town agency (except on behalf of constituents in the course of performing his/her duties as a representative of the electorate) when such appearance or representation would be in conflict with or would tend to impair his/her independence of judgment and action in the performance of his/her official duties as such Town official. Any Town official member of a board, commission or agency or employee may appear before a Town agency in the performance of official, public, or civil obligations.

§ 28-6. Use and disclosure of confidential information. [Amended 4/24/2006]

- A. Except as may be required by law, no Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, or employee of the Town shall disclose any confidential information concerning the property, government business or affairs of the Town and neither shall he/she use such information to advance the private financial interest of himself/herself or others.
- B. No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency or employee of the Town shall knowingly, with the intent to deceive, disseminate any false information or make false statements.

§ 28-7. Whistle Blower Protection. [Added 4/24/2006]

No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency or employee of the Town shall be dismissed or reprimanded or treated in any manner inconsistent with his/her abilities prior to the disclosure in any way, if such person in good faith and reasonable belief files a complaint under this code. It is the express intent of this section to allow the Code to function without fear of retribution to the complainant.

CODE OF ETHICS

§ 28-8. Gifts and favors. [Amended 4/24/2006]

- A. No public officials or employees, spouse or minor child of the public official or employees, shall accept or solicit any gift of financial interest whether in the form of money, thing, favor, loan or promise which would not be offered or given to him/her if he/she did not hold such appointment, office or employment.
- B. Use of town property. No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, or employee shall request or permit he/she or others the use of Town-owned or leased vehicles, equipment, materials or property for personal convenience or profit, except when such services are available to the public generally or are provided in conformance with established Town policies for the use of such Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, or employee in the conduct of Town business.
- C. All citizens to be treated equal. No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency or employee shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.
- D. Patronage. No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, or employee of the Town shall promise any employment, contract, or any relationship with the Town of Southington as an exchange for political support or political donations.
- E. Quid Pro Quo. No Town official, member of a board, commission or agency, or employee of the Town shall solicit or accept any gift from any person, company or entity which to his/her knowledge is interested in any pending matter within such person's official duties and responsibility.

§ 28-9. Distribution of Code of Ethics.

The Town Clerk shall cause a copy of this chapter to be distributed by every Town official, member of any board, commission or agency, employees (classified, unclassified, full-time or part-time, and all employees of the Board of Education), within ninety days after enactment of the ordinance from which this chapter derives. Each Town official, member of any board, commission or agency, employees (classified/unclassified, full-time or part-time and all employees of the Board of Education) thereafter shall be furnished a copy before entering upon the duties of his/her office or employment. A signed receipt for all copies shall be returned to the Town Clerk and retained on file.

CODE OF ETHICS

Article II Board of Ethics

§ 28-10. Created.

There is hereby created a Board of Ethics, which shall be charged with the administration of the Code of Ethics.

§ 28-11. Composition; terms; qualifications.

A. The Board of Ethics shall be composed of four regular members and two alternate members, all of which shall be resident electors, to be appointed by the Town Council. Of the four regular members initially appointed, two shall be appointed for a term of three years and two shall be appointed for a term of two years. No political party shall have as appointees more than two regular members and one alternate member on the Board of Ethics at one time. All subsequent appointments to the Board of regular members and all appointments of alternate members shall be for a term of three years. Any member having served for six years in succession shall be ineligible for reappointments to the Board. For individuals filling a vacancy, successive years of service will commence with the next appointment period. All members shall be electors of the municipality. No member shall: **[Amended 5/8/2017]**

- 1) Hold or campaign for any public office.
- 2) Hold an officer's position in any political party or political committee.
- 3) Serve as a member of any other municipal agency.

B. If a regular member of the Board of Ethics is absent or is disqualified, the Chairman of the Board shall designate an alternate to so act, choosing alternates in rotation, so that they shall act as nearly equal in number of times as possible. If an alternate is not available in accordance with such rotation, such fact shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

§ 28-12. Officers, terms; meetings

- A. Officers. At its annual meeting, the Board of Ethics may elect Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary to serve consistent with tenure of appointment until a successor shall be elected.
- B. Meeting. The annual meeting of the Board of Ethics shall be held on the third Wednesday of each January. At such meeting, a schedule for any further meeting for that year shall be set, and election shall be held. Other meetings may be called by the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or any two members of the Board.

§ 28-13. Authority to adopt rules and regulations: public record. [Amended 4/24/2006]

The Board of Ethics shall adopt rules of procedure, orders, and regulations which it deems necessary to carry out the intent of § 7-479 of the Connecticut General Statutes and this chapter. All such rules, orders and regulations and amendments thereto, and all proceedings of the board shall be filed in the office of the Town Clerk and available for public inspection.

CODE OF ETHICS

§ 28-14. Investigation of conduct. [Amended 7/11/1995; 4/24/2006]

- A. *Authority.* The Board of Ethics shall have power to investigate a written complaint concerning official conduct of any department or agency of the Town government or of any Town office, member of any board, commission or agency or employee thereof. The Board shall not consider any complaint alleging a violation of the Code of Ethics established herein unless such complaint is received by the Board within a period of two years from the date on which the act of omission complained of should have been, with reasonable diligence, discovered by the complainant.
- B. *Form and content of complaint.* The Board of Ethics shall receive complaints from any person of any violation of the Code of Ethics and shall investigate each complaint and may hold a hearing thereof if, in the opinion of the majority of the Board, the complaint warrants a hearing. Any complaint received by the Board must be in writing and must be a verified complaint signed under oath affirming the truth of allegations.
- C. *Initial determination.* Upon receiving a verified complaint under oath of an alleged violation of the Code of Ethics, the Board of Ethics shall, within fifteen days, notify in writing the respondent advising the concerned party of the specific nature of the complaint made and being investigated by the Board. Upon receipt of such notice, the party so notified shall have the right to demand a hearing by the Board within fifteen days.
- D. *Dismissal.* If the Board of Ethics determines that the verified complaint does not allege fact sufficient to constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics or the Charter of the Town, it shall dismiss the complaint and notify the complainant and the respondent.
- E. *Hearing.* If the Board of Ethics decides that a hearing is required, or the respondent demands a hearing, such hearing shall afford the respondent the right to be represented by counsel, the right to cross-examine anyone testifying against him/her, to answer any complaint made of his/her conduct, and to present evidence in his/her own behalf. The respondent shall also have the right to face the complainant. No hearing may be conducted with less than three Board members in attendance.
- F. *Subpoenas.* Pursuant to § 7-148h of the Connecticut General Statutes, and any amendments or substitutes therefore, the Board of Ethics shall have power to issue subpoenas or subpoenas duces tecum, enforceable as therein provided. The Board of Ethics shall have the power to administer oaths, compel attendance of witnesses and require the production of books and papers. At any such hearing, all proceedings shall be recorded by a duly licensed stenographer.
- G. *Decision.* A finding of a violation shall require three affirmative votes.

CODE OF ETHICS

- H. The written complaint and the record of the investigation and evaluation thereof shall be confidential until the Board of Ethics makes a finding of the probable cause except upon request of the respondent.
- 1) If the evaluation is confidential, any information supplied to or received from the Board shall not be disclosed to any third party by a subject of the evaluation, a person contacted for the purpose of obtaining information or by a Board or staff member. No provision of this subsection shall prevent the Board of Ethics from reporting the possible commission of a crime to the Chief State's Attorney or other prosecuting authority.
 - 2) Not later than three business days after the termination of the investigation, the Board shall inform the complainant and the respondent of its finding and provide them a summary of its reasons for making that finding. The Board shall publish its finding upon the respondent's request and may also publish a summary of its reasons for making such finding.
 - 3) The Board shall make public a finding of probable cause not later than five business days after the termination of the investigation. At such time, if the Board finds probable cause, the entire record of the investigation shall become public.
 - 4) If the Board makes a finding of no probable cause, the complaint and the record of its investigation shall remain confidential, except upon the request of the respondent and except that some or all of the record may be used in subsequent proceedings. No complainant, respondent, witness, designated party, or Board or staff member shall disclose to any third party any information from the investigation, including knowledge of the existence of a complaint, which the disclosing party would not otherwise have known. If such a disclosure is made and it is concluded that the complainant is the source of the disclosure, then, the Board may dismiss the complaint. [Amended 5/8/2017]

§ 28-15. Report of Findings. [Amended 7/11/1995; 4/24/2006; 10/9/2012; 12/9/2013; 5/8/2017]

A. If the Board of Ethics makes a finding of violation of this Code, it may issue punishment by:

- 1) Public censure and reprimand;
- 2) In the case of a public employee not under a collective bargaining agreement, recommend dismissal from employment or suspension from employment without pay;
- 3) In the case of an appointed official, recommend dismissal from his or her appointment.

§ 28-16. Right to Appeal. [Amended 7/11/1995; 5/8/2017]

Any respondent aggrieved by the decision of the Board regarding a finding of a violation may within 30 days take an appeal to the Superior Court for the Judicial District of New Britain. If the aggrieved respondent is successful in his appeal, then the Town of Southington shall reimburse reasonable attorney's fees to the aggrieved respondent in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.

CODE OF ETHICS

§ 28-17. Consultation with Town Attorney; confidentiality.

- A. Any person subject to the provisions of this chapter may request in writing an advisory opinion from the Town Attorney as to whether any activity contemplated by such person would be in violation of the provisions of this chapter.
- B. Any request for opinions, and the opinions rendered therein, shall be confidential and shall not be open to public inspection or disclosure without the written consent of the person requesting the opinion.
- C. All newly elected and appointed officials shall meet with the Town Attorney within 30 days of their election or appointment to review the ethics ordinance. **[Added 5/8/2017]**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have received the Town of Southington Policy Handbook and that I have read and understand the policies.

I understand that this Handbook represents only current policies and benefits, and that it does not create a contract of employment. Town of Southington retains the right to change these policies and benefits, as it deems advisable.

I understand that the information I encounter during my employment is proprietary to the Town and accordingly, I agree to keep it confidential, which means I will not use it other than in the performance of my duties or disclose it to any person or entity outside the Town. I understand that I must comply with all the provisions of the handbook to have access to and use company resources. I also understand that if I do not comply with all provisions of the handbook, my access to Town resources may be revoked, and I may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

I, _____, acknowledge receipt and have read the notices and policies in
(Print your name)

this handbook that was presented to me as an employee of the Town of Southington, this

_____.
(Date)

Employee Signature

Date

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The Town of Southington has established the following procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. The company will treat all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the extent reasonably possible.

1. Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing. The HR manager (or designee) may assist the complainant in completing a written statement or, in the event an employee refuses to provide information in writing, the HR manager (or designee) will dictate the verbal complaint.
2. Upon receiving a complaint or being advised by a supervisor or manager that violation of this policy may be occurring, the HR manager (or designee) will notify senior management and review the complaint with the company's legal counsel.
3. The HR manager (or designee) will initiate an investigation to determine whether there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation of this policy occurred.
4. If necessary, the complainant and the respondent will be separated during the investigation, either through internal transfer or administrative leave.
5. During the investigation, the HR manager (or designee), together with legal counsel or other management employees, will interview the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred.
6. Upon conclusion of an investigation, the HR manager (or designee) or other person conducting the investigation will submit a written report of their findings to the Town Manager. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, the HR manager (or designee) will recommend appropriate disciplinary action. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors:
 - a) the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct;
 - b) prior complaints made by the complainant;
 - c) prior complaints made against the respondent; and
 - d) the quality of the evidence (e.g., firsthand knowledge, credible corroboration).If the investigation is inconclusive or if it is determined that there has been no violation of policy, but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, the HR director may recommend appropriate preventive action.
7. Senior management will review the investigative report and any statements submitted by the complainant or respondent, discuss results of the investigation with the HR director and other management staff as appropriate, and decide what action, if any, will be taken.
8. Once a final decision is made by senior management, the HR director will meet with the complainant and the respondent separately and notify them of the findings of the investigation. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the respondent will be informed of the nature of the discipline and how it will be executed.

Alternative legal remedies

Nothing in this policy may prevent the complainant or the respondent from pursuing formal legal remedies or resolution through local, state or federal agencies or the courts.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPECTATIONS



Town of Southington

MEMO

To: All Town Employees
 Re: Customer Service Training and Expectations

The expectation of the Town of Southington is that all employees are trained and implementing best practices associated with customer service. The guidelines presented will be incorporated into the daily routine of all employees.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

- **Customer service is about professionalism, accuracy, and responsiveness.** *Professionalism is the acceptable behavior that an employee exhibits in the workplace. This includes respect for others, accountability, being ethical, clear communication, and exceeding expectations. All employees are always expected to present themselves in a professional manner.*
- **Customer service is more than being courteous; it's about having systems in place.** If you are answering the same questions over-and-over, instead of getting frustrated, explore *why* the same questions arises. Then, develop a system that will help address the questions.
- **Service matters and YOU are the *face-of-the-Town*.** How we interact with our customers AND colleagues affects the image associated with the Town and its employees. Residents will walk away with a positive image, **if** you are providing them with a positive experience. Does the customer look forward to interacting with my department? Does the customer dread the encounter?
- **Identify what *good service* means for your department. Think of every problem as an opportunity.** Good customer service begins with a problem and how we address the problem makes the difference. It's not about blame, it's about taking ownership and finding a solution.
- **Identify your *WOW* in customer service.** Giving more than what is expected does not cost money. Send an email confirming details following a phone conversation; confirming appointments via text/email/phone call; getting-back with someone in a timely manner to provide an update; sending a text or making a call to someone if you are running late to an appointment; or, taking the time to find the right person within the Town that will be able to assist a customer, before transferring a call.
- **It's all about the image.** When in front of the customer, you are on stage. When on break in the back room, you are off stage. Customers should not know that you are *so busy, angry, having a bad day, or frustrated with your boss/co-worker*.
- **Benefits of regularly scheduled departmental meetings.** Use meetings as an opportunity for employees to share encounters or challenges. As a team, create solutions and discuss ideas on how to best handle such challenges.

Phone Expectations of all Town of Southington Employees

Answering the Phones.

Answering the phones in a professional manner is an easy start. All Town employees will begin answering the phones with the following greeting:

Good morning/Good afternoon.

Southington Human Resource Department/Town Clerk's Office/Dept of Public Works, etc.

This is Sarah. How may I help you?

What is your phone personality?

Know your phone personality and recognize if it needs adjusting. When you answer the phone, try smiling. This will ensure you are projecting a positive first impression. The person on the other end of the phone should not know that you are busy or having a bad day.

Taking messages. Get the information from the customer so you, or your supervisor, has the opportunity to research the answer, BEFORE they return the call.

Dealing with an angry or abusive customer.

The angry customer:

1. Listen. Let them vent their frustrations.
2. Repeat some of the key areas of concern that they mentioned.
3. Share that you *want to help them*.
4. Lose the sarcasm.
5. After you listen, help solve the issue efficiently.

The abusive customer.

1. Listen. If they are venting in an inappropriate manner that includes name-calling, threatening physical harm/violence, or making inappropriate discriminatory statements, we recommend the following:
 - a. Warn the abusive customer of their behavior twice and if they continue, you will terminate the call.
 - b. Make some suggestive statements. We cannot come to a resolution by name-calling. I don't want to put the phone down but will hang up if this continues.
 - c. If the behavior continues, advise the caller that you are terminating the call based on the name-calling/threatening/inappropriate statements and will forward their contact information to your immediate supervisor, [provide name of the supervisor].
 - d. Immediately notify your supervisor of the nature of the call and how it was handled.
 - e. Supervisor will return the call later that day or the following morning. This allows the person the opportunity to calm down.

Remember to take ownership. People remember the little things you do for them. They need to report to your offices for a service. Make it a pleasant experience, even if there is an unpleasant, difficult conversation. You are in control of having a GREAT day.

Today is a GREAT day to have a GREAT day!

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND REVIEW

By signing below, you are acknowledging that the guidelines were reviewed with you by either an HR representative or your immediate supervisor.

You understand that the Town of Southington takes pride in their commitment to quality service for residents, visitors, and others, and agree to implement these best practices into your daily routine while employed with the Town of Southington.

Employee Information

Print Name

Location & Position

Signature

Date