

Town of Putnam
General Government Committee – Special Meeting
April 17, 2023 @ 6:00 PM
Putnam Municipal Complex
200 School Street, Room 109
Putnam, CT

Also available via zoom:
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83899353853>

Meeting ID: 838 9935 3853

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Minutes from April 3, 2023, General Government Committee Meeting
4. Unfinished Business
 - A. Cell Phone Policy
 - B. Employee Manual Update
5. New Business
6. Adjournment

To Be Approved
TOWN OF PUTNAM
April 3, 2023
GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
Also Via Zoom
ID# 823 7909 8464

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
PRESENT:	Deputy Mayor Simmons, Selectman Pempek
ABSENT:	Selectman Rawson
1.	CALL TO ORDER Deputy Mayor Simmons called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM
2.	APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES A. June 7, 2021 General Government Committee Meeting Minutes Selectman Pempek made a motion to approve the June 7, 2021 General Government Committee Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Simmons and passed unanimously.
3.	NEW BUSINESS A. Cell Phone Policy Town Administrator Sistare reviewed the proposed changes to the Cell phone policy with the Committee. Selectman Pempek approved the cell phone policy changes as presented. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Simmons and passed unanimously.
4.	Employee Manual Town Administrator Sistare and HR/PR Director Clifford reviewed the proposed changes to the Employee Manual. The Committee will meet again at 6:00 PM prior to the next Board of Selectmen meeting to continue review of the Manual
6.	ADJOURNMENT Selectman Pempek made a motion to adjourn at 6:49 PM. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Simmons and passed unanimously.

From: Jeffrey A. Rawson <jeff.rawson@putnamct.us>

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2023 1:34 PM

To: Elaine Sistare <Elaine.Sistare@putnamct.us>; Roy Simmons <Roy.Simmons@putnamct.us>; Scott Pempek <scott.pempek@putnamct.us>; Mariah Clifford <Mariah.Clifford@putnamct.us>

Subject: General Government Committee Meeting

All:

Good afternoon. I will not be able to attend the meeting on Monday night as I will be in Houston. As such, I wanted to provide you with my feedback regarding the drafts of both the Employee Cell Phone Policy and the Employee Handbook.

Regarding the Employee Cell Phone Policy, I do not have any changes; however, I do wish there was a way in which we could make this more general, discretionary for the Mayor, BOS, Town Administrator to approve rather than trying to list every position. Over time, positions are added and deleted and position titles are changed which necessitates frequent changes to the policy.

Regarding the Employee Handbook, the following are my comments:

1. Please add a space between "Employee" and "Handbook" on the cover page. **[Edited]**
2. In Section 1-4(H) the term "Select Board" is used. I would either suggest "Board of Selectmen" or "Selectman". **[Edited]**
3. There is a pervasive theme of removing the Board of Selectman as "authority" in many instances. The Town Charter should be consulted as to the duties of the Mayor, Board of Selectman, and Town Administrator to determine the appropriate authority(ies). Perhaps the correction is warranted but it surprises me that we would be granting authority to the BOS for many years in this agreement if it was contradictory to Town Charter. **[Edited]**
4. The right(s) of employees relating to sick, vacation, personal time in the event of separation of employment should be reviewed by ERISA counsel. I'm not sure whether we have it right or not in the draft in some cases. **[Confirmed with counsel that ERISA's main purpose is to protect the interest of employees who participate in employee benefit plans, including retirement and healthcare plans and is not applicable to leave plans. Government entities are exempt from ERISA]**
5. In Section 4-3, while we won't run afoul of DOL regulations for tracking the time of an exempt employee, I wonder to what end we are deciding to go down this slippery slope? An exempt employee is not required to work a fixed amount of hours given the nature of their position. One week they could work 10 hours and the next week 90 hours. If we are starting to track because we have concerns that someone is not completing their work because they aren't putting in the hours then we ought to address that head on. **[Confirmed with counsel that the Town expects exempt**

employees to complete their hours during normal business hours. In addition, hours must be recorded for auditing purposes to account for time.]

6. In Section 6-3 we are recommending that employees "check their email on at least a weekly basis". If we have department heads who are only checking their email on a weekly basis and we have laid out through this Section that it's "okay", I don't believe this is our intent. We should think about rewording this. **[Confirmed with counsel that this pertains mostly for field workers who don't have individual Town laptops. Edited to "minimum of twice per week".]**
7. We are striking Section 6-3(C) in it's entirety. Why? If the employee's issue is with the Town Administrator there needs to be an outlet and/or appeal process. The Section formerly referred to the appeal process in Section 8-3 but I don't even see a Section 8-3. What happened to that? **[Edited to add Board of Selectman review in accordance to Town Charter for appointed, exempt employees that are dismissed.]**
8. In Section 7-4(C), I don't understand the use of the June and July dates simultaneously. Perhaps the language is in error? **[Edited]**
9. In Section 9-11, I believe "Friday's" should be "Fridays". **[Edited]**

It would be my recommendation that until ERISA counsel has reviewed the agreement (not simply town counsel) and until we have a clearer answer as it relates to the authority granted by Town Charter as it relates to this Employee Handbook, we do not push this item forward. Thanks for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Rawson, Selectman

Town of Putnam

**TOWN OF PUTNAM
CELL PHONE POLICY**

AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

Submitted by:

Elaine Sistare, Town Administrator
Mariah Clifford, Human Resources and Payroll Director

Date for Consideration: April 17, 2023

Town Attorney Review Required: Yes, counsel input incorporated.

Financial Summary:

- Minor financial changes, including additional eligible employees in both Tier I and Tier II.
- Monthly costs per employee are in line with CCM standards.

Staff Recommendation:

Discussion Items as follows:

- Changes reviewed and approved by General Government on April 3, 2023.
- 2) D, added modification abilities by Town Administrator for applicable Department Heads.
- Request Board of Selectman final approval.

Supporting Materials (if yes, list attachments):

- PDF, showing tracked changes to August 2018 version.

Town of Putnam

Employee Cell Phone Policy

- 1) **Policy:** Employees whose job duties include the frequent need for a cell phone may receive extra compensation, in the form of a cell phone allowance, to cover business-related costs on their personal cell phone. No further reimbursement for cell phone costs is available to employees who receive such an allowance. The Town shall NOT maintain cell phones or other cellular devices, e.g., mobile hot spots, or other communication equipment for assignment to a specific individual, unless otherwise detailed herein and approved by the Town Administrator.

As a general rule, cell phones should not be selected as an alternative to other means of communication, e.g., land-lines, and radio phones -- when such alternatives would provide adequate but less costly service to the Town.

2) Cell Phone Allowance:

- a) **Eligibility:** Employees eligible for a cell phone allowance generally include certain department heads, supervisors, and full-time employees whose job duties regularly require emergency call back, irregular work hours or other job-related factors that require the employee to routinely utilize a cell phone to enhance their ability to perform their job duties. Specific eligibility is addressed in the next section. Proposals addressing the eligibility of positions not mentioned below shall be made to the Town Administrator, who shall make the final eligibility determination on all cell phone allowances.
- b) **Allowance Amount:** The Town has established a two-tier allowance standard. The standard monthly cell phone allowance amount shall be \$50 for Tier I positions and \$20 for Tier II positions. No further reimbursement for cell phone costs is available to employees who receive an allowance.
 1. **Tier I:** Possession of a cell phone is essential to fulfilling job responsibilities, and a significant amount of work associated with the position is conducted out of the office. The employee is expected to be available and responsive outside of normal work hours, on a regular basis. Eligible positions include: Mayor, Town Administrator, Maintenance Director, Custodian,, Building Official, Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal, Highway Superintendent, Road Crew Chief, Recreation Director, WPCA Superintendent and Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager.
 2. **Tier II:** Possession of a cell phone is helpful in fulfilling job responsibilities, and some work associated with the position is conducted out of the office. The employee is NOT expected to be available and responsive outside of normal work hours, on a regular basis or the employee is a part-time/stipend position which does not have regular office hours and relies on cell phone communication during specific events. Eligible positions include: Executive Assistant to the Mayor, Economic Development Director, Parks and Grounds Caretakers, Recreation Program Supervisor, , Emergency Management Director.

- c) **Allowance Payment:** The approved cell phone allowance will be paid as part of the employee's paycheck and will be subject to all applicable payroll taxes. This allowance does **not** constitute an increase to base pay, and will **not** be included in the calculation of percentage increases to base pay due to salary increases, promotions, etc.
 - d) **Modification:** The above description may be modified at the discretion of the Town Administrator and the applicable Department Head.
- 3) Current policy allows the following positions to remain having cell phone equipment and service paid directly by the Town: Building Inspector, Fire Marshal, Emergency Management Director and Road Crew Chief. Continuation of this practice is per the Town Administrator and applicable Department Head discretion. Any applicable direct payments from these positions will be paid from the applicable Department.

In addition, the Town WPCA maintains cell phone equipment and direct payment for on-call phones, modems, ipads and other communication equipment. This is at the discretion of the WPCA Superintendent.

- 4) **Employee Responsibilities:** To maintain eligibility, the employee must retain an active cell phone contract as long as a cell phone allowance is in place. The employee must provide his/her department head and the Town with the current cell phone number and immediately notify both parties if the number changes. Employees receiving a cell phone allowance are expected to carry the cell phone on their person and respond when called for town business.

Employees may choose the cellular service provider and plan design of their choice. If requested by Town Administrator, employees will provide the Town with a bill from their cellular provider to verify eligibility.

Because the employee owns the cell phone equipment personally, and the allowance provided is taxable income, the employee may use the phone for both business and personal purposes, as needed. While the phone is private property, some information contained in the phone may constitute a public record (those items related to business matters) under the Freedom of Information Act and may be subject to required disclosure and retention policies. This includes without limitation photographs, text messages, voice mail messages and/or call logs. Use of the phone in any manner contrary to local, state, or federal laws will constitute misuse, and will result in immediate termination of the cell phone allowance.

If, prior to the end of the cell phone contract, a personal decision by the employee, or employee misconduct, or misuse of the phone, results in the cell phone allowance being discontinued or the need to end or change the cell phone contract, the employee will bear the cost of any fees associated with that change or cancellation. For example, if an employee resigns, and no longer wants to retain the current cell phone contract for personal purposes, any cancellation charges will be the employee's responsibility.

This policy is subject to modification and/or repeal by the Town of Putnam at any time.

**TOWN OF PUTNAM
EMPLOYEE MANUAL**

AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

Submitted by:

Elaine Sistare, Town Administrator
Mariah Clifford, Human Resources and Payroll Director

Date for Consideration: April 17, 2023

Town Attorney Review Required: Yes, counsel input incorporated. Will request final counsel review following General Government final draft.

Financial Summary:

- Minor financial changes, including increased annual tuition reimbursement.

Staff Recommendation:

Discussion Items as follows:

- Per General Government Rawson email on March 31, 2023, edits/comments have been made to the attached email.
- 3-3, new policies or revisions to policies may be added as needed by the Town and shared with all employees.
- 6-3, use of various forms of communication: email, "teams", zoom, etc.
- 6-8.E, Board of Selectman review in accordance with Town Charter for appointed, exempt employees that are dismissed.
- 9-6.H. employees are responsible for proper care and security of electronic equipment provided to them.
- 9-11, all employees are issued a Town identification badge and are expected to wear it during all work activities.
- 9-11, maintain appropriate noise levels and tones

Other Notes:

- Library maintaining their Personnel Policy, we will share our final version for Board consideration.
- Editorial and formatting fixes will be checked prior to finalization.

Supporting Materials (if yes, list attachments):

- PDF showing tracked changes to May 2019 version.

TOWN OF PUTNAM
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
May X, 2023
Office of The Mayor

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Commented [ES1]: Update all page numbers when close to final

CHAPTER 1

Purpose and Scope

1-1. Purpose

This handbook is intended to serve as a practical guide to the current personnel policies and practices of the Town of Putnam (the "Town"). As illustrated in this handbook, the Town believes that it offers its employees a variety of progressive benefits and protections. In exchange, the Town expects its employees to conform to certain rules and requirements consistent with maintaining a professional working environment.

For purposes of this handbook, unless otherwise specified herein, the word, "Town" is interchangeable with the "Town Administrator" and shall mean the same as "Town Administrator" unless stated otherwise.

1-2. Disclaimer

This handbook is only a summary of the Town's expectations compiled for the convenience of its employees and supervisors. Since the Town cannot anticipate every situation that may arise, this handbook is not intended to cover all topics or circumstances. **Additionally, the policies and procedures in this handbook are guidelines only and are not to be construed as an expressed or implied contract of employment, a promise of employment for any specified time, or a guarantee of benefits or working conditions between any employee and the Town. None of the Town's policies, procedures, or practices, whether expressed here or elsewhere, whether oral or in writing, are to be viewed as creating any promises about the nature and duration of employment and no employee has a vested property right, constitutional or otherwise, or any contractual rights of employment in a job or position with the Town. Rather, the Town follows a policy of "at-will" employment, which means that either the employee or the Town can terminate the employment relationship with or without cause at any time. No person in the Town has the authority to make a commitment of guaranteed or continuing employment unless it is contained in a written contract, signed by the Mayor or Town Administrator.**

Further, the Town reserves the right to exercise its sole discretion in interpreting and applying this handbook without prior notice or employee approval.

This handbook supersedes and replaces all previous Town policies, rules and procedures which are contrary to those contained herein.

1-3. Revisions

In order to adapt to the Town's changing needs and to respond to specific situations as they may arise, these policies may change from time to time. As such, the Town reserves the right to revise, discontinue, suspend, or modify any part(s) of this handbook at any time without prior notice. The Town's actions, from time to time, may also vary from the attached policies and procedures, or any subsequent policies and procedures that may be implemented.

1-4. Scope

The terms of these policies shall apply to appointees to all positions now or hereafter created, except the following:

- A. Members of boards and commissions;

- B. The Town Attorney and other officers appointed by the Board of Selectmen;
- C. Employees of the Board of Education;
- D. Persons employed in a professional capacity to make or conduct a temporary or special inquiry, study or investigation;
- E. Volunteer personnel;
- F. Persons employed under individual contract or who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement (but only to the extent that the provisions contained herein conflict with those contained in such other contract, agreement or applicable laws; otherwise these policies shall apply to such persons as well);
- G. Persons employed by the Putnam Public Library (but only to the extent that the provisions contained herein conflict with those contained in The Library Personnel Policy approved October 28, 2019 or latest revision; otherwise these policies shall apply to such persons as well);
- H. All elected officials and persons appointed to fill vacancies in elective offices, other than those elected officials who are employed in full-time or part-time paid positions with the Town (e.g. the Mayor, Board of Selectman, Registrar). The terms of the policies shall apply to an elected official who is a full-time or part-time paid employee to the extent that these rules do not conflict with other applicable laws.

While these policies shall not generally apply to the above categories of personnel, any person performing services on behalf of, or for, the Town in any capacity shall be required to comply with the Town's rules and regulations regarding acceptable conduct, as detailed in Chapter 9, herein, or as otherwise required by the Town.

1-5. Application

These policies shall serve as a guide to the administration of a personnel system in keeping with the basic merit principles. The policies are not all inclusive and final discretion as to the interpretation or the appropriate course of action concerning a particular personnel matter shall be that of the Town Administrator, under the supervision of the Mayor and Board of Selectmen. A violation of these policies may, at the determination of the Town Administrator under the supervision of the Mayor and Board of Selectmen, result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Employees of the Town may be disciplined for other legitimate reasons as determined by the Town. Where there is a conflict between a particular personnel rule set forth herein and statements contained in an approved, uniform department regulation, an applicable local, state, or federal law, a collective bargaining agreement, or more specific statements contained in Town policies (such as insurance policies), then those statements shall prevail.

CHAPTER 2

Equal Employment Opportunity

2-1. Equal Employment Opportunity Statement

The Town is an equal opportunity employer, dedicated to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment on any basis prohibited by law. The Town considers applicants for all positions without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity/expression or any other legally protected status and is committed to providing equal opportunities in terms of its recruiting and hiring practices. The Town is also committed to providing equal opportunities to its employees in all of its employment practices, including but not limited to compensation, training, transfers, and promotions, and in the provision of all of its employee benefit programs. The Town further pledges its strong commitment to ensure that all contractors and subcontractors who do business with the Town provide equal opportunities in employment to all qualified persons solely on the basis of job-related skills, ability, and merit. The Town further pledges that all Town sponsored training and social and recreational programs will be administered without regard to any legally protected status. As part of its commitment to equal opportunities, the Town also expects all of its employees to adhere to this policy of nondiscrimination. The Town will take prompt action upon the receipt of a complaint of unlawful discrimination and will take appropriate corrective action, including disciplinary measures, if necessary, to remedy any violations of this policy.

2-2. Employment of Qualified Disabled Individuals.

The Town will provide reasonable accommodations to any qualified individual with a disability, as defined under applicable law, who has made the Town aware of his or her disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on the Town. Applicants or employees with a disability who believe that they need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should contact their supervisor and/or the Town Administrator.

On receipt of an accommodation request, the Town will review potential reasonable accommodation(s) that the Town may be able to make to enable applicants and/or employees to perform the essential functions of their job. As part of this process, an applicant or employee may be required to provide authorization to the Town to communicate with and obtain documentation from his or her doctor regarding the medical condition(s) for which reasonable accommodation is sought and may further be required to be evaluated by a doctor of the Town's choice. All such medical information discussed and received will be treated as confidential to the extent required and permissible by law. Any accommodation is within the sole discretion of the Town.

CHAPTER 3

Administration of Personnel Policies

3-1. Town Administrator

The Town Administrator, under the supervision of the Mayor and Board of Selectmen, will determine and administer all personnel policies and procedures. The Town Administrator may delegate the actual operation involved in administering these policies to such person or persons as he/she deems appropriate. The Town Administrator under the supervision of the Mayor and Board of Selectmen shall have the authority to impose discipline on Town employees, up to and including dismissal.

3-2. Department Heads

Department Heads shall have the responsibility, as delegated by the Town Administrator, to select, retain, promote, train and **discipline** employees within their departments. They are expected to effectively supervise their employees; to report upon the performance of their subordinates; to notify the Town Administrator of changes in duties of their employees; and to recommend salary increases. Department Heads shall recommend to the Town Administrator necessary, desirable changes in the personnel policies and procedures to improve administration of the personnel system. Subject to the approval of the Town Administrator under the supervision of the Mayor and Board of Selectman, a Department Head may adopt regulations consistent with the overall personnel policy to implement these rules for the operation of his or her unit. Among other duties, all Department Heads shall report directly to the Town Administrator, shall be required to attend department meetings, shall prepare an annual budget proposal for their departments, and shall represent the Town in the resolution of employee grievances. The Mayor and Town Administrator shall remain the final hiring authority of all Department Heads.

3-3. Employees

It shall be the responsibility of all employees to acquaint themselves thoroughly with the material in this handbook and any subsequent revisions hereto. Employees are encouraged to submit suggestions for changes in personnel policy and procedures for improvement of Town personnel administration as appropriate. All suggestions for changes should be submitted in writing to their Department Head.

[Revisions, additions and amendments to this handbook may be completed at any time by the Town Administrator and Mayor. Any such changes will be shared to all employees via their Town email and be shall effective immediately.](#)

CHAPTER 4

Hours of Work and Pay Practices

4-1. Hours of Work

Unless otherwise determined by the Town, the normal workweek for full-time Town employees shall be.

1. TOWN HALL, PARKS & GROUNDS, AND LIBRARY: A total of at least 35 hours as scheduled and determined by the Town.
2. HIGHWAY: A total of at least 40 hours as scheduled and determined by the Town.
3. WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY: A total of at least 40 hours as scheduled and determined by the Mayor and WPCA.

The above noted schedule may not apply to all Town employees as the hours of work of each employee will be determined by the requirements of the position held. The Town reserves the right to adjust the hours of work and the work schedules for any employee as necessary.

Furthermore, individual start and end times will be set by the Town Administrator to meet the needs of individual departments (e.g., where services to the public are required on a seasonal or 24- hour basis)

4-2. Hours of Operation

The Town reserves the right to adjust the hours of work for all employees and to change the hours and days of the week employees are expected to work as necessary to meet the needs of the Town, subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen. Therefore, all employees are subject to work schedule changes as the needs of Town service require.

4-3. Reporting Hours Worked

All employees will be required to submit their time sheets (timeclock and/or electronic submissions required) documenting hours worked each day, including when they start work, when they leave and return from lunch and when they leave for the day (and any other non-work time during the day, i.e., vacation, sick, etc.). Time sheets must be submitted by the employee to and approved by his/her Department Head, Town Administrator, or designee, who shall forward to payroll as required by the Human Resources Department. The Department Head or designee who approves hours worked is responsible for ensuring that the time sheet submitted is accurate, prior to forwarding.

Town Administrator shall have final approval, with Mayor as optional designee. 4-4. Pay Period and Paychecks

All employees are paid weekly on Thursday (or as otherwise determined by the Board of Selectmen) through direct deposit. For those weeks that Thursday is a federal holiday, employees will be paid on the preceding Wednesday. From each paycheck, the Town will deduct all withholdings required by law, including federal and

state income taxes, social security taxes, and wage garnishments. In addition, upon an employee's written authorization, the Town will make other lawful deductions from each paycheck, including for purposes of insurance payments.

4-5. Categories of Employment

All employees are classified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" in accordance with state and federal wage and hour laws. These classifications govern wage and salary procedures.

NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES: Individuals who are paid an hourly rate for regular hours worked and at the rate of one-and-one-half times their base rate for all hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours per day (with the exception of Thursdays for Town Hall employees) or forty (40) hours in any one payroll week. In addition, compensation for hours worked on weekends or on holidays will be treated no differently than for any other workday (e.g., non-exempt employees will be paid at their regular rate for all hours worked under forty in any payroll week or at the rate of one-and-one-half times their base rate for all overtime hours).

Non-exempt employees may be required to work overtime as necessary to meet work needs or project schedules. Supervisors will be responsible for scheduling overtime and will make every effort to notify employees as far in advance as possible. Non-exempt employees are expected to accept all requests to work overtime unless there is an unavoidable scheduling conflict. In addition, except in emergencies, all overtime must be authorized and approved by the immediate supervisor in advance.

EXEMPT EMPLOYEES: Individuals who are paid on a salaried basis which is intended as full compensation for all hours worked and who perform duties that are part of running the Town's operations. Exempt employees are not eligible to receive overtime pay for hours worked beyond forty hours in any one payroll week. Rather, exempt employees will be expected to work pursuant to the operational needs of the Town and to expend whatever effort is necessary to meet the requirements of their position. Exempt employees may request Mayor or Town Administrator approval of substituting work hours for atypical circumstances when they work extensively outside of normal work hours.

All employees are further classified as either "full-time," "part-time," "seasonal or temporary", or "stipend". These classifications govern eligibility for participation in the Town's leave and benefit programs, in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in this handbook.

FULL-TIME: An exempt or non-exempt employee with a work schedule that is typically not less than 35 hours per week, though which may vary depending on operational needs.

PART-TIME: An exempt or non-exempt employee who is employed in a position as needed, less than 35 hours per week. Any part-time employee whose hours temporarily increase above 35 per week shall not be considered a full-time employee until the employee is provided with written notice of a change in status after approval by the Town Administrator.

SEASONAL or TEMPORARY: An exempt or non-exempt employee who is employed in a position established for a specific period of time or for the duration of a specific project or group of assignments not to exceed 120 days per year. Seasonal and temporary employees are not eligible to participate in the Town's current leave and benefits program regardless of the number of hours they may work each week, unless specifically designated in individual employment agreements or as otherwise required by law.

STIPEND: An individual with a work schedule that varies and is set on an annual stipend basis for all duties associated with the position. There are no set hours, however stipend amounts are based on a typical weekly hour expectation, specific period of time or for the duration of a specific project or group of assignments. Stipend employees are not eligible to participate in the Town's current leave and benefits program regardless of the number of hours they may work each week, unless specifically designated in individual employment agreements or as otherwise required by law.

4-6. Meal Breaks.

All non-exempt Town employees shall have an unpaid meal break at a time to be determined by the Town, which break shall generally be at least thirty minutes per day unless otherwise determined.

4-7. Absenteeism and Punctuality.

Absenteeism detracts from services provided to Town residents and others and causes an undue burden for those employees who must fill in for absent employees. As such, consistent attendance and punctuality is necessary to the operations of the Town and to each employee's own individual performance.

Being on time for each scheduled workday means more than being physically present. It means being ready to begin work at the assigned time. Accordingly, employees are expected to report to work and to be ready to work at the beginning of their regularly assigned shift.

Tardiness will not be tolerated. Tardiness impairs workplace efficiency and is a burden to fellow employees. If an employee is going to be late for work, his or her supervisor should be notified immediately of the anticipated arrival time.

The Town recognizes that there will be occasions when unscheduled time off due to illness or for other personal matters will be necessary. All employees are expected to notify their supervisor at least one hour prior to the start of their shift to explain the reason(s) for such unscheduled time off or shift modification, and to provide an estimate of the number of days before they are expected to return to work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, unless the employee can demonstrate that it was not practicable to provide such notice. Notification is necessary so that job duties can be reassigned. When there is no notification, the absence will be considered unexcused and disciplinary action may be taken if deemed necessary by the employee's supervisor. If an employee fails to report his or her absence for three consecutive days, he or she will be considered to have resigned from employment.

Any deviation from this policy and/or repeated occurrences of unscheduled time off or unexcused absences could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

4-8. Administration of Overtime.

- A. Positions Subject to Overtime. Personnel shortages, peak workloads and other emergency situations may make it necessary for non-exempt employees to work beyond their regularly scheduled workweek, as prescribed by the Town Administrator.

Overtime Compensation.— Non-Exempt Employees. Hours of work over eight (8) hours per day (except on Thursdays for Town Hall employees) or forty (40) hours in a regular work week shall be considered as overtime. When a non-exempt employee who is eligible for overtime compensation is required to work in excess of the normal workweek, he or she will be paid his/her regular rate for all hours worked up to 40 and at the rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times the regular hourly rate for all hours actually worked over forty (40) hours in any such work week. Employees are not eligible for compensatory time unless specifically allowed.

- B. Overtime Authorization. Except in emergency conditions as determined by the Department Head, all overtime must be authorized and approved by the Department Head in advance. Failure to gain approval prior to working overtime will result in disciplinary action.
- C. Callback Time. When an employee who is eligible for overtime compensation after departing from his/her regularly scheduled shift is officially ordered to start back to work for emergency service, he/she shall be compensated from the time of his/her assignment for all hours worked at the rates set forth above or two (2) hours pay at his/her regular rate, whichever is the greater.

4-9. Emergency Closings.

All offices and facilities of the Town will be open on schedule for the full workday unless employees are specifically notified otherwise via phone, text, or e-mail, by the Town Administrator or Mayor. The decision to close, based upon local conditions, will be made by the Mayor or a designated Town official. The closing will apply to all Town facilities, except for public safety facilities or any other facility as deemed appropriate by the Mayor. The Superintendent of Schools will be responsible for school closings and delayed openings.

Employees who are classified as "Emergency Essential Employees" may be required to work during the emergency period. "Emergency Essential Employees" are public safety employees and supervisors; all employees in the Highway Department; and other employees as required by the Town Administrator and Department Heads for specific emergency duties.

Employees who are not required to work during an emergency closing will be paid for their regular hours of work on any day or portion of a day in which the Town facilities are closed due to emergency unless: (1) they did not report for work for any portion of the day in which the Town facilities were open; or (2) the employee was absent due to a pre-approved vacation or other paid or unpaid leave day.

Specifically for weather-related closings: the following Departments are responsible for weather management including treatment, and snow and debris clearing, and must report for work: Highway Department, Parks & Grounds Department, Maintenance Department and Water and Sewer Department. For all other Departments during weather-related closings: at the discretion and prior written direction of the Mayor or Town Administrator on an incident-by-incident basis, other Town Departments shall work remotely using laptops and are expected to be available for emails, phone calls at their business extension, and other efforts during normal work hours, in order to be considered as a workday.

Emergency Essential Employees who are required to work during an emergency period shall be paid in accordance with individual collective bargaining agreements and/or contracts.

If an employee chooses not to attend a holiday event for which a Town facility is closed, such employee will be required to utilize any available leave.

CHAPTER 5

Recruitment, Selection and Appointment of Employees

5-1. Recruitment of Employees

- A. Recruitment Policy. Individuals shall be recruited from a geographic area as wide as is necessary obtaining well-qualified candidates for the various types of positions.
- B. Announcements. The Town Administrator shall cause to be made known all vacancies for all positions by posting announcements of such vacancies on the Town's website, and if the Town Administrator or Mayor or Board of Selectmen deems advisable, in a newspaper or other media outlet.
- C. Recruiting Expenses. While it is the preference of the Town to recruit local persons, it is recognized that various staff, professional and supervisory positions may require recruitment from outside the area to obtain well-qualified applicants. Accordingly, in recruiting for the filling positions of this type, the Board of Selectmen may authorize payment of expenses for:
 - 1. An applicant's trip for a personal interview or reporting to duty upon appointment to Town service. Reimbursable expenses may include an allowance for transportation, meals, and lodging.

5-2. Selection of Employees

- A. Application Forms. Applications for employment shall be accepted at any time. Each candidate for municipal employment shall make application on the standard form prescribed and provided by the Town Administrator. Such information may be required as is deemed necessary in order to judge the applicant's qualifications for services in the Town. Applications shall not be returned but will remain on file for two (2) years or as per state law requirement, after which they may be destroyed.
- B. References and Investigation. As part of the pre-employment procedure, former supervisors, employers, and other references provided by candidates may be contacted as deemed necessary. Any references and other pre-employment investigation shall be documented and made part of the employee's file. Any reference checks or other investigation of an applicant shall be completed prior to an offer of employment.
- C. Competitive Examinations. The Town Administrator shall have the discretion to administer competitive examinations to help determine the merit and fitness for duty of qualified applicants. Examinations shall relate to those matters that will appropriately test the capacity and fitness of the qualified applicants to discharge efficiently the duties of the position. Examinations may include a rating of qualifications and experience, written, oral, and physical or performance tests or any combination thereof. Such examinations may take into consideration reasonable factors such as education, experience, aptitude, knowledge, character, physical fitness, or any other qualifications that, in the judgment of the Town Administrator, enter into the relative fitness of applicants.
- D. Pre-employment Physicals and Substance Abuse Testing. In the event an applicant receives a job offer, s/he shall also be subject to a medical examination and/or drug and/or alcohol testing that must be

successfully completed before commencing work.

5-3. Appointment

- A. Method of Appointment. All vacancies shall be filled by regular appointment, temporary appointment, promotion, demotion, or transfer. Only qualified candidates shall be recommended for appointment. Appointment to a vacancy and any changes regarding appointments shall be made by the Mayor, following recommendation by the Town Administrator, from the qualified candidates and the Town Administrator will notify the Board of Selectmen.
- B. Regular Appointment. A regular appointment indicates that an employee is to work for the Town in either a full-time or part-time capacity. Every employee who receives this type of appointment shall serve probationary period following the original appointment in accordance with the provisions below. Upon certification of the Department Head that the employee has satisfactorily completed the probationary period, the employee's status of employment shall be changed from probationary to full-time or part-time employee (as appropriate).
- C. Temporary Appointment. A temporary appointment indicates that the employee is to work for the Town for a period of typically 3 months or less. If an employee serves more than 4 months in a temporary appointment, a personnel action must be submitted to change the employee status to full-time, part-time, or terminated. Temporary employees may be separated at any time when their services are no longer required.

5-4. Probationary Period

Each new employee will receive a period of orientation into his/her position from his/her supervisor upon hire or transfer which is referred to as the employee's probationary period. The orientation process is designed to explain and review Town policies and procedures as necessary, including those that are contained in this handbook, and to allow the employee an opportunity to gain a thorough understanding of what is expected in his/her job duties. While each period of orientation will be unique to the needs of the individual and the functions to which s/he has been assigned, this process will also ordinarily entail explaining to the employee what his/her department does, its role in relation to the total operation of the Town, and how the employee's job fits in with the Town's operations.

The probationary period for new employees and employees that are promoted or transferred to a new position will be ninety (90) calendar days. The initial probationary period may be extended but in no event, shall it be more than one hundred eighty (180) calendar days.

Throughout the probationary period, an employee's performance will be more closely reviewed to determine if performance expectations are being met. Should the Town determine that performance does not meet standards at any time during the probationary period (or at any time thereafter), at the Town's discretion, various measures may be implemented to improve performance, or an employee may be terminated from employment. Nothing about the existence or implementation of the probationary period limits the Town's right to terminate the employment of employees for legitimate reasons as determined by the Town.

At conclusion of a successful probationary period, the Department Head will prepare a standard form documenting such completion, which will be reviewed and approved by the Mayor or Town Administrator, with a copy to the Employee's personnel file.

CHAPTER 6

Employee Development and Separation

6-1. Job Duties

The Town will instruct employees about their job duties upon hire and throughout their employment and reserves the right to change those duties as may be necessary for operational needs. One way to communicate job duties of a particular position to employees may be through a written job description, which the Town may implement and change from time to time. In any event, employees will be expected to devote their best efforts to the Town and to perform in good faith all duties that may be assigned.

6-2. Personnel Records

The Town maintains a separate personnel file for each employee. A current employee may inspect his/her personnel file within seven (7) days following a written request made to either the Human Resources Director or the Town Administrator. A designated member of the Town will be present during any such review, and the Town reserves the right to charge a fee for any copies of documents requested.

The Town shall provide employees with a copy of any documentation of any disciplinary action imposed on that employee not more than one business day after the date of imposing such action and shall immediately provide an employee with a copy of any documented notice of termination of employment. The Town shall include a statement in any documented disciplinary action, notice of termination or performance evaluation that the employee may submit a written statement explaining his or her position to be maintained as part of the personnel file, should the employee disagree with any of the information contained in any such documents.

It is important to keep personnel records up to date. Accordingly, employees are expected to promptly notify their immediate supervisors and the Human Resources Director of any changes in the following information: name, address or telephone numbers and persons to notify in cases of an emergency, any changes in marital status, names of beneficiaries, dependents listed on your insurance policy and number of dependents and other pertinent information for withholding tax purposes. Failure to notify the Town as soon as any of the above changes takes place could result in a loss of benefits or create personnel-related complications, for the Employee.

6-3. Communications and Problem Solving

The Town employs numerous forms of communicating its expectations of employees and its policies and procedures to employees, including through this handbook, written memoranda and verbal instruction. With the exception of seasonal or temporary hires, each full-time Town employee will receive a Putnam email upon hire. This Town email will be used to communicate various information. The Town expects each employee to check their email on ~~at least a weekly basis~~ minimum basis of twice per week. -All employees with a designated computer or laptop assigned to them shall have "Teams" active during work periods. For various meetings, including hybrid Board and Commission meetings, employees are required to use Zoom for their participation and set up.

Employees are further encouraged to periodically review Town bulletin boards and to read any information that is posted in break rooms or common areas. Employees may not post any notices on these bulletin boards that are not work-related. All work-related notices must be approved by the Mayor prior to posting.

The Town also encourages all employees to bring forward their suggestions and ideas about how the Town can be made a better place to work, how our work can be improved, and how our service to residents can be enhanced or provided more efficiently. Please bring any such suggestions and comments to your supervisor.

Whenever an employee has a problem or complaint, the Town expects that employee to speak up and communicate directly. In such cases, employees are encouraged to take the following steps:

- A. First talk to your immediate supervisor within five (5) business days of the event. Your supervisor is most familiar with you and your job, and is, therefore, in the best position to assist you.
- B. If your supervisor is the source of your concern or cannot help you resolve the matter, you can speak to the Town Administrator who will address your problem or complaint and render a written decision typically within five (5) business days of receipt.

When warranted in the Town's judgment, efforts will be made to address employee concerns and/or to take corrective action. Personal problems between employees are not to be acted on at work. In addition, if there is a work-related problem with a co-worker, and direct requests to cease that behavior have been ignored, then it is the employee's responsibility to bring the conduct at issue to the attention of his/her supervisor.

6-4. Salary Administration

Each job is defined by reference to several factors including amount of skill, effort, and responsibility required to perform the job, as well as performance on the job, local market rates and conditions. Salary ranges provide the Town with the ability to recognize and reward individual performance. Merit pay increases are based on an employee's demonstrated job performance and on his/her contribution to the accomplishment of the Town's objectives as well as the current financial position of the Town and the approval of the Town Budget. Absent a collective bargaining agreement there is no guarantee of a salary increase for any employee at any time. Employees will have the opportunity to understand the basis for any salary adjustment in discussions with their supervisors. Salary ranges are typically reviewed every year by the Department Heads, Town Administrator and Finance Director but may be reviewed at other times as circumstances warrant.

6-5. Promotion

The Town encourages employees to develop new skills, expand knowledge of their work, assume greater responsibilities, and make known their qualifications for promotion to more difficult and responsible positions. Current employees may apply for any vacancy if the employee has performed his/her current duties satisfactorily and otherwise meets the requirements of the vacant position. Outside applicants may also be considered for any employment opportunities within the Town. The decision whether to promote any particular employee will be made by the Town Administrator with the approval of the Mayor and Board of Selectmen and, as necessary, in consultation with the applicable Department Head(s).

6-6. Transfer

Transfer of an employee from one position to another, which does not constitute either a promotion or a demotion as defined herein, may occur when:

1. The employee meets the qualification requirements.
2. The transfer is in the best interests of the Town.
3. Further training and development of an employee in another position would be beneficial to the future potential of the Town; or
4. The transfer meets the personal needs of the employee and is consistent with Subsection (1) and (2) above.

The decision whether to transfer any employee will be made by the Town Administrator with the approval of the Mayor and, as necessary, in consultation with the applicable Department Head(s).

6-7. Demotion

An employee may be demoted to a position of a lower grade, for which he or she is qualified, for any of the following reasons:

1. As an alternative to layoff when a position is eliminated.
2. The position is reclassified to a lower grade.
3. A program is terminated.
4. The employee requests the demotion.
5. An employee is bumped due to a return of another employee from a leave of absence.
6. When unsatisfactory service is rendered or for disciplinary reasons.

The decision whether to demote any employee will be made by the Town Administrator with the approval of the Mayor and, as necessary, in consultation with the applicable Department Head(s).

6-8. Separation

Separation is the termination of an employee from employment by the Town through resignation, disability, death, retirement, dismissal, or layoff.

At the time of any type of separation, all records, assets, or other items of Town property in the employee's custody shall be returned by the employee to the Department Head.

- A. Resignation. An employee resigns in good standing if a written statement of reasons for the resignation

is received at least fourteen (14) days prior to the effective date of the resignation and if such employee returns all Town property, records, and assets before departure. The Department Head may permit a shorter period of notice because of extenuating circumstances. The resignation shall be forwarded to the Town Administrator with a statement by the Department Head as to the resigned employee's service performance and pertinent information concerning the cause of resignation, and whether or not re-employment is recommended. Employees may not take any paid time off during the notice period, unless specifically approved in advance by the Town Administrator or otherwise allowed by law.

- B. Disability. An employee may be terminated from his/her employment with the Town if he/she cannot perform the essential functions of his/her position with or without a reasonable accommodation because of physical or mental impairment. The Town may require an examination at the Town's expense by a physician of its choice to determine an employees' fitness for duty as well as any reasonable accommodations that may be made to allow the employee to perform the essential job functions. The termination date shall be the last day the employee actually performed work for the Town.
- C. Death. Separation shall be effective as of the date of death. All wages due shall be paid to the estate of the employee, or to the surviving spouse if otherwise required by law.
- D. Retirement. Retirement is the separation of an employee in accordance with the provisions of the Town retirement system under which the employee is eligible to receive benefits.
- E. Dismissal. Dismissal is an involuntary separation of an employee for any lawful reason. An employee may be dismissed upon the recommendation of a Department Head or upon the initiative of the Town Administrator with the approval of the Mayor. [Appointed, exempt employees who are dismissed, may request Board of Selectmen review in accordance with the Town Charter.](#)
- F. Layoff. Layoff is an involuntary separation of an employee resulting from a reduction in force due to lack of funds or work or because the employee's position has been eliminated for other legitimate reasons. The Department Head shall submit a report to the Town Administrator, together with a recommended list of the employee(s) to be laid off, and the Mayor shall make the final determination as to which employee(s) shall be laid off.

6-9. References

All requests for references/information about current or former employees shall be referred to the Town Administrator.

6-10. Tuition Reimbursement

All full-time employees with at least one (1) year of service to the Town will be eligible for tuition reimbursement for approved job-related courses. Job related courses must be budgeted by the Town Administrator and approved by the Mayor. Therefore, to allow appropriate budgeting, requests for consideration must be received at least 6 months prior to reimbursement. Reimbursement will be 80% of the costs including tuition, books and fees and shall not exceed \$1,500.00 per year. Employees will pay for tuition and related courses and upon successful completion of the course must present receipts for said expenses. Employees must achieve a grade of "C" or better to be eligible for tuition reimbursement. The employee must remain employed by the Town for a minimum of one (1) year following the reimbursement or said

reimbursement must be repaid to the Town.

CHAPTER 7

Employee Leave

7-1. General Policy

Leave is any authorized absence during regularly scheduled work hours that is approved by the employee's supervisor and/or the Town Administrator, as applicable. Leave may be authorized with or without pay subject to these rules based on the work requirements of the departments. Any requests for unpaid leave will first be considered for approval by the Department Head, with final approval required by the Town Administrator.

7-2. Procedure for Requesting Leave

For all leave needed for foreseeable matters (such as for vacation time, pre-planned medical issues, jury duty, military leave, etc.), employees must make a written request to their supervisor indicating the type of leave, duration and dates of departure and return which must be approved prior to the taking of leave. In the case of any leave needed for unforeseeable matters (such as for unexpected medical issues), employees are required to notify their supervisors of such leave and record it appropriately on their time sheet.

7-3. Holidays.

- A. The Town recognizes the following days as holidays for regular full-time employees to be granted with pay, subject to change as may be agreed upon during labor negotiations

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr., Day
President's Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day

Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day

- B. When a holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. When a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday.
- C. Holidays for Part-time Employees. Part-time employees who are scheduled to work less than twenty (20) hours per week shall not be eligible for holiday leave. Part-time employees whose normal workweek is twenty (20) hours or more shall be paid according to the number of hours they would be scheduled to work on the day observed as the holiday.
- D. Absences before or after holidays.
 - 1) Holiday pay is granted to any employee for established holidays on which the employee would normally have been scheduled to work and is available for such work.
 - 2) To be eligible to receive holiday pay, an employee is required to work his/her regularly scheduled hours on both the workday preceding and the workday following the holiday.
 - 3) Exceptions to this policy may be approved when individual is on:
 - a) Military leave
 - b) Jury duty
 - c) Vacation leave
 - d) Bereavement leave
 - e) One day of illness either before or after the holiday but not both
 - f) Previously approved personal days off either before or after the holiday but not both
 - g) Other leaves as approved by the Town Administrator at his/her discretion.
 - 4) In the event that an employee is absent the day prior and after the holiday due to illness, the employee will not be paid for the holiday and absences will be charged to accrued leave time accordingly.

7-4. Vacation.

- A. The provisions of this article shall apply to full-time and part-time employees. Employees shall receive one (1) day of vacation as of July 1st of each year, which shall not be part of the vacation accrual described below, and in addition shall then accrue the following vacation days:

Years of Continuous Service	35 Hrs. Week Hours	40 Hrs. Week Hours
Up to 5 years	70	80

More than 5 years up to 10 years	105	120
More than 10 years up to 15 years	126	144
More than 15 years up to 20 years	140	160
More than 20 years	175	200

Part-time employees shall receive the equivalent number of hours based on their normal hours per week (e.g. Up to 5 years, an 18 hour/week part-time employee shall receive 36 hours of vacation time per year.)

Employees shall have one-half of all vacation time credited as of July 1st of each contract year and the remaining vacation time will be accrued on a monthly basis during the remaining 11 months.

- B. Requests for vacation time shall be made in writing at least two (2) weeks prior to the applicable vacation period. In cases of conflicting vacation requests, seniority, as previously defined in this Agreement, shall control. In any event, all vacation requests must be received at least five (5) days prior to the requested dates. Requests must be approved by the employee's supervisor.
- C. Vacation benefits are accrued and payable monthly commencing on the date of hire and ending on their anniversary date of each year. No more than the equivalent of fifteen (15) days of a current year's vacation accrual may be carried over to the next fiscal year. Employees hired on or before June 30, 1999 July 1, 2000, shall be permitted to carry over a maximum of one and one half (1 ½) of a current year's vacation accrual. No more than four (4) weeks' vacation may be taken consecutively.
- D. Vacation shall not be taken in increments of less than thirty (30) minutes
- E. An employee who is laid off or voluntarily terminates will receive, at the end of the pay period following the layoff or termination, all accrued but unused vacation pay. Such vacation pay will be computed up to and including the last full month of employment. An employee terminated for cause shall not receive accrued payment for accrued vacation time.

7-5. Paid Personal Time

For new part time and full-time employees who have satisfied their probationary period, they shall be entitled to paid personal time on a prorated basis with the equivalent of one (1) workday for each four months of employment until the succeeding July 1st. . All non-probationary part-time and full-time employees who have successfully fulfilled probationary requirements will receive three (3) paid personal days per fiscal year, based on the average number of hours worked per day, which shall be available as of the commencement of the fiscal year. All paid personal time must be used during the fiscal year in which they are awarded, or they shall be forfeited. There is no payout option for paid personal time if an employee is separated from the Town for any reason.

7-6. Sick Leave

- A. Eligibility. This sick leave policy applies to all full-time and part-time employees of the Town (as further defined below) who do not otherwise qualify for paid sick leave under a collective bargaining agreement or individual employment contract. Any eligible full-time or part-time employees who are covered by any such documents are entitled to the benefits provided thereunder and this policy does not diminish, preempt, or override the terms of any such documents.

Seasonal or temporary workers who perform work on a per diem or occasional or irregular basis are NOT eligible.

- B. Accrual. All full-time employees shall earn sick leave at ten (10) days per fiscal year cumulative to a maximum of sixty (60) workdays (e.g., 480 hours for employees that work 40 hours per week and 420 hours for employees that work 35 hours per week). Employees hired on or before July 1, 2022, shall be permitted to carry over a maximum of the equivalent of 120 days. All part-time employees who work a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week shall accrue sick leave at the prorated equivalent of five (5) days per fiscal year, cumulative to a maximum of twelve (12) days of sick leave.

- C. Sick leave is accrued monthly.

- D. Use of Sick Leave. Sick leave is provided for the following purposes:

1. The employee's own illness, physical incapacity or bodily injury or disease.
2. Illness or physical incapacity in the employee's immediate family requiring his/her personal attention. For this purpose, "immediate family" is defined as employee's current spouse, mother, step-mother, father, step-father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparents, brother, sister, child, step-child, daughter-in-law, son-in-law or grandchild.
3. To attend medical and dental appointments or for other preventive care issues.
4. When required to quarantine in accordance with public health requirements.
5. Medical care or other reasons related to being a victim of family violence or sexual assault (such as to obtain services from a victim services organization; to relocate due to the violence and/or assault; or to participate in any civil or criminal proceedings related to the violence and/or assault).
6. Death in the employee's immediate family. May take up to five (5) days of sick time, following the use of three (3) bereavement days, if applicable. Immediate family is defined above.

Sick leave cannot be used for absence due to any injury that is compensable under the workers' compensation system (except when any waiting period is required).

Sick leave may be used in thirty (30) minute increments, up to and including all scheduled hours for which the employee would have otherwise worked on the day at issue.

- E. Notification and Documentation of Illness. The Town requires employees to provide at least seven (7) days' notice of the need to take paid sick leave if the need for leave is foreseeable (such as for preventative medical care issues). If the leave is not foreseeable, then the employee must give notice as soon as practicable. In this regard, an employee is expected to notify his/her immediate supervisor or the Department Head at least one (1) hour before the start of each workday that he/she will be absent and to provide the reason for such absence. Employees must notify their supervisor or the Department Head each day they are absent unless otherwise authorized by their supervisor or the Department Head. Failure to report absences may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment, unless the employee can demonstrate that it was not practicable to provide such notice. The supervisor or the Department Head must receive the call directly from the employee.

An employee who has been absent for five (5) or more consecutive days due to illness, injury or health condition, or for preventative medical care, of the employee or his/her immediate family member will be required to provide a note from the applicable health care provider establishing the need for the time off. The note must state the length of the illness and (as applicable) whether the employee is able to return to full duty without restrictions, or if the employee has any restrictions, the nature of those restrictions and how long the restrictions may need to be in place. If necessary, the Town may require the employee to see a physician paid for by the Town to determine fitness for duty. The Town may further require a court record or documentation from a victim services organization or the police or counselor for leave taken due to family violence or sexual assault issues.

A health care provider's note may be required when there has been frequent or questionable absenteeism, or when the employee calls out sick the day before or after a holiday or vacation day, or for absences of more than three consecutive days.

If the Town determines that an employee is abusing sick leave, such employee will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. However, the Town will not take any retaliatory or other adverse employment action or otherwise discriminate against any employees because they request or use paid sick leave in accordance with Town policy and applicable law.

- F. E. Payment Upon Termination. Upon retirement or death of an employee, fifty (50%) percent of his/her accrued sick leave up to the maximum accumulation, shall be paid to the employee or his/her estate, at the end of the pay period following the retirement or death of an employee. Upon voluntary termination or lay-off, twenty-five (25%) percent of up to the maximum accumulation will be paid to the employee at the end of the pay period following voluntary termination.

7-7. Bereavement Leave

Employees shall be granted leave in the event of a death in their immediate families. Such leave shall commence no earlier than the death of the family member and shall not exceed three (3) workdays. Employees may use up to five (5) sick days if needed for additional bereavement leave with approval from their supervisor. Immediate family member includes and is limited to the employee's current spouse, mother, step-mother, father, step-father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparents, brother, sister, child, step or foster child, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, grandchild, significant other or other relatives who are actual members of the household and reside therein on a permanent basis. The Town reserves the right to request verification of the death and the person's relationship to the employee.

7-8. Training Leave

Employees who participate in approved or mandated job-related development programs will be granted leave for the training period plus time needed to travel to and from the training site. Employees will be allowed to participate in all mandatory training to retain certification if their certification is required as part of their Town employment. Employees must submit written documentation to the Town Administrator outlining the full cost of said training. Approval must be obtained by the Town Administrator in order to participate in training.

Employees on approved training leave will be compensated with their full pay during the leave plus all costs of the training including meals up to \$20.00 per day for all meetings/conferences that are multiple days and/or out of the region. Employees on approved training leave for meetings/conferences that are one day in length or located within a one-hour drive from their home will not be compensated for meals.

7-9. Jury Duty

Any employee required to serve jury duty will receive a portion of his/her regular pay which will, together with the jury pay, equal his or her regular salary for same pay period. Employees shall be allowed as much time off as needed to serve on a jury. Jury duty pay will be given only for time lost on regularly scheduled working days. Employees are expected to report for work during scheduled hours whenever jury services are not required. The employee is required to give at least one (1) week notice to his or her Department Head of forthcoming jury duty and must furnish the Town with the notice to serve, evidence of attendance and of any fees paid by the state.

7-10. Military Leave

The Town will provide military leave in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

7-11 Unpaid Personal Leave

Personal leaves of absence for reasons not covered elsewhere in this handbook may be granted at the sole discretion of the Town Administrator based on an employee's individual circumstances and the business needs of the Town. Leaves of absence are considered voluntary time off without pay. Since the purpose of an unpaid leave of absence is to enable an employee to maintain his/her ability to continue employment with the Town, such an employee may not work elsewhere while on such leave unless previously approved by the Town Administrator or unless otherwise required by applicable law.

To be eligible for a personal leave of absence, an employee must have been continuously employed full-time for a one (1) year period prior to the leave period requested. A request for an unpaid leave of absence must be submitted in writing sixty (60) days in advance (unless it is an emergency) to the Town Administrator stating the purpose and expected duration. Leaves without pay shall not exceed one (1) year, except in cases of military service which will be determined individually. The Town Administrator will review each such request on a case-by-case basis to determine whether to approve the request, and if approved, to determine the duration of leave time that can be provided. The Town can require, at its discretion, medical certification for any leave requested for medical reasons. Because a personal leave of absence is unpaid, employees must use all of their accrued vacation, sick, comp, and/or personal time before any unpaid leave can begin. Any leave time (if applicable) so used will be counted as part of the total leave time allotted. The employee will not accrue leave of any kind and will not receive holiday pay during their leave of absence.

Leave time will not count toward seniority during a leave of absence. While using any available paid leave, employees may continue participation in the Town's medical and dental health plans by continuing to make their employee contributions. During unpaid leave, employees may continue participation in the Town's medical and dental health plan, by making the full employee and employer contributions on at least a biweekly frequency. Within a reasonable period of time prior to the expiration date of a leave, or in any event, at least one week prior to the expiration date, employees must contact the Town Administrator to confirm whether they are able to return. If the leave time allowed has expired, and the employee has made no contact with his/her supervisor, the leave of absence will cease, and employment will be terminated. If an employee confirms that s/he will be able to return to work upon the expiration of the leave, the Town will attempt to restore that employee to the same or similar position. However, employees should recognize that when they are ready to return from an unpaid leave of absence, there is a risk that the same or similar position (or any position) may not be available. As such, job placement following a return from an unpaid leave of absence is not guaranteed.

7-12. Injury Leave — Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation benefits shall be awarded in accordance with State Statutes, subject to medical confirmation and appropriate basis. On-the-job injuries must be reported at the time of occurrence to the employee's supervisor.

Injury leave will begin at the time of injury and will continue until the employee is certified by a doctor's note to return to work. Eligibility to return to work shall be decided pursuant to State Statutes and the Workers' Compensation Policy then in effect. The Town Administrator may in appropriate circumstances request confirmation as to the medical status of the employee.

The Town will compensate injured employees for the difference between their benefits under the Connecticut Workers' Compensation Act and their full pay, for the period of their injury leave not to exceed sixty (60) days.

7-13. Family and Medical Leave

The Town will abide by the requirements of Federal Family and Medical Leave Act, as may be amended from time to time (hereinafter referred to collectively as "FMLA").
Employees will be required to use all accrued leave time prior to unpaid FMLA leave.

CHAPTER 8

Disciplinary Actions

8-1. Responsibility for discipline, reasons.

It is the responsibility of all employees to observe the policies and regulations necessary for the proper operation of the Town's departments.

- A. Department Head Responsibilities. Department Heads are responsible for the proper and efficient operation of their departments and for enforcing Town policies and regulations. Department Heads are authorized to apply such disciplinary measures as may be necessary to enforce Town personnel policies up to, and including, recommending dismissal to the Town Administrator.
- B. Types of Disciplinary Action. The type of disciplinary action taken will vary with the severity of the situation and may include the following measures: oral or written reprimand, demotion, suspension, dismissal, denial of pay increases or other discipline of employees for such reasons as, but not limited to, those stated herein. The Town reserves the right to determine the appropriate disciplinary action based on individual circumstances.
- C. Reasons for Disciplinary Action. All employees are expected to comply with the Town's standards of behavior and performance. Disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, may be imposed upon an employee for conduct or actions that interfere with or prevent the Town from effectively and efficiently discharging its responsibilities to the public.

The following shall result in disciplinary action; however, the list is meant to be illustrative only and should not be considered to include all reasons for disciplinary action:

- Engaging in activities prohibited by or in violation of the law, Town Charter, Town ordinance and/or Town policies and procedures.
- Falsification of Town or employment records.
- Substandard or unsatisfactory job performance.
- Incompetence, inefficiency, or negligence in the performance of duties.
- Theft or misappropriation of funds.
- Fraud or dishonesty.

- Misuse of or damage to the property of the Town, co-employees, visitors, or others associated with the Town.
- Insubordination, disobedience, or refusal to comply with supervisor's instructions.
- Sleeping or otherwise wasting time or loafing during work hours.
- Physical or verbal abuse of co-employees, visitors or other associated with the Town, including by exhibiting bullying behavior.
- Threatening or intimidating co-employees, visitors, or others associated with the Town, including sexual harassment or harassment or discrimination based on other protected categories.
- Acts of violence, including bringing a weapon of any kind, licensed or otherwise, on Town property or on Town business, unless otherwise authorized to do so as part of job responsibilities (e.g., police, animal control officer or deputy).
- Disorderly conduct or disruptive behavior, including provocations or fighting with other employees, visitors, or others associated with the Town on the premises or during Town business.
- Use of profane or vulgar language while on Town premises or during Town business.
- Use or possession of alcohol at work.
- Use, sale, purchase, or possession of illegal drugs at work.
- Abuse of prescription drugs at work.
- Unauthorized disclosure or use of privileged, proprietary, or confidential information.
- Unauthorized absence from work.
- Abuse of paid or unpaid time off.
- Unexcused and/or repeated absenteeism or tardiness.
- Unauthorized use or destruction of Town property, equipment, or supplies.
- Conviction of a criminal offense while employed by the Town.
- Performing services for others during working hours.
- Action or conduct affecting or impairing the efficiency of the Town service or that may bring the Town into disrepute.
- Violation of the Town's information technology policies.
- Any other conduct that the Town deems is averse to the best interests of the Town.

The forgoing list is non-exhaustive and is only intended to be representative of the types of conduct for which discipline, up to and including dismissal, may be imposed. This policy should be construed as a guide for employees and supervisory personnel to illustrate the Town's general philosophy on rules of conduct and discipline. It does not alter the employment at-will relationship between the Town and its employees.

8-2. Discipline Procedure

The Town reserves the right to determine what form of discipline, if any, is appropriate for specific employee behaviors, given the facts and circumstances present in each instance, and what outcome would be in the best interests of the Town.

Whenever possible, if employee performance attitude, work habits or personal conduct falls below a desirable level, supervisors shall inform the employee of the problem and give counsel and assistance. If appropriate and justified, a reasonable period of time for improvement may be allowed before initialing a disciplinary action. In some instances, a specific incident may justify severe disciplinary action up to and including dismissal; however, the action to be taken depends on the seriousness of the incident and the whole pattern of the employee's past performance and conduct.

- A. A. **Verbal Warning.** Any verbal warning will be memorialized with a written memo which shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. **Written Warning.** In situations where a verbal warning has not resulted in expected improvements or where more severe initial action is warranted, a written warning shall be given to an employee, and a copy shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- B. **Suspension.** An employee may be suspended by the Town Administrator with or without pay for such reasons as (without limitation): misconduct, negligence, inefficiency, insubordination, mishandling of confidential material, breach of the duty of loyalty, unauthorized absence, or other reasons when alternate personnel actions are not appropriate. Within two (2) working days of the suspension decision, the Town Administrator shall furnish to the employee a written statement of such action specifically setting for the reasons for the action.
- C. **Demotion.** An employee may be demoted to a position of a lower grade for which he/she is qualified as a form of discipline.
- D. **Dismissal.** An employee may be dismissed upon the recommendation of the Town Administrator with the approval of the Mayor. Immediately upon the dismissal decision, the Town Administrator shall furnish to the employee a written statement of such action specifically setting forth the reasons for the action. It is the policy of the Town not to rehire former employees who have been dismissed, or who resigned while an investigation or charges were pending.

CHAPTER 9

Employee Conduct

9-1. General Policy.

A Town employee should refrain from any conduct that could reflect unfavorably upon Town service. Town employees must avoid any action that might result in or create the impression of using public office for private gain or giving preferential treatment to any person.

9-2. Outside employment.

An employee may not engage in outside employment absent prior notification to his/her immediate supervisor and the Town Administrator. No full-time employee may engage in other full-time employment outside the Town service, and no employees outside employment shall be in conflict of interest with Town employment. Conflicts will be resolved at the sole discretion of the Town Administrator.

Any employee who engages in employment outside of his/her regular working hours shall be required to perform his/her regular Town duties first.

The Town shall in no respect be liable in case of any injury to an employee while he/she is engaged in outside employment nor for any occupational illness attributed to that outside employment.

9-3. Political Activity

All employees of the Town shall be free and are encouraged to exercise their rights as citizens, to cast their votes and express their opinion on all political subjects. No employees of the Town shall solicit any person to vote at any political primary or election or challenge or in any manner attempt to influence any voter in a Town election while on duty.

9-4. Disclosure of Interest

- A. Any appointed Town officer or employee who has or may have a significant financial interest, direct or indirect, in any contract, transaction or decision or any agency, agent, officer, board or commission of the Town, or any other potential conflict of interest, shall immediately disclose the nature and extent of that interest or conflict, in writing, to the Town Clerk, who shall record such disclosure upon an official record filed in the office of the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk shall then send a copy of such disclosure to the agency, agent, officer, board, or commission of the Town making such contract, transaction, or decision.
- B. Any such officer or employee shall be disqualified from any discussion, action or vote on any such matter coming before an agency, agent, officer, board, or commission. Such officer or employee of the Town shall not in any way condone, promote, encourage, influence or otherwise attempt to affect action or matters which will or may result in a conflict of interest between his/her Town duties and responsibilities and his/her private affairs or which are incompatible with the proper discharge of his/her other official duties and, to that end, no appointed Town officer or employee shall grant any

special consideration, treatment or advantage to any person or entity beyond that which is available to every other person or entity.

- C. No employee shall solicit any gift. No employee shall accept any gift having a substantial value, greater than \$50, from any person who, to his/her knowledge, has an interest, directly or indirectly, in any manner whatsoever in business dealings with the Town.
- D. Violation of the provisions of this section shall be grounds for the immediate dismissal of any such officer or employee. Any such violation shall render such contract, transaction, or decision voidable by the agency, agent, officer board or commission or employee making such contract, transaction or decision.

9-5. Confidentiality

During the course of employment with the Town, employees will have access to certain confidential information. Such confidential information may include information pertaining to the lives of Town residents and the business interests in the community, as well as personnel, fiscal and legal matters pertaining to Town employees or operations.

Violating confidentiality as it pertains to the Town's internal affairs or the affairs of its residents and the business community, either during the course of employment or thereafter, except as may be required by law, or in connection with job duties, is strictly prohibited. All employees must hold in confidence and not directly or indirectly disclose, make public, use, or make copies of any confidential information, except as may be expressly authorized by the Town or other applicable laws. Except as otherwise required by law, all records must be kept secured and confidential and not discussed with or released to anyone inside or outside the Town who does not have a business need to know such information. All employees must further agree to take all reasonable steps necessary to ensure that all confidential information will not become known to third parties, including other employees who do not need to know such information. If you have any questions, please discuss with your supervisor or the Town Administrator.

All records, files, documents, computer disks and other materials, or copies thereof, containing confidential information shall be and remain the sole property of the Town, shall not be removed from the Town's premises or otherwise used except for bona fide business purposes and shall be promptly returned to the Town upon request at any time during employment and immediately upon termination of employment with the Town, whether voluntary or involuntary. These non-disclosure obligations shall remain in effect during the entire period of employment with the Town and at all times after termination of employment, whether voluntary or involuntary. The Town further requires all employees to comply with the Freedom of Information Act.

9-6. Employment of Relatives

The Town neither prohibits, nor favors, the employment of relatives of an employee. For purposes of this policy, a "relative" includes a parent, spouse, child, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, and stepparent. In-law relationships and other persons living in a household are also included in this policy. Employment of relatives in the same work unit or department is permitted, provided that neither relative occupies a position which supervises, directs, or controls the work of the other; reports to the other; or has any review or sign-off relationship with the other. The conditions of this policy also apply if two employees are

dating or become related through marriage after they are employed.

9-7. Information Technology Use

A. Internet Access Guidelines

Employees may obtain access to the Town's Internet services if there is a business need to do so. Employees granted access to the Internet are required to abide by the following guidelines:

- Internet access shall be used for business purposes only during working time. "Working time" for purposes of this provision and other provisions below is the time an employee is engaged or should be engaged in performing his/her duties for the Town. Limited personal use of Internet access during non-working time is permitted to the extent that such use does not interfere with the Town's business operations or others who are working, does not cause the Town to incur any additional expenses, and does not otherwise violate any the Town policies or procedures or applicable laws. Excessive personal use of Internet access is strictly forbidden.
- The Town reserves the right to block access to certain Internet websites and/or other addresses, which are not specifically related to business needs.
- All Town communications services and systems, hardware and software are the Town's property; accordingly, the Town may review and monitor the use of the Town property as well as the data and/or communications sent, received and/or stored without any prior notice.
- Town employees are prohibited from using the Town's Internet and/or network to access social media sites for personal use at any time due to the potential risks associated with malware, spyware, viruses, etc.
- Information Technology Department personnel are the only Town employees authorized to download software from the Internet or via e-mail onto the Town's network. Any such software or files become the property of the Town and may be used only in ways that are consistent with their licenses or copyrights. All downloaded software must be virus tested by Information Technology Department personnel and have sufficient support documentation to assess the origin and integrity of the software.

B. Electronic Mail (E-mail) Guidelines

The Town provides putnamct.us domain-based email addresses for every permanent employee. Employees shall monitor, manage and communicate via the Town email as necessary to maintain up-to-date access to Town policies and procedures, and to communicate internally and externally for Town-related business.

The Town requires all employees and appointed members to participate and successfully complete cyber security training, using KnowB4 or similar. This training is required on an annual basis, per management direction.

E-mail system users must utilize their best professional judgment in writing messages, in forwarding e-mail messages and attachments or reading e-mail that was inadvertently sent to their mailboxes.

The Town prohibits the use of e-mail for personal, non-work-related messages or exchanges during working time. Limited personal use of e-mail during non-working time is permitted to the extent that such use does not interfere with the Town's business operations or others who are working, does not cause the Town to incur any additional expenses, and does not otherwise violate any the Town policies or procedures or applicable laws. Excessive personal use of e-mail is strictly forbidden. The Town further prohibits Town personnel from accessing their personal email (Yahoo mail, Gmail, etc.) through the Town's network due to the potential risks associated with malware, spyware, viruses, etc. Town personnel are also prohibited from forwarding personal emails with or without attachments to their Town email address due to potential risks. Citizen and any non-public business-related information are not to be forwarded to personal email addresses.

The Town considers all data developed on its systems, including e-mail, to be the property of the Town and further considers any improper use of the e-mail system to be a misuse of the Town's resources. The Town reserves the right to access, view, review, audit, intercept, and block or monitor any messages sent or received over the Town's network at any time. The Town also reserves the right to block email messages forwarded or sent from Town email addresses to preserve the integrity of the Town's network and private and confidential data and resources.

The following e-mail guidelines must be adhered to:

- Employees must not communicate nonpublic, personal information regarding the Town's residents via e-mail. If it is necessary to communicate confidential information, this must be done using the Town's encrypted email service by an employee that has been given access to the service.
- Each employee using e-mail must identify himself or herself honestly, accurately, and completely, including their job title.
- No confidential proprietary information can be communicated by e-mail, unless using the encrypted emailservice.
- E-mail received (especially unsolicited e-mail) shall be reviewed immediately and promptly addressed or disposed of. All e-mail received with attached files must first be completely evaluated by a full virus test check before the files may be opened or used.
- E-mail may not be used at any time to solicit or proselytize for religious or political causes, outside organizations or other non-job-related solicitations.
- E-mail must not be used to send or receive copyrighted materials, trade secrets, or proprietary information.

Authorized Information Technology Department personnel have access to all messages on the e-mail system. Designated authorized personnel have the authority to monitor and block both incoming and outgoing e-mail transmissions.

C. Consequences for Failure to Follow Guidelines on Internet Access and E-mail

Misuse of the Internet or e-mail will not be tolerated. Examples of misuse include:

- Sending messages that contain computer viruses.
- Using data from any system, internal or external, when the employee does not have the authority to access.
- Using another person's password
- Allowing another person to use your personal password.
- Using intimidating, violent, profane, obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, or similar inappropriate language in private or public messages, including sending threats and harassing (as defined in our anti-harassment policy) messages.
- Entering another individual's e-mail or reading another person's e-mail without authorization
- Downloading or installing any non-Town owned software including screensavers.
- Downloading or installing any software that allows "instant messaging" or access to personal e-mail accounts.
- Breaking into, or attempting to break into, systems when the employee does not have authorization to access (known as hacking)
- Sending fictitious messages that could be mistaken for Town official statements or materials.
- Sending, forwarding, or posting confidential Town information to unauthorized individuals or an employee's personal email account.
- Using Town's property and Internet access for personal gain, in non-job-related activities or entertainment
- Sending illegal messages or materials
- Sending or receiving emails with attachments that may contain potentially damaging malware, etc. or that may utilize large amounts of the Town's resources (bandwidth, storage, etc.)

- Refusing to cooperate with the Town when it is conducting an authorized, reasonable internal security investigation.

This list is not meant to be complete but to serve as a guideline for employees.

By using the Town's electronic information systems, employees agree to comply with this policy and other applicable Town policies, as well as state and federal laws and regulations. Penalties for infractions may include loss of system access, and disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment. In addition, some activities may lead to risk of legal liability, both civil and criminal.

Public records retention and Freedom of Information requirements must be satisfied in the use of electronic communications systems in accordance with the Town's policies and applicable law.

D. Electronic Monitoring

The Town gives notice to all of its employees and to anyone else who enters its premises or work locations of the potential use of electronic monitoring in the workplace. "Electronic monitoring" means the collection of information on the Town's premises and in connection with the Town's equipment about the activities or communications of employees and others by any means other than direct, personal observation. Electronic monitoring includes the use of a computer, telephone, wire, radio, camera, video-camera, tape or digital recording device or any other type of electromagnetic, global positioning system ("GPS"), photo-electronic or photo-optical system.

The Town reserves the right in its sole discretion to engage in electronic monitoring on its premises at any time for any lawful business purpose, including without limitation, to: (a) access business information; (b) provide a safe and secure work environment; (c) assist in the evaluation of employee work performance; (d) supervise employees to be sure that they are acting consistently with business objectives; (e) investigate suspected misconduct; (f) assess compliance with the Town policies and applicable law; and to (g) ensure that the Town's operations continue appropriately. The Town will not engage in any electronic monitoring that is prohibited by any applicable state or federal law, including without limitation, by monitoring activities in areas provided for employee private, personal use (such as rest rooms/locker rooms) and/or by monitoring for the purpose of interfering with/restraining an employee's rights to engage in protected concerted activities.

The following are examples of the particular types of electronic monitoring that the Town may use on its premises and at its work locations:

- Monitoring of e-mail and other components of the computer system
- Video surveillance
- Telephone and voice-mail monitoring
- Monitoring of electromagnetic card access system
- Monitoring using GPS tracking devices.

An individual consents to being electronically monitored by the Town for any lawful business purpose by being employed by the Town, using the Town equipment or vehicles and/or by being on the Town's premises.

Any employee who is determined to have engaged in any conduct that is contrary to the Town's business as a result of information obtained through the Town's use of electronic monitoring shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In addition, criminal penalties and fines may apply where the employee's conduct violates applicable state or federal laws.

E. Personal Electronic Devices

Employees are prohibited from attaching their personal devices to or charging them on the Town's computers. Employees are not to plug in any storage devices, USB drives, cell phones, cameras, DVD\CDs, media cards or any other personal storage device into the Town's network or Town owned hardware. All charging of these personal devices should always be done from a wall outlet.

An employee's use of any personal electronic devices (such as cell phones, tablets, laptops, smartwatches, etc.) is limited during working time. In compliance with the Town's cell phone policy, limited use of any personal electronic devices is allowable and expected for authentication purposes for Town related business activity, documentation of Town projects, inspections, and/or other Town related activities. During non- working time, an employee's use of any personal electronic devices must not be disruptive to others (including co-workers, customers, etc.) or interfere with the work of the Town and must not violate the Town's policies (including standards of conduct; confidentiality; acceptable IT use, etc.) or applicable law.

F. Recording Devices

To prevent harassment (as defined in our anti-harassment policy), maintain individual privacy, encourage open communication, avoid unnecessary distractions and protect confidential information of the Town from being improperly disclosed, employees are prohibited from taking, distributing or posting pictures, videos or audio recordings while on working time. Exceptions may be granted when participating in an authorized Town activity or with permission from the Town Administrator for business related purposes. For the same reasons as stated above, employees who seek to take, distribute or post pictures, videos or audio recordings of people while on the Town's premises (such as other employees, residents or others doing business with the Town) while on non-working time must notify and obtain permission from such other individuals first.

At no time may an employee take, distribute or post pictures, videos or audio recordings of any confidential information of the Town (as defined in the Town's confidentiality policy) or in violation of any other Town policy.

Employees also may not take pictures or make recordings of work areas at any time. An exception to the rule concerning pictures and recordings of work areas would be if the employee were engaging in any activity protected by the National Labor Relations Act including, for example, taking pictures of health, safety and/or working condition concerns, or of strike, protest and work-related issues and/or other protected concerted activities, as long as such pictures, videos or audio recordings do not disclose any confidential information of the Town (as defined in the Town's confidentiality policy).

While this section outlines requirements and limitations for employees' use of recording devices, it is important to note that as a public employer, on Town property and engaging in Town activities, members of the public may take photos, videos or engage in other recording efforts of Town employees, their workspaces and normal work

activities. Only confidential information, as defined herein, may be limited from public access.

G. Social Media

“Social Media” are various forms of discussion-and information-sharing tools, including social networks, blogs, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, message boards and online forums.

Technologies include picture and video sharing, wall postings, e-mail, instant messaging, and music sharing. Examples of Social Media applications include, but are not limited to, Google and Yahoo Groups; Wikipedia; Facebook; YouTube; Twitter; LinkedIn; and news media comment sharing/blogging. This policy covers all social media tools, both current and future.

Any employee who chooses to use social media needs to be aware of the following set of guidelines for appropriate online conduct to avoid having the Town take adverse action with respect to their employment.

- The personal use of social media is not allowed while employees are on working time regardless of the equipment used (e.g., either using personal or Town phones or computers). Employees may further not use Town equipment for personal reasons in accordance with applicable policies. Exceptions are for Town media sites, Town website, Town Facebook and other approved social media platforms, which the Town Administrator has given employee permission for posting.
- Any conduct, which under the law or Town policy is impermissible if expressed in any other format (such as through a conversation, a memo or an e-mail), is impermissible if expressed through social media as well. Any harassing comments (as defined in our anti- harassment policy), obscenities or similar conduct that would violate the Town's policies is never allowed while using Town equipment or during an employee's working time.
- Employees who use social media shall not post any proprietary or confidential data, documents or photographs about the Town or its residents or vendors, or any information which would violate any laws applicable to the Town, regardless of whether the posting is done during working or non-working time.
- Unless authorized in writing by a management representative (such as when an employee's job is to send public messages on behalf of the Town), employees do not have permission to speak on behalf of the Town in any form.
- While communicating through social media, if an employee posts any content that has something to do with the work they perform for the Town or subjects or individuals associated with the Town's business, employees must make clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the Town by accompanying their posts with a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the Town's positions or opinions."
- Supervisors should avoid sending or accepting "friend" requests from and to employees which could result in violations of any applicable Town policies, including without limitation policies pertaining to conflicts of interest and discrimination or harassment.
- Be thoughtful in all your communications and dealings with others, including in e-mail and social media. Never harass, ridicule, threaten or defame fellow employees, residents or others

doing business with the Town.

- Be aware that you are not anonymous when you make online comments. Information on your networking profile is published in a very public place. Even if you post anonymously or under a pseudonym, your identity can still be revealed.
- The Town may monitor content on the Internet and reserves the right to request that you remove posts that violate this policy.

When an employee's use of any social media violates the law or any Town policies (including policies pertaining to confidentiality, employee misconduct or job performance), appropriate discipline up to and including termination of employment will be imposed, regardless of when the information was posted or sent and regardless of the tools or site used to post or send such information.

Nothing in this policy (or any other Town policy) will be implemented or should be interpreted in any manner so as to prohibit or inhibit employees from engaging in any lawful activities through social media, including exercising any rights they may have to engage in protected concerted activity or political activities.

H. Computer Access and Passwords

Employees are prohibited from gaining access to another employee's computer or other electronic communications and must not use unauthorized codes passwords or other means to gain access to another employee's computer or other electronic communication systems, unless expressly permitted to do so by authorized management personnel. Employees are prohibited from accessing a file or retrieving any stored information on the Town's e-mail, voicemail, and computer system passwords unless permitted to do so by authorized management personnel.

Employees are responsible for maintaining strong, up-to-date passwords for various Town related business activities. This may include but is not limited to, computer login, emails, timeclock management systems, Town websites, Town accounting software, State or Federal sites, etc. All employee passwords must be provided to the Town's IT Department. Employees will coordinate with their Department Head, Town management or IT Department, as necessary for password retrieval.

[Employees are responsible for proper care and security of any electronic equipment provided to them. This includes locking as appropriate, signing out when away from the workspace, and other computer security practices.](#)

9-8. Workplace Harassment and Discrimination

The Town will not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any employee that unlawfully discriminates against any co-workers, visitors, or others associated with the Town, on the basis of any legally protected status, or which unlawfully harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile working environment.

The Town requires all employees to attend and as applicable, successfully complete training on an annual or bi-annual basis.

Discrimination or harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to words, conduct, adverse job action, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, physical contact, or violence. While all forms of discrimination and harassment based on an employee's legally protected status are prohibited, including but not limited to any adverse job action or intimidation based on race, age, religion, gender, national origin, disability status, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, gender identity/expression or sexual orientation, it is the Town's policy to emphasize that sexual harassment is illegal and prohibited by both state and federal law.

In order to maintain a work organization that is free from any form of sexual harassment, the Town puts all employees (including managers) on notice that sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct. Specifically, it is contrary to the Town's policies for any employee to sexually harass another employee by:

- a) Engaging in unwelcome sexual conduct, or requests for sexual favors a condition of an employees' continued employment; or
- b) Using an employee's submission or rejection of such conduct as the basis for making employment decisions (e.g., promotions, raises); or
- c) Creating a work environment in which conduct of a sexual nature substantially interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an atmosphere of intimidation, hostile or offensive to employees.

Although not an inclusive list, the following are examples of the type of conduct prohibited by the policy against sexual harassment:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or flirtations;
2. Unwelcome attention of a sexual nature such as degrading comments, suggestive or lewd remarks, propositions, jokes, tricks or noises;
3. Unwanted hugs, touches, kisses or requests for sexual favors;
4. The threat or suggestion that continued employment, advancement, assignment or earnings depend on whether or not the employee will submit to or tolerate harassment;
5. Retaliation for complaining about sexual harassment.

All employees are further advised that sexually explicit or sexually offensive material has no place within the Town's facilities. Such material may not be posted, displayed, or even possessed within the facility. Possession of such material, even if it is not posted or publicly displayed, will be considered a violation of Town policy, and will subject the individual to disciplinary action.

Any employee who believes that the actions or words of a supervisor or fellow employee or any outside party in the workplace constitute unwelcome harassment or unlawful discrimination has a responsibility to report such conduct or immediately complain to his or her immediate supervisor should his/her direct requests that the conduct cease be ignored. If an employee is uncomfortable raising his or her complaint with someone to whom s/he reports, or if the complaint involves someone in his or her direct line of command, then that employee

should bring a complaint to the Department Head, the Town Administrator, or any managerial representative of the Town.

Confidentiality at the time of reporting the incident will be preserved to the maximum extent possible. However, all allegations of unlawful harassment and discrimination must be investigated promptly. In this regard, the reporting employee, the alleged harasser or discriminator and any other employees aware of the incident are expected to treat this information in a confidential manner so as not to defame or invade the privacy of others.

The Town will take prompt action upon the receipt of a complaint of unlawful harassment or discrimination. Any employee determined to have committed unlawful harassment or discrimination will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Moreover, any individual who makes unwelcome advances, threatens or in any way discriminates or harasses another employee based on a legally protected status may be personally liable for monetary damages for such actions and their consequences.

The Town will not tolerate the taking of any reprisal against an employee who, in good faith, files harassment or discrimination or participates, in good faith, in the investigation of any such complaint. However, any employee who is determined to have made up false accusations of unlawful harassment or discrimination will also be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

9-9. Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace

To promote safe and efficient operation of the workplace and to comply with applicable state and federal laws, it is the policy of the Town to maintain a work force that is free from the effects of illegal drugs and abuse of alcohol or prescription drugs. The health and safety of the Town's employees is of serious concern. Employees have the right to work in an alcohol and drug-free environment and to work with persons free from the effects of alcohol and drugs. Employees who abuse alcohol or drugs are a danger to themselves, to other employees and to the Town's business interests.

It is a standard of conduct for employees of the Town to not use illegal drugs and to abuse alcohol or prescription drugs, either on or off the job. No employees may use, sell, manufacture, receive, distribute, dispense, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug, or abuse prescription or over the counter drugs, while on Town property, while operating Town or personal vehicles on Town business, or while off-premises where such behavior compromises the Town's business interests, or undermines the public confidence in or harms the reputation of the Town, or adversely affects the employee's job performance, job safety and/or ability to fulfill Town responsibilities.

It is against Town policy to report to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs – even if prescribed. Being under the influence of alcohol, an illegal drug, or abuse of any prescribed or over the counter drugs on Town premises or while performing Town business, in Town supplied vehicles or during working hours is absolutely prohibited.

In compliance with applicable state and federal law and regulations, any employee who operates a commercial motor vehicle requiring a commercial driver's license (CDL) or is an applicant for a driver position will be subject to alcohol and drug testing as further described in a separate policy for all such affected individuals.

Employees must notify the Town Administrator of any criminal drug/alcohol statute conviction no later than five

(5) days after such conviction.

Failure or refusal of an employee or applicant to cooperate fully with any portion of this policy or submit to any drug testing as may be lawfully requested or required, will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination or denial of employment.

9-10. Smoking

In order to maintain a safe and comfortable working environment and to ensure compliance with applicable laws, smoking and vaping in Town Hall offices and other Town facilities is not allowed.

Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for violating this policy.

9-11. Personal Appearance and Work Habits

All employees are representatives of the Town and are expected to project a positive image of the Town to the public and to anyone associated with the Town. As such, employees are expected to wear appropriate business attire when at work, in accordance with the type of job they hold. Basic elements for appropriate and professional business attire include clothing that is in neat and clean condition. [All employees are issued a Town identification badge upon hire and are expected to wear it during all work activities.](#)

The wearing of revealing or sexually provocative clothing will not be permitted. Moreover, the following, without limitation, are examples of clothing which do not present a business-like appearance for those who have contact with the public, and which, therefore, will not be permitted: tank-tops, muscle shirts, T-shirts, shirts which expose the midriff or inappropriate slogans or graphics, shorts/skirts which do not extend below the mid-thigh, off the shoulder dresses/shirts/ blouses/sweaters, sweats and exercise clothing, leggings with thin, or mesh material, sports/wicking material, clothing with slogans, casual shoes, sneakers, flip-flops, construction or hunting boots, and all types of dirty or ripped/ragged clothes. Adjustments to above- noted clothing may be made based on position and as approved by the immediate supervisor and/or Town Administrator

If an employee reports for work improperly dressed, his/her supervisor will instruct the employee to return home to change clothes or will take other appropriate corrective action. Non-exempt employees will not be compensated during such time they are away from work. Repeated violations of this policy will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Jeans will be permitted on Fridays when the Town is participating in a casual Friday program, with donations to non-profit or similar agencies, with details from management. If an employee's position requires the majority of their work to be in the field, they are permitted to wear personal protective equipment including clothing/footwear. If an employee's position requires minimal field work, it is expected that they bring a change of clothing or footwear for the duration of field work.

Employees are also expected to maintain good work habits at all times. All work areas are to be kept neat and orderly at all times, to assure ease in retrieval of necessary information. Employees should also maintain professional posture at all times, and, for example, should not put their feet up on any furniture while at work. [Employees should also maintain appropriate noise levels and tones so as not to disturb other employees, offices, and members of the public.](#) In addition, telephone courtesy at all times is essential. An employee answering the telephone should state the department's name and then his/her own name, and should be professional in dealing with the caller, and responsive to the caller's needs.

9-12. Personal Telephone Calls and Personal Mail

The Town recognizes the need for occasional personal calls to be made or received during business hours for situations such as checking on family members' health or safety, childcare, eldercare, emergency transportation, etc. The Town expects employees to keep the number of personal phone calls to a minimum, to make and receive them during personal time (e.g., breaks or lunch), and to limit the duration of such phone calls. In addition, when a long-distance phone call must be made, the call must be billed to the caller's personal phone number. Employees should not use the Town as a personal mailing address and personal mail should not be put through the Town's postage meter. Use of Town stationery for personal mail is prohibited.

9-13. Use of Cell Phones

At all times during working time all personal cell phones must be either turned off or switched to vibrate. Absent an emergency situation, any employee who needs to make or receive a cell phone call, should do so only during break times and only in private locations.

In compliance with the Town's cell phone policy, for those specific cell phones and communications equipment that are purchased through the Town are the property of the Town. The primary use of the cell phone is for work-related business. Personal use of a Town-owned cellular phone should be occasional. NOTE: Under no circumstances should the assigned cellular phone be used as a replacement for a personal cell phone or residential landline phone.

Cell phone (Town-owned or personal) use is prohibited while driving a Town-owned or personal vehicle. Should an employee need to make or receive a call (including text messaging) while driving, s/he should locate a safe and lawfully designated area to park and make or receive the call or use a hands-free speaking device.

Individuals to whom cellular phones have been provided are responsible for the security and maintenance of the phones and must promptly report any damage, theft, or vandalism to their Department Head and/or the Town Administrator.

9-14. Employee Safety

The Town seeks to promote a safe and healthy physical environment for all employees. These guidelines are designed with employee safety in mind. In addition to complying with these guidelines and any directives from supervisors, each employee should insure that no action s/he takes endangers himself or herself or a fellow employee or results in the destruction of property.

Every employee needs to be aware of and adhere to the following safety precautions:

- Notify your supervisor of any emergency situation.
- If you are injured or become sick at work, no matter how slight, inform your supervisor immediately.
- If you have an accident at work, immediately report it to your supervisor, who will assist you in completing an incident report. This incident report must be submitted within 24 hours of any accident so that it can be filed with our

Workers' Compensation carrier, if necessary.

- Learn how to lift properly. Bend your knees and keep your back erect. Get help when necessary.
- Keep work areas neat and arrange workstations so there are no hidden safety or health hazards.
- Keep passageways clear at all times.
- Report unsafe working conditions immediately to your supervisor.
- Report damages or broken machines and equipment to your supervisor.
- Know the locations, contents and use of first aid and firefighting equipment.

9-15. Workplace Violence Prevention

The safety and security of its employees and residents is important to the Town. Acts of intimidation, threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors or others associated with the Town by anyone on Town property or otherwise in the course of their relationship with the Town will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy will lead to appropriate action that may include discipline up to dismissal, arrest and prosecution.

The Town has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy against any form of intimidation, threats or violence in the workplace. Any form of intimidation, threat or violent act is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Violations of this policy include but are not limited to: participating in, provoking or otherwise contributing to any threat or violent act in the workplace; abuse, assault, battery, verbal or written threats, intimidation, and harassment; and possession of any firearm(s) or any other type of weapon on any Town property or work location(s) (unless authorized to carry weapons by the Town or State).

Because it is often difficult to distinguish between a real threat and one made in jest, all threats will be treated as real and therefore even threats of violence spoken only in a joking manner are strictly prohibited by this policy. Any employee who makes a threat, whether express or implicit, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in any violent act or other violation of this policy on Town property or otherwise in the course of their employment with us, shall be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits, and shall remain off Town property pending the outcome of an investigation. Depending on the circumstances involved, the Town's response may include, but is not limited to, reassignment of job duties, discipline up to and including suspension and termination of employment, and/or criminal prosecution of the person(s) involved.

All Town personnel are responsible for notifying their supervisors and the Town Administrator of any violation of this policy, including but not limited to, any threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person witnessed or received. All reports will be investigated fully and promptly. Any intentionally false or misleading report will be grounds for disciplinary action.

The Town's premises are restricted to individuals with a legitimate business purpose. Any employee who observes any individual (including current or former employees) loitering, or present on the premises without an apparent business need to be there or otherwise interfering with operations should report the circumstances

immediately to their supervisor and the Town Administrator.

9-16. Unauthorized Use of Town Property

Unauthorized employee use of any Town equipment and supplies for non-work-related purposes is strictly prohibited. Examples of equipment and supplies that employees may not use without authorization include the following: computers/printers, copiers, telephones, fax machines, postage meter, and work supplies (pens, papers, tape, etc.). Employees may further not use their own or other Town offices or workspaces as a place to live, sleep or engage in any outside business activities. Unauthorized use or negligence in the care and use of Town property shall subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

9-17. Return of Town Property.

All records, files, documents, equipment and other materials, or copies thereof, relating to the Town's business, shall be and remain the sole property of the Town. These materials shall not be removed from the Town's premises except when required in connection with the performance of an employee's duties for the Town and shall be promptly returned to the Town and not retained by any employee upon request at any time and upon termination of employment with the Town. Employees must return all Town property in their possession by their last day of employment.

CHAPTER 10

Retirement and Other Fringe Benefits.

10-1. Insurance Benefits.

The Town offers full-time employees medical, dental, life and disability insurance benefits. The conditions of enrollment and specific benefit plan terms are set forth in specific plan documents that are available upon request in the Human Resources Office. The Town reserves the right to change any of its insurance benefits as well as the conditions for participation in such benefits plans in the sole discretion of the Board of Selectmen.

10-2. Pension Plan Benefits.

The Town has established a pension plan benefit applicable to full-time employees. The conditions of participation and specific plan terms are set forth in a plan document which is available upon request in the Human Resources Office. The Town reserves the right to change its pension plan benefit as well as the conditions for participation in such benefit plan in the sole discretion of the Board of Selectmen, with approval by the Legislative Body.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed a copy of the Town of Putnam Employee Handbook, as amended effective _____, 2023. I understand that is my obligation to familiarize myself with and abide and comply with all of the policies and procedures set forth therein. I further understand that the Town has the right to change, delete, add to, suspend, or discontinue any of its policies and procedures at any time without prior notice, and that if the Town so exercises this right and I remain employed thereafter, I will abide by, and comply with, all of the Town's policies and procedures which are then in effect.

Employee Name: _____
(please print)

Signature _____

Date: