

# HANDBOOK ROUGH DRAFT 2

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Welcome to the Town of Appomattox. We are pleased to have you as part of our team. As a Town employee, you play an important role in providing public services and serving the residents of Appomattox with professionalism, integrity, and respect. We encourage you to become familiar with the Town's mission, vision, and core values, which guide our actions and decision-making as a local government organization.

This Employee Handbook is intended to provide general information regarding Town policies, procedures, benefits, and workplace expectations. It is designed to help employees understand how the Town operates and what is expected of them in their role as public servants. The handbook should be used as a reference guide and does not create a contract of employment or confer any contractual rights.

Employment with the Town of Appomattox is at will, meaning that either the employee or the Town may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or notice, except as otherwise provided by law or formal written agreement approved by the Town.

This handbook is not all-inclusive. The Town reserves the right to modify, amend, suspend, or discontinue any policy, procedure, or benefit described in this handbook at any time, in accordance with applicable federal and Commonwealth of Virginia laws and regulations. Changes may be made as operational needs, legal requirements, or policy considerations evolve.

Employees are responsible for reading and understanding the information contained in this handbook and for complying with Town policies and procedures. If you have questions or need clarification, please contact your supervisor, the Town Manager or Human Resources.

By working together, we can maintain a safe, respectful, and productive workplace that supports effective public service and strengthens our community.

We are glad you are here and look forward to your contributions to the Town of Appomattox.

## Organizational Vision, Mission and Values

### Vision

To be a trusted and innovative local government that enhances the quality of life for all residents by providing excellent public services, fostering community collaboration, and planning responsibly for the future.

### Mission

Our mission is to serve the residents of Appomattox with integrity, professionalism, and dedication. We are committed to delivering efficient, high-quality public services that promote public safety, sustainability, economic vitality, and community well-being. Through responsible stewardship of public resources, collaboration with our citizens and partners, and thoughtful planning, we strive to meet today's needs while preparing for tomorrow's opportunities.

### Core Values

- Integrity – Conducting all government operations with honesty, transparency, and ethical responsibility.
- Public Service – Placing the needs of our residents at the center of every decision and action.
- Accountability – Being responsible stewards of public trust, resources, and outcomes.
- Collaboration – Working together across departments, with elected officials, and alongside the community to achieve shared goals.
- Innovation – Seeking creative, efficient, and forward-thinking solutions to improve government services.
- Respect – Treating all individuals with fairness, dignity, and professionalism while valuing diversity and inclusion.

## The Town of Appomattox and its History

The Town of Appomattox was founded in 1925 and operates under a Council–Manager form of government. The Town serves a community of more than 1,700 residents and provides essential municipal services with a focus on professionalism, accountability, and public service.

Appomattox has a rich and significant history shaped by Native American heritage, Civil War events, and nineteenth-century development. The area is nationally recognized for its role in American history, most notably as the site associated with the conclusion of the Civil War, as well as for its longstanding traditions of agriculture, commerce, and civic engagement.

Today, the Town of Appomattox blends its historic legacy with a commitment to responsible governance, community service, and sustainable growth for current and future generations.

## Why Public Service Matters

Working for the Town of Appomattox is more than a job—it is a commitment to public service, community trust, and responsible stewardship.

As a municipal employee, your work directly affects the daily lives of residents, businesses, and visitors. Whether providing essential services, maintaining infrastructure, supporting public safety, or ensuring fair and transparent government operations, every role contributes to the Town’s ability to serve its citizens effectively.

Appomattox’s historic significance carries a responsibility to uphold values of integrity, accountability, and respect. Town employees are entrusted with public resources and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the organization and the community.

Public service in Appomattox means:

- Serving the community with fairness and professionalism
- Making decisions guided by law, policy, and ethical standards
- Treating residents, coworkers, and elected officials with respect and dignity
- Protecting the public’s trust through transparency and accountability

Each employee plays an important role in preserving the Town’s legacy while helping shape its future. Through dedication, teamwork, and service, Town employees help ensure that Appomattox remains a strong, responsive, and welcoming community for generations to come.

## Ethics

The Town expects all employees to hold themselves and their coworkers to the highest ethical standards. Employees are expected to act and make decisions guided by public service principles and the Town’s core values to achieve positive results. Public service principles include, but are not limited to:

- Building trust through honesty and transparency
- Seeking no personal gain
- Treating all individuals fairly and with respect
- Strengthening the community through responsible stewardship

Recognizing that how results are achieved is as important as the results themselves, employees are expected to apply an ethical perspective in all workplace decisions and actions. When there is any uncertainty about the appropriateness of a decision or course of action, employees are encouraged to seek advice and guidance. Such guidance is available from supervisors, Department Directors, Human Resources, and the Town Manager.

## Town Manager Role and Responsibilities

The Town Manager serves as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Appomattox and is responsible for the administration of the Town's day-to-day operations. In accordance with direction from the Town Council and applicable provisions of the Code of the Town of Appomattox, the Town Manager is vested with the authority necessary to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Town.

### A. Organizational Structure

The Town Manager is authorized to establish and maintain the Town's organizational structure, including the creation of departments, divisions, and administrative units as deemed necessary to carry out municipal functions and services.

### B. Appointment and Personnel Authority

The Town Manager, or designee, shall have the authority to appoint, supervise, discipline, and remove department heads and all subordinate officers and employees, except for those positions appointed directly by the Town Council, in accordance with applicable laws and policies.

### C. Acting Authority

In the absence or incapacity of the Town Manager, a designee authorized by the Town Manager shall assume the duties and exercise the powers of the Town Manager.

# Chapter 2

## Employment

### The Employment Relationship

The Town believes that all employees—regardless of role, position, status, or salary—make a vital contribution to achieving the Town’s mission. The Town is committed to maintaining a safe, non-discriminatory, and alcohol- and drug-free workplace where employees can work in a supportive environment and interact responsibly with colleagues and citizens.

Managers and employees share responsibility for fostering a respectful, professional workplace and for ensuring that the citizens of the Town of Appomattox receive effective and responsive public services.

### Employment at Will

The Town of Appomattox, Virginia, is an employment-at-will employer. Employees of the Town of Appomattox do not have a contract of employment. Neither these policies nor any other Town document constitutes an express or implied contract of employment or guarantee of continued employment.

Nothing in this manual is intended to create, nor shall it be construed as creating, any vested rights or contractual entitlement to wages, benefits, policies, or procedures. Employment with the Town may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the Town, with or without cause, and with or without notice, in accordance with applicable law.

The contents of this manual, and the Town of Appomattox’s policies and procedures, may be modified, amended, or discontinued at any time, subject to compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local employment laws and regulations.

### Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

The Town of Appomattox is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE) and is fully committed to fair and equitable employment practices in compliance with federal and state law.

The Town maintains and promotes equal opportunities for all employees and applicants in recruitment, hiring, promotion, reassignment, training, compensation, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

Discrimination is prohibited on the basis of: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions (including lactation), sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected status. Employment decisions are based solely on an individual's ability to perform the essential functions of the position.

## A. Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment

- The Town does not tolerate discrimination or harassment, including sexual or racial harassment.
- All allegations will be promptly and thoroughly investigated, and corrective or disciplinary action will be taken as warranted.
- Retaliation against employees who file complaints, participate in investigations, or report discriminatory conduct is strictly prohibited. This protection does not cover knowingly false or malicious claims.
- While confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, the Town will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy and interests of all parties involved.

## B. Reporting Guidelines

### 1. Informal Consultation

Employees may contact the Town Manager or Human Resources to discuss concerns regarding potential discrimination or harassment.

Reasonable precautions will be taken to maintain confidentiality during this information-gathering stage.

### 2. Internal Reporting

Employees are encouraged to report incidents to a supervisor, Department Director, Town Manager, or Human Resources.

Supervisors and officials must promptly investigate any report or act of discrimination or harassment of which they become aware.

### 3. Formal Complaint Process

Employees may use applicable administrative procedures or the Town's formal Grievance Procedure to report and resolve complaints of discrimination.

## Diversity and Inclusion Plan

The Town of Appomattox is committed to fostering a workplace that reflects the diversity of the community it serves and the relevant available labor pool. The Town supports fair, equitable, and

non-discriminatory employment practices designed to attract, develop, and retain qualified employees, consistent with applicable laws including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Virginia Human Rights Act.

## A. Recruitment and Selection

1. All recruitment and hiring processes shall be conducted in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. Individuals who meet the minimum qualifications for publicly advertised positions shall have an equal opportunity to apply and be considered.
2. The Town may utilize a variety of recruitment methods, including print media, online job boards, social media platforms, and professional recruitment organizations, to promote broad and diverse applicant pools.
3. All job announcements shall include the following statement: “The Town of Appomattox is an Equal Opportunity Employer.”
4. Supervisors and employees involved in the hiring process may receive periodic training on objective selection methods, structured interview techniques, bias awareness, and inclusive hiring practices.

## B. Communication and Transparency

1. Notices identifying the Town as an Equal Opportunity Employer shall be posted and maintained in accordance with applicable legal requirements.
2. Employment opportunities, including internal promotional opportunities, shall be posted on the Town’s website and other designated communication channels.
3. Job postings may be shared with professional associations, community organizations, recruitment networks, and educational institutions to enhance outreach to qualified applicants.
4. The Town may establish partnerships with vocational schools, colleges, and universities to support workforce development and recruitment efforts.

## C. Assignment of Responsibilities

1. All employees are expected to contribute to a respectful, professional, and inclusive workplace. Individual conduct and workplace interactions are essential to achieving the Town’s organizational values.
2. Supervisors and managers are responsible for fostering and maintaining a work environment that is respectful, inclusive, and free from unlawful discrimination.

All employment-related decisions—including hiring, promotion, compensation, job assignments, training opportunities, working conditions, and participation in committees or projects—shall be based on legitimate, job-related criteria.

3. Supervisory personnel serve as a primary resource for employees by providing guidance and support regarding the Town’s Equal Employment Opportunity

policies and Diversity and Inclusion Plan. They are expected to model these standards and ensure consistent application in all aspects of supervision and decision-making.

## Federal and State Employment Law

The Town of Appomattox complies with all applicable federal and state employment laws and regulations and supports employment decisions that are job-related and free from unlawful discrimination. While full compliance with all employment laws is required, the following summarizes several of the laws most frequently applied to Town employment practices.

### A. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

1. In accordance with HIPAA Title I, the Town of Appomattox provides health insurance coverage for eligible employees and eligible dependents who lose or change employment and ensures that coverage is made available regardless of specific diseases or pre-existing conditions, as required by law.
2. In accordance with HIPAA Title II, the Town complies with national standards for the protection and processing of health care information related to Protected Health Information (PHI). The Town's current Notice of Privacy Practices is provided to new employees and maintained by the Human Resources function for employee access.

### B. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

1. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), qualified individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination in employment. An individual is considered "qualified" if they can perform the essential functions of the position, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

The Town of Appomattox will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship, in accordance with applicable law.

Individuals may be considered to have a disability under the ADA if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
  - They have a record of such an impairment; or
  - They are regarded as having such an impairment.
2. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, physical activities such as walking, standing, lifting, and breathing; mental activities such as learning, reading, and thinking; and the operation of major bodily functions, including immune system function, normal cell growth, and reproductive functions. The

determination of whether an activity qualifies as a major life activity is interpreted broadly under applicable law.

3. Management will engage in a timely, good-faith interactive process with employees who request an accommodation or where the need for an accommodation is apparent, to identify a reasonable accommodation when appropriate.

#### C. Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA)

1. The Town does not request or use genetic information for employment decisions.
2. Genetic information includes family medical history, genetic test results, information on reproductive services, or genetic information of embryos or fetuses.

#### D. Criminal Convictions

1. The Town of Appomattox does not unlawfully discriminate against individuals with criminal convictions. A prior conviction does not automatically disqualify an applicant from employment. The nature of the offense, its relevance to the position, and the time elapsed since the conviction will be considered in relation to the duties of the position.
2. Criminal background checks may be conducted following a conditional offer of employment, based on the requirements and responsibilities of the position

#### E. Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Related Conditions

1. The Town does not discriminate based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, including lactation.
2. Employees requesting accommodations related to these conditions should contact Human Resources to help determine appropriate support under applicable law and Town Policy.

## Position Categories

#### A. Position Classifications

All Town of Appomattox positions are designated in one of the following categories based on operational needs, budget approval, and applicable law:

##### 1. Full-Time Positions

Full-time positions are authorized by the Town Manager and approved through the annual budget based on ongoing service delivery needs. Employees in full-time positions are expected to work a regular, continuing schedule consistent

with their department's standard work hours, typically totaling 2,080 hours per year.

Full-time positions are included in the Town's compensation plan and are assigned to an established pay grade and range. Employees in full-time positions are generally eligible for Town-sponsored benefits, subject to applicable plan provisions, eligibility requirements, and waiting periods.

Full-time positions may be classified as salaried (exempt) or hourly (non-exempt) in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

## 2. Part-Time Positions

Part-time positions are authorized through the annual budget based on an ongoing service delivery need and typically involve a work schedule of fewer than 32 hours per week. Employees in part-time positions may work a regular, ongoing schedule and are compensated for actual hours worked.

Part-time positions may be included in the Town's compensation plan and assigned to a pay grade and range. Part-time employees are generally not eligible for Town-sponsored benefits unless otherwise required by law, specified by plan provisions, or expressly approved by the Town Manager.

## 3. Salaried (Exempt) Positions

Salaried positions are compensated on a salary basis and are typically designated as exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). These positions are authorized through the annual budget and are generally associated with supervisory, administrative, professional, or managerial responsibilities.

Salaried positions are included in the Town's compensation plan and assigned to an established pay grade and range. Employees in salaried positions are expected to work the hours necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the position and are not eligible for overtime compensation except as required by law.

## 4. Hourly (Non-Exempt) Positions

Hourly positions are compensated based on actual hours worked and are designated as non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). These positions may be full-time or part-time and are typically used for roles requiring time-based compensation.

Hourly positions may be included in the Town's compensation plan and assigned to a pay grade and range, as applicable. Employees in hourly

positions are eligible for overtime compensation in accordance with applicable law.

## 5. Seasonal Positions

Seasonal positions are authorized to meet temporary or recurring short-term operational needs, such as peak workload periods, special programs, or weather-dependent activities. Seasonal employment is limited in duration and does not exceed a defined period established by the department or funding source.

Employees in seasonal positions may work full-time or part-time schedules and are compensated for actual hours worked at an established hourly rate. Seasonal employees are not eligible for Town-sponsored benefits unless required by law or expressly provided by policy or funding agreement. Seasonal employment does not guarantee continued employment beyond the designated season.

## B. Employment Status

In addition to position classification, employees may be assigned an employment status based on the expected duration of employment:

### 1. Temporary Positions

Temporary positions are established to meet short-term operational needs, including special projects, interim staffing requirements, or workload fluctuations. Temporary employment is limited in duration and does not create an expectation of continued or permanent employment.

Employees in temporary positions are compensated for hours actually worked and are generally not eligible for Town-sponsored benefits unless required by law or expressly approved.

### 2. Seasonal Status

Employees hired into seasonal roles are classified as seasonal employees and are subject to the same limitations described under Seasonal Positions. Seasonal employment is tied to a specific period of the year and does not create any expectation of continued or ongoing employment.

Temporary and seasonal employees are subject to all applicable Town policies, workplace rules, and performance expectations. The Town reserves the right to end temporary or seasonal employment at any time, with or without notice, subject to applicable law.

# Leadership Responsibilities

Department Directors and other designated supervisory and management officials are responsible for carrying out the following personnel management functions in support of the Town of Appomattox's mission and service delivery goals:

## A. Organizational Planning

Develop departmental organizational structures and staffing levels based on service delivery needs, operational priorities, and available resources.

## B. Performance Management and Work Environment

Establish and clearly communicate work expectations; develop and implement operating procedures; manage employee performance; and maintain a safe, productive, and effective work environment.

## C. Departmental Procedures

Issue departmental employment-related procedures necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the department. All such procedures must be consistent with these Employment Policies and must be coordinated in advance with the Human Resources Department.

## D. Work Scheduling

Schedule departmental activities, including hours of work, rest and meal periods, preparation time, and clean-up time, in accordance with applicable policies and operational requirements.

## E. Recruitment and Assignment

Participate in the selection of applicants for employment and assign duties and responsibilities to employees within their areas of responsibility, consistent with Town policies and applicable law.

## F. Personnel Actions

Make recommendations or take action, as authorized, regarding promotions, demotions, reassignments, disciplinary actions, terminations, and other personnel-related decisions in accordance with applicable federal, state, and Town employment laws, policies, and procedures.

## G. Compensation Administration

Make salary and pay-related decisions as outlined in the Town's Employment Policies and approved compensation plans.

## H. Training and Development

Identify employee training and professional development needs and provide or facilitate on-the-job training to support employee growth and organizational effectiveness.

#### I. Fiscal and Procurement Responsibility

Ensure compliance with Town financial management and procurement policies, including the responsible use of fiscal resources, consultants, and approved contracts.

#### J. Delegation of Authority

The personnel management functions described above may be delegated, in whole or in part, by the Department Director to appropriate supervisory staff, consistent with Town policy and applicable law.

## Recruitment and Hiring

Human Resources in collaboration with Department Directors/Supervisors shall develop and maintain effective recruitment processes that attract applicants who are representative of the community and possess the education, knowledge, skills and abilities to meet the current and future needs of the Town.

#### A. Filling Vacancies

Vacant positions may be filled internally, externally, or both, as determined by the Department Director/Supervisor. The Town supports internal development through promotions, cross-training, and job rotations. Recruitment may be limited to current employees when appropriate.

#### B. Job Postings and Advertisements

- Positions are typically advertised for a minimum of five (5) business days; only applications received during the posting period are considered.
- Applications may be accepted in advance of anticipated vacancies for future consideration.
- All postings include: “The Town of Appomattox is an Equal Opportunity Employer.”

#### C. Application Process

- Applications are generally submitted online, providing education, training, and work experience information.
- Alternative application methods may be used when appropriate.
- Human Resources manages applications in collaboration with departments

#### D. Selection and Testing

- The hiring process may include skills testing, written exams, interviews, assessment centers, drug/alcohol testing, or other reliable testing

- Applicants completing scored examinations may review results during normal business hours. Errors may be contested through Human Resources.

#### E. Background Checks

- Certain positions (positions involving minors or money) require background checks, including:
  - Criminal history
  - Education verification
  - References
  - Credit checks (if job-related)
- Driving positions require a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) record.

#### F. Driving Requirements

- Applicants must meet minimum standards for driving safety:
  - Acceptable:  $\leq 4$  demerit points, no DWI/DUI in 3 years,  $\geq 3$  years valid license
  - Unacceptable:  $\geq 5$  demerit points, DWI/DUI within 3 years, suspension for violations/accidents
- Positions transporting non-employees require applicants to be at least 21 years old with  $\geq 3$  years of driving experience.
- All driving records are reviewed and approved by Human Resources before employment offers. Conditional approvals may be granted under limited circumstances.

#### G. Qualifications and screening of applicants

Minimum qualifications include education, experience, skills, knowledge, and other attributes predicting job success. Background checks and driving records may also be required.

Human Resources screens applications for minimum qualifications using resumes, references, interviews, and personnel records for current/former employees. Screening may involve external agencies if appropriate.

#### I. Essential Functions and ADA Compliance

Each Town class specification includes the essential functions of the job. Applicants will be considered, regardless of disability under the American with Disabilities Act, based on their stated ability to perform the essential functions of the position with or without an accommodation.

#### J. Pre-Employment Requirements

Certain positions require a pre-employment physical examination and drug/alcohol screening, which must be completed after a conditional job offer and before starting work. Any medical treatment or additional tests identified during the examination are the responsibility of the employee. Questions about medical costs should be directed to Human Resources before any additional treatment or testing.

The Town of Appomattox requires drug/alcohol screening for applicants offered employment, including employees transferring or promoting into:

1. Public Works Associate positions
2. Positions requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL)
3. Other safety-sensitive positions where the nature of the work justifies screening

Applicants offered a covered position must provide a specimen for drug testing by urinalysis and other appropriate tests for alcohol. Testing will follow standard medical procedures as determined by the Town in consultation with its medical advisors. A positive test for drugs or alcohol will disqualify the applicant from employment.

## Employment of Relatives and Special Categories

The Town of Appomattox regulates the employment and work assignments of individuals who are related to one another or to elected or appointed Town officials to maintain public trust, avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest, and prevent unfair or preferential treatment of employees or members of the public.

### A. General Policy

1. Members of the same family may be employed by the Town; however, no employment relationship may result in direct or indirect supervision of an immediate family member by another employee or public official.
2. This policy applies to all employees, regardless of employment category, and to elected and appointed officials of the Town.

### B. Definitions

- Town Council Members: Individuals serving a current term on the Town of Appomattox governing body.
- Public Officials: Individuals elected or appointed to a position with the Town.
- Employees: Individuals performing work for the Town in return for compensation.
- Immediate Family: Spouse, parent, spouse's parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, in-laws, legal guardian, step-relations of equivalent degree, and non-related individuals residing in the same household.

- Indirect Supervision: Any ability to influence terms or conditions of employment, including assignments, pay, discipline, performance evaluations, or advancement.

### C. Prohibited Employment Relationships

1. No public official or employee may directly or indirectly supervise or influence the work, pay, or employment decisions of an immediate family member.
2. Employees may not be hired, promoted, demoted, transferred, or reassigned in a manner that creates a conflict under this policy.
3. Employees in positions senior to family members must recuse themselves from decisions affecting their relatives.

### D. Elected and Appointed Officials

1. Immediate family members of Town Council members or the Town Manager shall not be employed in positions where:
  - A direct or indirect supervisory relationship exists; or
  - The position would create an actual or perceived conflict of interest or undue influence.
2. If an employee's immediate family member is elected or appointed to Town Council or the position of Town Manager, the Town will review the employment relationship to determine whether a conflict of interest or supervisory issue exists.
3. Where a conflict is identified, the Town may take appropriate action, which may include reassignment, restructuring of supervisory relationships, or other measures to eliminate the conflict. If no reasonable accommodation can be made, separation of employment may be required.

### E. Changes in Family Relationships

1. Employees must notify their supervisor of any change in family status (marriage, adoption, shared household) that could create a policy violation.
2. Conflicts must be resolved within three (3) months via reassignment or separation.

### F. Emergency Exceptions

- In limited situations, such as public safety emergencies or weather-related events, employees who normally fall outside the same supervisory chain—including immediate family—may temporarily work together or provide supervision for the duration of the emergency only.

### G. Employment of Non-U.S. Citizens

- Non-U.S. citizens legally authorized to work in the United States are considered for employment, promotion, and other personnel actions on the same basis as U.S. citizens.

## H. Employment of VRS Annuitants/Retirees

- Individuals receiving a Virginia Retirement System (VRS) annuity may not be employed in any full-time position unless they agree to suspend benefit payments during employment.

## I. Age Requirements

1. **Minimum Age for Employment:** Employees must be at least 18 years of age for regular full-time or part-time positions, except as allowed below.
2. **Employment of Minors (16–17 years old):** Eligible only for internships, trainee, seasonal, or temporary programs, subject to:
  - Departmental need and Town Manager approval
  - Compliance with federal and Virginia child labor laws
  - Limitations to non-hazardous duties, restricted hours, and required supervision
  - Written parental or guardian consent, where required
  - Exclusion from classification as regular full-time employees
3. **Employment of Persons Under 16:** Individuals under 16 years of age are not eligible for Town employment.
4. **Safety-Sensitive Positions:** Positions requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) or other safety-sensitive duties are subject to federal or state minimum age requirements. Employees must meet all legal and job-related requirements.

# New Employee Orientation and Initial Employment Period

## A. New Employee Orientation

Except in unusual circumstances, all new employees are required to complete onboarding activities on their first day of employment. This includes the completion of required payroll, tax, and benefit documentation, as well as the receipt of applicable policy and safety information.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that newly hired employees attend a New Employee Orientation coordinated by Human Resources on their first day of work or as soon as practicable thereafter.

## B. Initial Employment Period

The Town of Appomattox utilizes an Initial Employment Period to evaluate the suitability of newly hired employees for their positions. This period allows the Town to assess:

- Work performance;

- Interpersonal conduct and professional behavior; and
- Adjustment to job duties and the work environment.

The Initial Employment Period is considered an integral part of the employment process and applies to all full-time and part-time employees.

1. The standard Initial Employment Period is twelve (12) months from the date of hire or from the date an employee transitions into a full-time or part-time position.
2. Employees serve only one Initial Employment Period, regardless of reassignment, promotion, or demotion within the Town.

### C. Extension of Initial Employment Period

While twelve (12) months is generally sufficient to evaluate employee performance and suitability, the Initial Employment Period may be extended under limited circumstances.

1. Department Directors or Supervisors may request an extension of up to six (6) additional months with:
  - Job-related justification;
  - Written approval; and
  - Documentation submitted to and maintained in the employee's official personnel file by Human Resources.
2. The employee must be notified in writing of:
  - The reason(s) for the extension; and
  - The performance expectations required to successfully complete the extended period.
3. Acceptable reasons for extension may include, but are not limited to:
  - Extended absence due to illness, injury, or approved leave; or
  - Other circumstances that prevent a full and fair evaluation of the employee's performance.

### D. Employment Actions During Initial Employment Period

1. Employees who have not successfully completed their Initial Employment Period may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including separation from employment, in accordance with the Town of Appomattox Workplace Expectations and Procedures.
2. Employees separated from employment during the Initial Employment Period are not eligible to utilize the Town's grievance or appeal procedures, unless otherwise required by applicable law.
3. All employment actions taken during the Initial Employment Period will be administered in compliance with applicable federal and state laws.

## Safety

The Town of Appomattox is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. The Town maintains a comprehensive Safety Program coordinated through its Risk Management function, beginning with New Employee Orientation and continuing throughout employment.

The Safety Program is designed to:

- Reduce workplace injuries and illnesses;
- Prevent property damage;
- Promote safe work practices;
- Improve operational efficiency; and
- Minimize costs to the Town and its taxpayers.

The Town complies with all applicable federal and state safety laws and regulations, including the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) Program. Town safety policies are designed to meet or exceed these requirements.

#### A. Employee Responsibilities

All employees share responsibility for maintaining a safe workplace and are expected to:

- Follow all applicable safety rules, policies, procedures, and training requirements;
- Promptly report all accidents, injuries, near-misses, unsafe conditions, or hazards to their supervisor; and
- Maintain current emergency contact information to support timely response in the event of an emergency.
- Employees are required to update emergency contact information within ten (10) business days of any change using the Town’s designated form or Human Resources system. This information will be kept confidential and used only when necessary to protect employee health and safety.

#### B. Supervisor and Management Responsibilities

Supervisors and management staff are responsible for supporting and enforcing the Town’s Safety Program, including:

- Enforcing safety rules, policies, and procedures;
- Ensuring employees receive required safety training;
- Identifying and correcting unsafe conditions in a timely manner; and
- Cooperating with Risk Management, the Town Manager, and Human Resources in accident investigations and implementation of corrective actions.

Employees are encouraged to raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation. Questions regarding workplace safety, compliance requirements, or the Safety Program should be directed to a supervisor, Department Director, the Town Manager, or Human Resources.

## Emergency Service

The Town of Appomattox operates a numeric emergency operations system to ensure continuity of operations and effective emergency response. All employees are responsible for performing assigned duties during emergency situations to maintain essential services for residents. This may include:

- Working outside normal business hours
- Performing tasks outside the employee's regularly assigned duties

In the event of unusual circumstances or when the Town Manager declares a State of Emergency, employees may be required to accept special assignments to support emergency operations and service delivery.

To facilitate effective communication during emergencies, employees must keep their personal contact information current with Human Resources.

## Work Scheduling

This policy establishes expectations regarding work schedules, on-call responsibilities, overtime, and emergency response to ensure operational efficiency, employee accountability, and compliance with federal and state law.

### 1. Administrative Workweek

- The administrative workweek consists of seven (7) consecutive calendar days, generally beginning at 12:01 a.m. Monday and ending at 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

### 2. Typical Work Schedule

- Standard Town business hours: Monday–Friday, 7:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., with a one-hour or half an hour unpaid meal period.
- Non-exempt employees work 8-hour days; work performed according to schedule or approved leave counts as a regular workday.

### 3. Alternate Work Schedules

- Departments may implement alternate schedules (e.g., job sharing, telecommuting, compressed workweeks) to meet operational needs.
- Alternate schedules are a management tool, not an employee entitlement. Approval rests with the Department Director or Town Manager.

### 4. Meal Periods and Breaks

- Meal periods: at least 30 consecutive minutes, unpaid, employee fully relieved of duties.
- Short breaks: discretionary, paid, based on operational needs.
- Nursing mothers are entitled to reasonable break time to express milk during the child's first year. The Town will provide a private space, other than a bathroom, for employees to express breast milk. This space will be shielded from view, free from intrusion by coworkers and the public, and available in accordance with applicable law, including the Fair Labor Standards Act as amended by the PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act.

## 5. Travel Time

- Commuting to/from home is not paid.
- Travel between work locations during the workday is paid.
- Out-of-town travel for official business is generally paid and counts toward overtime for non-exempt employees.

## 6. On-Call (Standby) Duty

Time outside normal work hours when employees must remain available for service calls or emergencies. Employees may engage in personal activities but must respond promptly when contacted.

### Assignment and Rotation

- The Utilities Director, Public Works Superintendent or Facilities Project Director maintains fair on-call schedules.
- Employees may trade assignments with approval. Approved trades do not relieve responsibility.

### Use of Town Vehicles

- Vehicles used only for official call-back purposes.
- Must be returned to designated location after use.

### Performance Expectations

- Employees must respond promptly.
- Failure to respond or repeated unavailability may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All essential employees are expected to be available and respond when contacted for emergencies regardless of on-call status; Failure to respond may result in disciplinary action unless excused by a supervisor;

## 7. Overtime Policy

Hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek for non-exempt employees. Paid leave (vacation, sick, holiday) generally does not count toward overtime.

#### Authorization

- Overtime must be pre-approved except in emergencies.
- Supervisors manage overtime to meet operational needs and control costs.

#### Timekeeping

- Non-exempt employees must accurately record all hours in the approved system.
- “Off-the-clock” work is prohibited.

#### Unauthorized Overtime

- Working unauthorized overtime may result in corrective action.
- Employees will still be compensated for hours actually worked.

### 8. Emergency Call Policy

To ensure essential services continue during unforeseen or urgent situations requiring immediate action.

Definition of Emergency: Events that require immediate response to:

- Protect public health, safety, or welfare
- Maintain/restore essential services or infrastructure
- Prevent property damage
- Respond to disasters or critical operational disruptions

Examples: Severe weather, utility failures, road closures, public safety threats, major equipment failures.

#### Emergency Call Authority

- Town Manager may declare an emergency.
- Department Directors/Supervisor may initiate emergency call-ins when immediate response is required.

#### Employee Responsibilities

- All Essential personnel must remain reachable and report as directed.
- Must follow lawful directives during emergency operations.
- Failure to respond without legitimate reason may result in disciplinary action.

#### Use of Town Resources

- Authorized use of Town vehicles, equipment, and facilities is permitted in compliance with policies.

#### Safety and Fitness for Duty

- Do not report if impaired, ill, or unfit.
- Notify supervisor if unable to respond safely.

Failure to respond to an emergency call, refusal to perform assigned emergency duties, or abandonment of emergency assignments without authorization may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, subject to applicable law and due process.

## Separation from Employment

### A. Resignation

Resignation is a voluntary separation initiated by the employee. Employees are encouraged to provide at least two (2) weeks' written notice to their Department Director; notice is not required during the initial employment period. Verbal resignations must be documented by the supervisor.

- Once submitted, resignations may only be withdrawn with Department Director approval.
- An employee may be allowed to resign in lieu of dismissal; the personnel record will note "resigned in lieu of dismissal."

### B. Retirement

Retirement may be voluntary or mandatory. All retirements are subject to Virginia Retirement System (VRS) rules.

### C. Separation Without Prejudice

Used when separation is due to circumstances beyond the employee's control, such as reduction in force, medical conditions, loss of license/certification, policy conflicts, or incarceration. Employees will normally receive at least seven (7) calendar days' written notice.

### D. Disciplinary Separation

Handled according to the Town's disciplinary policies and procedures.

### E. Initial Employment Period

Employees may be separated at any time during the initial employment period if performance, dependability, conduct, or suitability is unsatisfactory, or operational needs are not met.

#### F. Limitations on Leave Use

Operational needs may prevent any leave usage before separation. In such cases, employees will be paid for accumulated PTO/annual leave subject to maximum payout limits.

#### G. Return of Town Property and Final Pay

Employees must return all Town property, including materials, equipment, uniforms, keys, and tools, prior to or at separation.

- If items are lost or damaged due to negligence, the Town may recover costs through final paycheck deductions or invoicing, as allowed by law.
- Employees must provide a forwarding address to receive their final paycheck and W-2. Human Resources may contact the employee to discuss benefits and schedule an exit interview.

#### H. Additional Deductions at Separation

Upon separation from employment, the Town may apply payroll deductions to an employee's final paycheck for outstanding benefit costs or other elected supplemental benefits only to the extent permitted by applicable federal and Virginia law and supported by the employee's prior written authorization.

Authorized deductions may include, but are not limited to:

- Employee-paid portions of health, dental, or other insurance premiums;
- Voluntary benefit elections (e.g., supplemental insurance, retirement contributions, or other elected programs); and
- Other obligations owed to the Town for which the employee has provided a signed, written authorization permitting payroll deduction.

The Town will not make deductions from wages that are not otherwise authorized by law or supported by a valid written authorization executed by the employee. All deductions will be administered in compliance with the Virginia Wage Payment Act and other applicable laws.

If the employee's final paycheck is insufficient to cover authorized deductions, or if no valid authorization exists for a particular amount, the Town will invoice the employee for the remaining balance. Employees are responsible for timely repayment of any outstanding obligations.

#### I. Exit Interview

An exit interview with Human Resources is encouraged for voluntary separations and retirements. It provides an opportunity to discuss reasons for leaving and review benefits, reinstatement options, and retirement. This is not a counseling or grievance session. Information may be used to improve working conditions and employee satisfaction.

## J. Reinstatement

Employees who voluntarily separate in good standing may be eligible for reinstatement within six (6) months at the Department Director's discretion and Town Manager approval, provided a vacant position exists.

- Salary, benefits, and VRS participation will continue as applicable, with the separation period treated as leave without pay unless otherwise provided by law.
- Reinstatement is not guaranteed and depends on position availability, budget, and operational needs.

## Personnel Files

The Town maintains official personnel files for all employees in the Human Resources Department. These files include records related to employment, regardless of where the documents are physically stored. Departments may also keep working files relevant to their employees.

Personnel files may contain, but are not limited to:

- Employment applications and resumes
- Job classifications and pay information
- Performance evaluations
- Disciplinary and counseling records
- Employment agreements and commendations
- Records of education or certifications

Medical and confidential information, such as FMLA documentation, ADA accommodation records, and results of physical or drug/alcohol testing is maintained in separate files.

Employees have the right to review their personnel files under the Virginia Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act, with certain documents (e.g., third-party references, examination materials) excluded. Employees may request corrections or submit a written statement for inclusion. Reviews are scheduled through Human Resources, and files may not be removed from Town offices.

## Release of Information

The Human Resources Department treats all employee information as confidential and manages requests for employment verification or personnel information in compliance with federal and state law. Departments receiving such requests must refer them to Human Resources.

HR may release limited personnel information to current or former employees, Town departments, or authorized local, state, or federal agencies when necessary for official duties. Employees and former employees may review their personnel files with proper identification, in accordance with Town policy and applicable law.

For external requests, the Town generally provides a neutral employment reference, including verification of employment, job title, and dates of employment. Salary information for employees earning over \$10,000 annually is considered public record and may be released. Additional personnel information will only be released with written authorization from the employee or as required by law.

## Chapter 3

# Compensation

### Compensation Philosophy

The Town of Appomattox seeks to attract, retain, and reward employees who are representative of the community and capable of delivering exceptional service. The Town's compensation system is guided by the following principles:

1. Value of Public Service – Employees who dedicate themselves to serving the community are valued and respected.
2. Individual Considerations – Compensation reflects market competitiveness, performance, and organizational goals; it cannot meet every individual circumstance.
3. Fairness and Equity – Compensation decisions are based on job classification, performance, qualifications, and experience, not on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation, or any basis prohibited by law.
4. Fiscal Responsibility – Compensation plans must be affordable, aligned with the Town's budget, and financially sustainable.
5. Transparency – Pay guidelines are objective, understandable, and consistently applied.
6. Market Competitiveness – The Town strives to ensure pay is competitive with the labor market while recognizing employee contributions and experience.
7. Total Compensation – Compensation balances base pay, benefits, and other rewards to deliver competitive total compensation.

## Pay Plan

The Town maintains a Pay Plan with market-based pay ranges and broad bands. Each position is assigned a grade or band based on duties, responsibilities, and market data. Base pay must fall within the assigned range. The Pay Plan is reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with market trends, recruitment needs, and retention goals.

### Benchmarking

- The market includes local governments, comparable Virginia municipalities, and private sector employers.
- Benchmark positions are used to compare pay and benefits; all Town positions are linked to a benchmark.

### Pay Adjustments

- Adjustments may be made due to market variances, turnover, recruitment challenges, or internal equity.
- Management considers multiple data points when determining adjustments.

### Advancement Through Pay Ranges

- Pay increases are performance-based and may reflect length of service.

- Employees meeting only minimally acceptable performance standards may not receive increases.

## Position Classification and Reclassification

### A. Classification

Assignment of positions to a pay grade or band based on duties, scope, responsibility, and market comparisons.

### B. Reclassification

- Positions may be reclassified to a different grade due to changes in duties, organizational structure, or departmental needs.
- All reclassification requests are reviewed by Human Resources, with funding verification required from Finance/Treasury.
- Department Directors/Supervisors may appeal reclassification recommendations to the Town Manager. Decisions of the Town Manager are final.

### C. Job Review Process

- HR conducts reviews with possible site visits, to ensure accurate grade placement.
- Requests must include essential duties, justification, and a completed Job Review Questionnaire.

## Pay Actions

### A. New Hire Pay

- Base pay is normally set at the minimum of the pay range.
- Pay above the minimum may be approved for exceptional skills, experience, or market conditions with written justification and funding verification.

### B. Performance Increases

- Annual performance-based increases are awarded per the Town's budget and policy.
- Employees completing initial employment periods may receive increases after successful completion.

### C. Promotions

- Promotions to a higher grade normally receive a yearly set percent increase or the minimum of the new range, whichever is greater.
- Exceptions require HR and Town Manager approval.

#### D. Reclassifications

- Employees moving to a higher pay grade through reclassification receive a set percentage increase or the minimum of the new grade, whichever is higher.

#### E. Alternate Pay Systems/Bands

- Departments may use alternate pay structures with HR approval to meet unique operational needs.

#### F. Demotions

- For cause demotions result in an up to 10% reduction or pay set at the maximum of the lower grade, whichever is lower.

#### G. Reassignments

1. Same-grade reassignments – pay remains unchanged.
2. No-fault lower-grade reassignments – pay adjusted to minimize loss, without exceeding the maximum of the new range.
3. Voluntary lower-grade reassignments – typically a 5% reduction, not exceeding the new grade maximum.

#### H. Certification Pay

- Additional pay may be awarded for job-related licenses or certifications, removed upon loss of certification.

#### I. Temporary Assignments

- Acting duties or temporary assumption of additional responsibilities may warrant temporary pay increases up to 10% or the minimum of the higher-grade pay range.
- Extensions may be approved by the Town Manager.

#### J. Within Grade Increases

- Discretionary increases for added responsibility or demonstrated value not tied to performance or reclassification.
- Requests must include justification and funding source; HR forwards recommendations to the Town Manager.

#### K. Overtime Compensation

- Non-exempt employees receive overtime at 1.5x regular pay for hours exceeding 40 per week.

- Exempt employees are not typically eligible for overtime; supervisors may allow schedule adjustments for extended hours.

#### L. Emergency Pay

- Paid at 1.5x regular pay for employees called back to work outside normal hours due to emergencies or critical service needs.
- Includes minimum 2 hours of pay for work done.

#### N. On-Call Pay

Employees assigned to on-call duty shall receive a flat daily stipend as compensation for their availability. Employees who are called back to work while on-call shall be compensated for a minimum of two (2) hours per call-out. Multiple call-outs occurring within a two (2) hour period shall be considered a single call-out for compensation purposes. Additional details regarding on-call expectations and procedures are outlined in the On-Call Policy.

#### O. Other Pay Actions

- Includes allowances, one-time bonuses, rewards, or incentives approved in alignment with the compensation philosophy.

## Pay Process

#### A. Pay Schedule

- Biweekly (26 pay periods/year), every other Friday.
- Payments are via mandatory direct deposit.

#### B. Timekeeping

- Non-exempt employees record all hours and leave or applicable time keeping system.
- Exempt employees record hours and leave in time keeping system.

#### C. Payroll Deductions

- Automatic: federal/state taxes, Social Security, court-ordered obligations.
- Optional: benefits contributions, supplemental plans, charitable contributions.
- Employees must review pay statements and report errors promptly.

#### E. Direct Deposit

- Required for all employees and council members

- Employees may split deposits; changes require Finance / HR submission.
- Pay is deposited on payday or the preceding banking day if a holiday affects the schedule.

## On-Call Compensation Policy

Employees assigned on-call duty shall receive a flat daily stipend as compensation for availability, as follows:

Weekdays (Monday–Friday): See HR for current daily flat rate

Weekends (Saturday–Sunday): See HR for current daily flat rate

Town-Observed Holidays: See HR for current daily flat rate

This stipend compensates employees solely for availability and does not constitute hours worked under the FLSA. On-call compensatory payments will be paid each pay period and will not accrue toward leave balances, retirement benefits, or overtime calculations.

When an employee is called in to perform work during an on-call period, the employee shall be compensated at one and one-half (1.5) times the employee’s regular hourly rate for all hours actually worked.

A minimum of two (2) hours of pay shall apply for each separate call-out. If multiple calls occur within a two (2) hour window, the time shall be treated as a single call-out.

Travel time between the employee’s home and the work site shall be considered compensable time once a call-out begins.

## Holiday Pay

### Eligible Employees

- Full-time employees are eligible to receive eight (8) hours of holiday pay for Town-recognized holidays.
- To be eligible for holiday pay, an employee must be in full pay status on the scheduled workday before and after the holiday.
- Employees who are on leave without pay for any portion of the scheduled workday immediately before or after the holiday are not eligible for holiday pay.

Examples:

Example 1: If December 25 is a holiday and an employee's employment ends on December 24, the employee is not eligible for holiday pay for December 25.

Example 2: An employee exhausts sick leave on July 1 and is placed on leave without pay on July 2 and 3. The employee is not eligible for holiday pay for July 4.

# Chapter 4

## Benefits

An employee's total compensation package includes salary or wages combined with Town-provided benefits. This package is designed to attract, reward, and retain high-performing employees. In addition to the benefits outlined in this chapter, employees may be eligible for other programs or incentives as determined by the Town.

### Right to Make Changes

The Town of Appomattox reserves the right to modify, add, or eliminate benefits at any time, for both active employees and retirees, as it deems appropriate.

- Changes may occur due to evolving business needs, budgetary considerations, or legal requirements.
- This policy does not create a contractual or vested right to any current or future benefits.
- Employees and retirees are not guaranteed continued participation in any benefit plan, except where required by federal or state law.

The Town will provide notice of changes whenever practicable, but employees are responsible for reviewing updates to the benefits program.

### Medical and Dental Coverage

#### A. Eligibility

Group medical and dental coverage is available to all full-time employees and their eligible dependents in accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) for employees averaging 32 paid hours per week.

- Enrollment occurs at new hire orientation, with coverage beginning the first day of the month following full-time hire. If hired on the first of the month, coverage begins that date.
- Employees may make changes during open enrollment or following a qualifying event such as marriage, divorce, or the birth/adoption of a child.

#### B. Cost of Coverage

- The Town pays 100% of the employee-only coverage.
- Employees electing to cover dependents are responsible for the additional cost.
- Payments are made through payroll deductions on a pre-tax basis, unless a written waiver is submitted to Human Resources.

## Life Insurance

The Town provides group life insurance benefits to eligible employees through the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), along with the opportunity to purchase additional optional coverage.

### A. Basic Group Life Insurance (VRS)

All full-time employees are covered under the Town's basic group life insurance plan. This plan is administered by VRS and underwritten by a carrier selected by VRS.

- The benefit for death due to natural causes is two (2) times the employee's annual base salary, rounded to the next highest thousand dollars.
- The benefit for accidental death is four (4) times the employee's annual base salary.
- The Town currently pays 100% of the premium cost for this coverage.

Upon retirement, employees who are eligible for retirement at the time of separation will have their life insurance coverage reduced over time in accordance with VRS provisions. Coverage decreases by 25% beginning January 1 following one full calendar year after separation and continues to reduce annually until it reaches 25% of the original value.

### B. Optional Group Life Insurance

Eligible full-time employees may elect to purchase additional group term life insurance coverage for themselves and, if elected, for their spouse and dependent children through a Town-approved provider.

- Employees may elect coverage in amounts of one (1), two (2), three (3), or four (4) times their annual salary, subject to plan limits.
- Coverage for spouses and dependent children is based on the employee's elected coverage level and plan provisions.
- Employees are responsible for 100% of the premium cost for optional coverage through payroll deduction.

Coverage is subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable insurance policies and VRS guidelines.

Employees are responsible for maintaining current beneficiary designations.

Additional information regarding coverage, enrollment, and eligibility is available through Human Resources or VRS resources.

## Disability Benefits

Employees who are members of the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) are required to participate in disability coverage programs as a condition of VRS membership, in accordance with VRS rules and plan requirements.

### Short-Term Disability (STD)

- Short-Term Disability coverage is provided and paid for by the Town of Appomattox for eligible employees.
- Employees are responsible for enrolling in STD coverage when first eligible and for maintaining continuous coverage as required by the plan.
- STD benefits provide income protection for qualifying non-work-related medical conditions for a limited duration in accordance with plan provisions.

### Long-Term Disability (LTD)

- Long-Term Disability coverage is provided and paid for by the Town of Appomattox for eligible employees.
- LTD benefits provide income protection for extended periods of disability in accordance with plan terms and eligibility requirements.

### VRS Disability Retirement

VRS Plans 1 and 2 include eligibility for Disability Retirement if an employee is unable to work due to a non-work-related or work-related medical condition that is expected to be permanent or long-term in nature. Eligibility requirements, medical certification standards, and application procedures are governed by VRS.

Employees should contact Human Resources and/or VRS directly for detailed guidance regarding eligibility and application procedures.

### Enrollment and Employee Responsibility

Employees will be provided enrollment information at the time of hire and during applicable enrollment periods. Employees are responsible for timely enrollment and for understanding the terms of coverage.

Questions regarding VRS disability coverage, enrollment deadlines, payroll deductions, or coordination of benefits should be directed to Human Resources.

The Town currently provides funding for Short-Term and Long-Term Disability benefits; however, coverage levels, benefit provisions, employee eligibility requirements, and employer contributions are subject to change based on annual budget review and approval by the governing body. The Town reserves the right to modify, amend, or discontinue these benefits at any time, consistent with applicable law and applicable plan agreements.

Details regarding eligibility, benefits, and plan provisions are outlined in the Handbook for VRS Members, available through Human Resources and online at [www.varetire.org](http://www.varetire.org). The type and conditions of disability coverage depend on the employee's specific VRS plan membership and applicable Town benefit offerings.

## Retirement

All full-time employees of the Town are enrolled in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) based on their date of hire or enrollment eligibility. VRS coverage begins on the first day of the month following the employee's hire date. If an employee is hired on the first business day of the month, coverage begins on that date. Coverage generally ends on the last day of the month in which employment terminates.

### A. VRS Overview

VRS is a defined benefit retirement system administered by the Commonwealth of Virginia. All rules governing contributions, eligibility, and benefits are established by the Virginia General Assembly and administered by VRS. The Town, as a participating employer, complies fully with all applicable VRS requirements.

### B. Retirement Plans

Employees participate in one of the following VRS plans based on their membership date and eligibility:

- Plan 1 and Plan 2: Employees enrolled in VRS prior to January 1, 2014, or meeting eligibility criteria for these plans.
- Hybrid Retirement Plan: Employees whose initial VRS membership began on or after January 1, 2014. The Hybrid Plan includes both a defined benefit and defined contribution component, subject to VRS rules.

Employees who transfer employment from another VRS-participating employer retain their existing plan membership and service credit, subject to VRS regulations.

### C. Contributions

- Employees contribute a minimum of 5% of annual creditable compensation, as required by VRS.

- The Town contributes the employer portion as determined by the Virginia Retirement System Board of Trustees. Employer contribution rates are subject to change.
- Employee contributions are made through payroll deduction and are remitted to VRS in accordance with state requirements.

#### D. Vesting

Employees become vested in the VRS retirement benefit after completing five (5) years of service credit. Vesting means the employee has earned a non-forfeitable right to receive a future retirement benefit, subject to VRS eligibility rules.

#### E. Retirement Benefits

Retirement benefits are determined by VRS based on the following factors:

1. Years of service credit
2. Average Final Compensation (AFC):
  - Plan 1: highest 36 consecutive months of compensation
  - Plan 2 and Hybrid Plan: highest 60 consecutive months of compensation
3. Benefit multiplier established by VRS
4. Age and service eligibility requirements for unreduced retirement, which vary by plan

Only periods of paid employment or paid leave count toward service credit. Periods of unpaid leave do not earn service credit and may impact retirement eligibility and benefit calculations.

#### F. Disability and Survivor Benefits

VRS provides disability retirement and survivor benefits for eligible employees in accordance with plan provisions. Eligibility requirements, medical certification standards, and benefit determinations are governed solely by VRS.

#### G. Separation and Refunds

- Upon separation from employment, employees may request a refund of their member contributions in accordance with VRS regulations.
- Refunds may affect eligibility for future retirement benefits, and employees are encouraged to review the implications before withdrawing contributions.
- Coverage and service credit end in accordance with VRS rules, typically on the last day of the month of separation.

#### H. Reemployment After Retirement

Retired employees who return to work for the Town are subject to applicable VRS reemployment provisions. These may include break-in-service requirements, limitations on

hours worked or earnings, and restrictions based on retirement status. Employees and retirees are responsible for ensuring compliance with all VRS reemployment rules.

#### I. Beneficiary Designation

Employees are responsible for maintaining accurate and current beneficiary designations with VRS. Failure to do so may result in benefits being distributed according to VRS default provisions.

#### J. Additional Information and Resources

Detailed information regarding retirement benefits, eligibility, and plan provisions is available in the VRS Member Handbook, accessible through Human Resources or online at [www.varetire.org](http://www.varetire.org).

Employees are encouraged to:

- Attend VRS educational and counseling sessions
- Use VRS retirement planning tools and calculators
- Consult Human Resources with questions regarding eligibility, service credit, or retirement planning

The Town reserves the right to participate in a different retirement system or modify administrative procedures as required by law or operational necessity. Any changes will be implemented in accordance with applicable state and VRS requirements.

## Continuation Of Health Coverage (COBRA)

The Town provides continuation of health insurance coverage in accordance with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

COBRA coverage may be available to employees and dependents following qualifying events, including:

- Termination of employment (except for gross misconduct)
- Reduction in work hours
- Divorce or legal separation
- Loss of dependent eligibility
- Death of covered employee

#### A. Coverage Duration

- Up to 18 months for employment termination or reduction in hours
- Up to 36 months for other qualifying events

## B. Election Period

Eligible individuals have 60 days from the date of notice or loss of coverage to elect COBRA continuation coverage.

## C. Cost

Participants are responsible for the full premium cost plus any allowable administrative fees. The Town does not contribute toward COBRA premiums.

## D. Termination of Coverage

COBRA coverage may end early if:

- Premiums are not paid on time
- Coverage period expires
- The Town ceases to offer a group health plan
- The individual becomes covered under another group plan or Medicare (as applicable)

Human Resources will provide required COBRA notices and enrollment information following a qualifying event.

# Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Town contracts with a professional employee assistance provider to deliver confidential employee assistance services to eligible employees and their immediate family members.

## A. Services

### 1. Individual Services

The EAP provides confidential assistance to help employees resolve personal or professional issues that may adversely affect job performance or personal well-being. Services may include, but are not limited to:

- Marital or family concerns
- Substance use or abuse issues
- Financial or legal difficulties
- Emotional or mental health concerns
- Stress management and life adjustment issues
- Career or workplace concerns
- Parenting and childcare challenges

The EAP may provide assessment, short-term counseling, referral services, and follow-up support as appropriate.

## 2. Group and Organizational Services

The EAP may also provide consultation and support services to Town departments, workgroups, or supervisors. These services may include:

- Workgroup conflict resolution support
- Critical incident response and debriefing
- Organizational consultation to address workplace dynamics affecting morale or productivity
- Supervisor coaching and referral guidance
- Intervention strategies to improve workplace functioning and communication

These services are intended to support a healthy, productive, and safe work environment.

## B. Confidentiality

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is designed to provide confidential support services to employees and their household members. EAP staff are bound by applicable professional ethical standards and contractual obligations with the Town to maintain confidentiality of all communications, records, and service usage to the fullest extent permitted by law.

The EAP will not disclose or confirm an employee's participation in services, nor the nature of any discussions, assessments, or treatment, unless the employee provides written authorization or disclosure is otherwise required by law.

In cases where an employee is referred to the EAP by the Town or a supervisor, the EAP may confirm only whether the employee has made contact and/or participated in services. No clinical information, counseling content, or treatment details will be shared under any circumstances.

All EAP records are maintained separately from personnel files and are not part of the employee's official employment record.

## C. Procedures

### 1. Voluntary (Self) Referral

Employees and their immediate family members are encouraged to voluntarily access EAP services by contacting the provider directly. Supervisors may recommend use of the EAP when appropriate. Participation through self-referral is confidential and will not be reported to the Town.

2. **Mandatory Referral (Drug-Free Workplace Program)**  
Employees who test positive for drugs or alcohol under the Town's Drug-Free Workplace Program may be referred to, and required to participate in, the EAP as a condition of continued employment. (Refer to the Drug-Free Workplace Policy for additional details.)
3. **Supervisory Referral Procedures**  
Supervisors may initiate a formal referral when there is a reasonable belief that job performance deficiencies or workplace behavior issues may be related to personal concerns. Supervisors shall follow these procedures:
  - a.) **Consultation with Human Resources**  
Supervisors must contact Human Resources to discuss the situation and obtain appropriate referral documentation prior to initiating a referral.
  - b.) **Documentation and Employee Meeting**  
The supervisor shall complete the required referral form and meet privately with the employee to discuss performance concerns and the EAP referral.
  - c.) **Scheduling the Appointment**  
If the employee agrees to participate, the supervisor or Human Resources will coordinate with the EAP provider to schedule an initial appointment.
  - d.) **Time Off for Participation**  
The Town will provide paid administrative leave for the employee to attend the initial EAP appointment. Any follow-up appointments must be scheduled outside of work hours when feasible or charged to the employee's accrued leave balances, unless otherwise approved.
  - e.) **Employee Cooperation**  
Employees referred to the EAP are expected to comply with recommended participation requirements. Failure to cooperate may result in appropriate disciplinary or management action. Employees remain responsible for meeting all job performance and conduct expectations.
  - f.) **Refusal to Participate**  
If an employee declines a supervisory referral, the supervisor shall document the refusal and provide the documentation to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's official personnel file. Appropriate management action may be taken based on the underlying performance or conduct concerns.

## Workers' Compensation Insurance

The Town provides Workers' Compensation insurance benefits to all employees through Virginia Risk Sharing Association as required by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act. This program provides

wage replacement and medical benefits to employees who are unable to work due to a work-related injury or occupational illness.

A. Any employee involved in an accident or injury arising out of and in the course of employment must report the incident to his or her supervisor immediately, or as soon as practicable. Failure to promptly report an injury or illness may result in delay, reduction, or denial of Workers' Compensation benefits, including payment of medical expenses.

B. Benefits provided under the Town's Workers' Compensation program may include compensation for:

1. Temporary total disability;
2. Temporary partial disability;
3. Permanent partial disability;
4. Permanent total disability;
5. Medical expenses;
6. Rehabilitation expenses; and
7. Death benefits.

C. Workers' Compensation benefits in the Commonwealth of Virginia are administered by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission. The Town complies with all rules, regulations, and reporting requirements established by the Commission regarding the administration of Workers' Compensation claims.

D. To ensure proper handling of Workers' Compensation claims, the following procedures must be strictly followed. Failure to do so may result in the employee being responsible for medical expenses or may adversely affect the employee's claim.

1. Immediately, or as soon as physically able, report all work-related accidents, injuries, or occupational illnesses to the employee's supervisor.
2. Complete all required accident or injury reports for each work-related incident.
3. Select a treating physician from the Town's approved Panel of Three Physicians, which is available through the Human Resources Department

#### E. Employer Responsibilities

##### Injury Leave

- Employees with a compensable on-the-job injury or occupational illness may receive paid injury leave for scheduled workdays during the first seven (7) calendar days following the injury.
- This leave is not charged to the employee's accrued leave balances.

##### Workers' Compensation Benefits

- After the seventh calendar day, Workers' Compensation wage replacement may apply if the employee remains unable to work.
- Benefits generally cover up to two-thirds (2/3) of the employee's average weekly wage (subject to state limits) and authorized medical expenses.
- If the injury is not approved as compensable, additional absences must be covered by accrued leave in accordance with Town policies.

#### Coordination and Compliance

- Human Resources coordinates with the Risk Management Team and Virginia Risk Sharing Association (VRSA) to ensure compliance with the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act.

#### Interaction with FMLA

- If a work-related injury qualifies as a serious health condition under FMLA, absences of more than one (1) workweek will be designated as FMLA leave and run concurrently with Workers' Compensation leave, where applicable.

Note: If an employee obtains treatment from a physician not included on the Town's approved panel, the employee may be financially responsible for any resulting medical expenses.

## Other Benefits

### A. Voluntary Supplemental Benefits

The Town may offer voluntary supplemental benefits, such as additional life, medical or accidental insurance, short-term disability, long-term care, or other programs. These benefits:

- Are provided through third-party vendors and are not part of the standard Town benefits program.
- May be paid through pre-tax or after-tax payroll deductions, as appropriate. Employees interested in these programs should contact Human Resources for enrollment details and options.

### B. Allowances

1. Uniforms and Clothing
  - Certain positions may receive uniforms or special clothing required for official duties.
  - Department Directors/Supervisors will specify the type, color, and style of uniforms and provide rules for issuance, maintenance, replacement, and accountability.

## 2. Equipment and Tools

- Employees may receive equipment, tools, or monetary allowances as needed for their position.
- Allowances and provisions are based on job requirements and available resources.

## C. Other Resources

The Town may provide additional resources, including:

- Local professional memberships
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services
- Training and development opportunities
- Employer discounts or programs

Employees should contact Human Resources for information on eligibility and access to these resources.

# Chapter 5

## Paid Time Off and Other Absences

This chapter establishes the Town of Appomattox's policies governing paid time off (PTO) and other authorized absences. These policies are designed to provide employees with time away from work for personal, family, medical, civic, and work-related needs, while ensuring continuity of operations and compliance with applicable federal and state laws.

### General Information

Specific leave types and eligibility requirements are outlined in the sections that follow:

#### A. Purpose of Paid Time Off (PTO)

Paid Time Off (PTO), also referred to as leave, is an important component of the Town's total compensation package. PTO provides employees with time away from work for rest, relaxation, personal needs, and other approved purposes, and may also provide income protection during periods of illness or incapacity. Eligibility and accrual rates are determined based on factors such as an employee's participation in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), date of hire, length of service, and position classification.

#### B. Attendance Expectations

Regular and reliable attendance is essential to the Town's ability to maintain service delivery, productivity, and operational effectiveness. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled unless leave has been requested and approved in accordance with Town policy.

#### C. Accrual of PTO

Eligible employees accrue PTO on a per-pay period basis. Accrual is granted at the close of each pay period, provided the employee is in a paid status on both the scheduled workday immediately preceding and the scheduled workday immediately following the end of the pay period.

#### D. Creditable Service for Accrual

For full-time employees, creditable service for PTO accrual purposes is calculated from the date of appointment to, or conversion into, a full-time position.

#### E. Effect of Position Changes

Promotion, demotion, transfer, or reassignment to another full-time position does not affect an employee's accrued PTO balance.

#### F. Approval and Operational Needs

Approval of PTO is at the discretion of the employee's supervisor and may be denied, limited, or rescheduled based on operational needs, staffing requirements, or patterns of excessive absence. Employees may be recalled from approved PTO in the event of emergencies or critical service needs.

#### G. Request Procedures

Except where otherwise required by law or policy, PTO must be requested and approved in advance in accordance with departmental procedures.

#### H. Minimum Usage Increments

PTO may be used in increments of one (1) hour.

#### I. Non-Transferability of PTO

PTO is a personal benefit and may not be loaned, transferred, or sold to another employee, except through participation in the Town's approved Leave Donation Program.

#### J. Pay Status Limitation

Employees may not be in more than one pay status at any time. Employees may not use paid or unpaid leave while simultaneously performing work for the Town.

## Full-Time Paid Time Off Benefits

### A. Sick Leave

Sick leave is paid time off that may be used for:

- The employee's illness, injury, or medical condition;
- Medical, dental, or related healthcare appointments; or
- Care of a dependent family member who requires the employee's presence.

For purposes of sick leave, a dependent family member is defined as the employee's parent, spouse, minor child or stepchild, or a person for whom the employee has legal guardianship.

1. **Accrual:** Eligible full-time employees accrue ten (10) hours of sick leave per month.
2. **Maximum Accrual and Carryover:** Sick leave may be carried over from year to year up to a maximum of two hundred forty (240) hours.
3. **Verification:**
  - Supervisors may require medical certification to approve sick leave usage. Documentation may also be required to confirm the need to care for a dependent.

- A medical certification will be required for absences of three (3) or more consecutive workdays, unless otherwise waived by the supervisor or Human Resources.
- Employees will be notified in advance when certification is required when practicable.

Patterns that may indicate misuse include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated use on Mondays or Fridays;
- Use immediately following payday;
- Use in patterns inconsistent with legitimate illness.
- Suspected abuse may result in corrective or disciplinary action

#### 4. Coordination with FMLA and Other Leave:

- Sick leave may run concurrently with leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) when the absence qualifies.
- Employees may be required to use available sick leave during FMLA leave, in accordance with applicable law.
- Use of sick leave does not extend the total amount of leave available under FMLA.

#### 5. Leave Without Pay:

- Sick leave accrual does not continue during periods of leave without pay.
- Employees must be in a paid status to accrue sick leave.

6. Payout at Separation: Unused sick leave is not paid upon separation from employment.

Sick leave is provided for income protection during periods of illness or qualifying need and is not intended as a form of compensation or payout benefit.

#### B. Annual Leave

Full-time employees accrue Paid Time Off (PTO) on a bi-weekly basis based on completed years of service.

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Accrual Rate (Per Pay Period)</u>	<u>Annual Accrual (26 Pay Periods)</u>	<u>Equivalent Days</u>
0 – 4 Years	4.0 hours	104 hours	13 days
5 – 9 Years	5.0 hours	130 hours	16.25 days
10 – 14 Years	6.0 hours	156 hours	19.5 days
15 – 19 Years	7.0 hours	182 hours	22.75 days
20 – 24 Years	8.0 hours	208 hours	26 days
25 or more	9.0 hours	234 hours	29.25 days

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### Policy Guidelines

- PTO accrues each pay period and begins on the employee’s date of hire.
- Employees must be in a paid status to accrue PTO.
- Use of PTO must be approved in advance by the employee’s supervisor, except in emergency situations.

### Accrual Limits

- Once the maximum accrual limit is reached, no additional PTO will accrue until the balance falls below the established cap.

### Leave Accumulation and Carryover

Employees may carry forward unused paid leave from one calendar year to the next, up to the maximum accrual limit established by their years of service tier. Once an employee reaches the maximum allowable balance, additional leave will not accrue until the balance falls below the cap.

The Town establishes maximum accrual limits at approximately one and one-half (1.5) times the employee’s annual accrual rate to promote both workforce wellness and responsible fiscal management.

### Leave Without Pay / FMLA

- Employees who exhaust all available PTO and continue on approved leave (including leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)) will be placed in a leave without pay status.
- Any leave taken beyond the employee’s accrued PTO balance will be unpaid and subject to payroll deduction, as applicable.
- PTO must be used in accordance with applicable leave policies before transitioning to unpaid leave, unless otherwise required by law.

### PTO Payout at Separation

Employees separating from employment with the Town of Appomattox may be eligible to receive payment for accrued, unused Paid Time Off (PTO), subject to the following conditions:

#### 1. Eligibility for Payout

- Employees who separate in good standing (e.g., resignation with proper notice or retirement) will receive a lump-sum payment for accrued, unused PTO.
- Employees who are involuntarily separated for misconduct may forfeit payout of unused PTO, to the extent permitted by applicable law.

#### 2. Notice Requirement

- Employees are generally expected to provide a minimum of two (2) weeks' written notice to be eligible for full PTO payout.
- Failure to provide proper notice may result in reduction or forfeiture of PTO payout, as permitted by law.

#### 3. Payment Method

- PTO payout will be calculated based on the employee's final regular rate of pay at the time of separation.
- Payment will be issued in the employee's final paycheck or as soon as administratively practicable thereafter, in accordance with payroll processing timelines.

#### 4. Accrual Limits

- Payout of PTO is subject to any maximum accrual caps established by Town policy.
- Any accrued PTO in excess of the maximum allowable balance may be forfeited and will not be paid out.

#### 5. Use of PTO Prior to Separation

- Employees may request to use accrued PTO prior to separation; however, operational needs may limit approval.
- Approved use of PTO prior to separation must follow standard leave request procedures.

#### 6. Return of Town Property

- Final PTO payout may be offset to the extent permitted by law for unreturned Town property, outstanding obligations, or authorized deductions.

PTO accruals, usage, and payout are governed by Town policy and may be changed at any time. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as creating a vested right to PTO benefits except as required by law.

### C. Parental Leave

The Town of Appomattox provides parental leave to support employees during the birth, adoption, or placement of a child

Employees requesting parental leave are expected to work collaboratively with the Human Resources Department to develop a leave plan that addresses the anticipated duration of absence and available financial support options.

This planning process may include:

- Coordination of available leave balances (e.g., sick leave, annual leave, parental leave, or other applicable leave);
- Review of benefits and income replacement options, such as short-term disability (if applicable);
- Identification of the expected leave timeline and return-to-work date; and
- Discussion of any operational or transitional needs within the employee's department.

Employees are encouraged to contact Human Resources as early as practicable to ensure adequate planning and continuity of operations.

### D. Funeral Leave

Funeral leave is provided upon the death of an immediate family member.

Immediate family includes spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, in-laws, legal guardians, and equivalent step-relations.

1. Up to three (3) consecutive workdays may be approved by the Department Director.
2. Additional time may be approved and charged to other available leave.

### E. Volunteer and School Activity Leave

Full-time employees may receive up to sixteen (16) hours per calendar year for:

- Volunteer service with nonprofit or civic organizations;
- School-related activities involving a dependent child.

Requirements:

- Advance approval;
- Documentation of participation.

This leave:

- Must be used in one-hour increments;
- Does not carry over;
- Has no cash value upon separation.

#### F. Paid Holiday Leave

The Town observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- George Washington Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day and Yorktown Victory Day
- Election Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Additional observed days may include:

- Day after Thanksgiving
- Day after Christmas

Key Provisions:

- Holidays falling on Saturday are observed Friday; Sunday holidays are observed Monday.
- Employees must be in paid status before and after the holiday to receive pay.
- Holidays during approved leave are not charged against leave balances.
- Employees required to work holidays will receive compensation in accordance with Town policy.
- Essential personnel may observe the actual holiday rather than the observed date.

The Finance/Treasurer's Office administers holiday pay in accordance with Town policy and applicable law.

## Family and Medical Leave Policy (FMLA)

The Town recognizes the importance of supporting employees during significant medical and family-related events while maintaining operational effectiveness. This policy establishes a structured leave program that aligns with the principles of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and incorporates applicable provisions of Virginia law.

While the Town may not meet the threshold to be a covered employer under federal FMLA, it provides leave consistent with these standards to promote fairness, consistency, employee well-being, and workforce stability.

This policy also coordinates with benefits administered through the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and applicable state-administered programs.

The Town will comply with all applicable federal and Virginia leave laws and regulations. Where any provision of this policy conflicts with applicable law, the law will control.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical condition protections
- Military leave and service-related protections
- Jury duty and civic obligations
- Organ and bone marrow donation leave (as applicable)
- Crime victim and witness protections

The Town will comply with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program as it becomes effective, including payroll contributions, employee eligibility, and coordination of benefits.

As regulatory guidance is finalized, the Town will update procedures and employee communications to ensure full compliance. Benefits provided under this policy will be coordinated with any state-administered paid leave benefits to avoid duplication and ensure proper wage replacement.

### I. Eligibility

Regular full-time and part-time employees who have completed at least twelve (12) months of continuous service are eligible for leave under this policy.

The Town may, at its discretion, provide leave to employees with less than twelve (12) months of service where appropriate.

### II. Qualifying Reasons for Leave

Eligible employees may request leave for the following reasons:

- The employee's own serious health condition

- To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition
- Pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions
- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care
- Qualifying military exigencies or to care for a covered service member, as applicable

### III. Leave Entitlement

Employees may be granted up to twelve (12) weeks of leave within a rolling twelve (12)-month period, measured backward from the date leave is used.

Leave under this policy may be paid or unpaid, depending on:

- The employee's available accrued leave balances; and
- Applicable state-administered benefits, including Virginia PFML

Employees are required to use available accrued paid leave (such as sick leave, vacation leave, or PTO) concurrently with approved leave, unless otherwise approved or prohibited by applicable law.

Leave may be taken on a continuous, intermittent, or a reduced schedule basis when medically necessary or otherwise approved. Employees and supervisors are expected to coordinate scheduling to minimize disruption to operations where practicable.

All leave taken under this policy, whether paid or unpaid, counts toward the total leave entitlement.

### IV. Benefits Continuation

The Town will continue the employee's group health insurance coverage during approved leave under the same terms as if the employee were actively working.

Employees remain responsible for their portion of premium contributions. Failure to make required payments may result in loss of coverage, consistent with applicable law.

If an employee does not return to work following leave, the Town may seek reimbursement of employer-paid premium costs unless the failure to return is due to circumstances beyond the employee's control or as otherwise required by law.

### V. Job Protection and Return to Work

The Town intends to provide job protection consistent with this policy and applicable law.

Upon return from approved leave, the Town will make reasonable efforts to reinstate the employee to the same or a comparable position with similar pay, benefits, and working conditions.

Reinstatement may be affected by legitimate operational needs, including but not limited to workforce reductions, restructuring, or position elimination unrelated to the leave.

Employees may be required to provide a fitness-for-duty certification prior to returning to work, as permitted by law.

## VI. Employee Responsibilities

Employees must:

- Provide advance notice of the need for leave when foreseeable
- Notify the Town as soon as practicable when leave is not foreseeable
- Provide required medical certification or supporting documentation
- Maintain regular communication regarding leave status and intent to return

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in delays or denial of leave, consistent with applicable law.

## VII. Coordination with Other Policies and Laws

Leave under this policy will run concurrently with other applicable Town leave benefits, including sick leave, vacation leave, PTO, and disability benefits, where permitted by law.

The Town will also evaluate leave requests and return-to-work situations in accordance with:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Applicable Virginia disability accommodation laws

Additional leave or workplace accommodations may be provided as a reasonable accommodation when appropriate.

## VIII. Virginia Retirement System (VRS) Considerations

### Service Credit

- Employees continue to earn VRS service credit during periods of paid leave
- Unpaid leave does not count toward service credit unless permitted under VRS rules

### Contributions

- Contributions continue during paid leave
- Contributions cease during unpaid leave and resume upon return

### Impact of Leave Without Pay

Extended unpaid leave may:

- Delay retirement eligibility
- Reduce total service credit
- Affect average final compensation (AFC)

Employees are encouraged to consult HR or a VRS counselor regarding retirement impacts.

### Sick Leave Conversion

Eligible employees may convert unused sick leave at retirement in accordance with VRS provisions.

## IX. Separation from Employment

Employees who do not return from approved leave and fail to communicate with the Town may be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

Final compensation may include adjustments for:

- Outstanding benefit premiums
- Unpaid employee obligations

All deductions will be made in accordance with applicable law.

## X. Policy Administration

This policy does not create a contract of employment and may be modified at the Town's discretion.

The Town reserves the right to interpret and administer this policy in accordance with operational needs and applicable laws.

## Other Absences with Pay

### A. Work-Related Injury Leave

1. Duration and Transition to Workers' Compensation
  - Employees injured on the job are eligible for up to seven (7) calendar days of paid injury leave, without charge to accrued leave.

- If the employee cannot return to work after seven days, wage-loss benefits are handled under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act, including waiting periods and eligibility rules.
- 2. Reporting and Claim Requirements
  - Employees must promptly report all work-related injuries or illnesses to their supervisor and comply with Town and state reporting requirements.
  - Failure to report in a timely manner may delay or deny benefits.

## B. Military Leave

Military leave is approved time off to perform duty in a uniformed service, including active duty, training, National Guard duty, or fitness examinations.

1. Notice
  - Employees should notify their supervisor as soon as possible.
  - Official orders or documentation must be provided unless military necessity prevents it, in accordance with USERRA.
2. Paid Military Leave
  - Eligible employees receive up to 15 workdays (120 hours for full-time) of paid military leave per federal fiscal year (October 1 – September 30).
  - Employees may use accrued PTO in addition to or after paid military leave.
3. Workday Definition
  - A workday equals 1/260 of the employee's regularly scheduled annual hours.
  - Leave should be scheduled to minimize operational disruption when practicable.
4. After Paid Military Leave
  - Employees may use accrued PTO or be placed on approved leave without pay after exhausting paid military leave.
5. Reemployment Rights
  - Employees with ≤5 years of cumulative military service and honorable discharge are entitled to reemployment rights under USERRA and applicable Virginia law.

## C. Court Service Leave

1. Eligibility
  - Employees required to serve as jurors or to appear in court related to their job are eligible for paid court service leave.
2. Procedures
  - Provide supervisors with official documentation (summons, subpoena, or clerk verification).
  - Return documentation after service confirming dates and times.
3. Other Court Appearances

- Court appearances unrelated to work (e.g., child support, divorce, off-duty incidents) must be charged to accrued leave or leave without pay.
- 4. Administrative Determination
  - Department Directors, in consultation with HR, determine eligibility for court service leave.

#### D. Administrative Leave with Pay

Employees may be placed on administrative leave with pay for work-related reasons, such as:

- Employee recognition or professional development
  - Work-related visits to other Town offices
  - Pending investigation or disciplinary review
1. Key Points
    - Administrative leave is not disciplinary and does not create entitlement to continued employment or pay.
    - Leaves exceeding 15 workdays require HR review and must be documented in the personnel file.
  2. Access to Town Property and Systems
    - While on administrative leave, access to facilities, vehicles, records, and electronic systems may be restricted or modified to protect operations or investigations.
  3. Coordination with Investigations
    - Employees on administrative leave must remain available during normal hours, cooperate with investigations, and follow all Town directives unless instructed otherwise.

## Leave Donation Program

The Town of Appomattox supports the voluntary sharing of accrued paid leave through the Leave Donation Program. This program allows employees to donate leave to a Leave Bank and enables eligible employees to request donated leave when they are unable to work due to a personal or family illness, injury, or catastrophic situation.

#### A. Eligibility

- All Town employees may participate as donors and/or recipients.
- Participation is voluntary. Approval to receive donated leave is subject to review by the Town Manager and/or Human Resources.

#### B. General Guidelines

1. The program allows employees to support coworkers during serious, unplanned medical emergencies.
2. Donated leave may only be used for absences expected to last more than two consecutive working days, after the employee has exhausted all accrued paid leave.
3. A serious health condition is defined as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical/mental condition that involves:
  - Inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical facility, or
  - Continuing treatment by a healthcare provider causing absence for more than a few days.
4. Employees must normally use 16 hours of unpaid leave before accessing donated leave.
5. Donated leave may not be used for elective or non-medically necessary procedures.
6. Eligible leave types for donation include:
  - Annual leave
  - Hybrid leave
  - Holiday leave
  - Compensatory time
7. Donations and usage of leave must be in one-hour increments.

#### C. Administration

The program is managed jointly by Human Resources, and Finance Department.

Human Resources coordinates program activities, including:

- Tracking donations
- Reviewing requests
- Ensuring compliance with program guidelines

#### D. Requesting Donated Leave

1. Employees may request donated leave 30 days or more after enrolling in the program.
2. Requests may only be submitted when all paid leave is exhausted or expected to be exhausted.
3. A maximum of 240 hours of donated leave may be granted per request. Extensions may be requested if additional leave is required.
4. Requests must include medical certification specifying the condition, estimated period of incapacity, and any work restrictions.
5. Requests require Department Director/Supervisor recommendation, considering:
  - Prior leave record
  - Work performance

- Length of service
  - Length of participation in the Leave Donation Program
  - Operational needs, including temporary staffing
  - Nature of the illness, injury, or catastrophic situation
6. Completed requests with endorsements are submitted to Human Resources for approval.
  7. Employees must exhaust all accrued paid leave and 16 consecutive hours of unpaid leave before using donated leave.
  8. Donated leave cannot exceed the period of approved absence and is not available for elective or non-medically necessary procedures.

## Absences Without Pay

### A. Leave Without Pay (LWOP)

Leave Without Pay (LWOP) is an approved leave status granted when an employee has exhausted all appropriate paid leave. LWOP is generally approved by Human Resources or the Town Manager, except in cases governed by FMLA or Military Leave, which follow separate policies.

LWOP may also be used to document disciplinary suspensions from duty and pay.

1. Employees on LWOP for 30 Consecutive Days or More
  - Are ineligible for funeral, personal, holiday, or other paid leave during the LWOP period.
  - Must make arrangements to pay both the Town's and employee's share of medical, dental, and vision premiums.
  - Do not accrue VRS service credit, except that service credit may be purchased for LWOP taken for military service, educational leave, or personal illness.
2. Insurance Coverage
  - The Town continues to pay group life insurance premiums for LWOP related to military service, educational leave, or illness for up to two months.
  - Employees may continue coverage beyond this period by paying premiums directly, for a maximum of 24 months.

### B. Unauthorized Absence

Any absence from a scheduled work period without prior approval from a supervisor or Department Director is considered unauthorized.

1. Consequences
  - Employees will not be paid for unauthorized absences.
  - Employees are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
2. Job Abandonment

- Failure to contact a supervisor for three consecutive workdays during an unauthorized absence is considered voluntary resignation.
3. Emergency Conditions
- Leaving the work site or failing to return during communicated emergency conditions (e.g., before or after a normal shift) without approval will also be considered an unauthorized absence.

## Return-to-Work Plan

The Town of Appomattox is committed to providing a safe workplace and assisting employees in returning to productive work as soon as possible following a work-related injury or illness. The plan emphasizes an employee's abilities rather than limitations, while complying with medical restrictions and legal requirements.

Human Resources and Risk Management are responsible for establishing and maintaining the return-to-work plan. Temporary modified, transitional, or alternate work assignments may be provided when an employee cannot immediately resume regular duties. Departments, HR, and Risk Management will collaborate to determine suitable assignments until the employee can return to full duties.

### Medical Considerations

- Assignments are based primarily on the employee's medical condition and any restrictions prescribed by their authorized medical provider.
- Assignments are temporary and may be adjusted or discontinued based on medical updates, operational needs, or business necessity.
- Employees may also be required to follow return-to-work provisions under short-term disability or other applicable benefit programs.

### Employee Responsibilities

Employees are expected to actively participate in developing and following their return-to-work plan and to comply with assigned duties within medical restrictions. Failure to participate or comply may affect eligibility for benefits and may result in management action.

# Chapter 6

## Engaging and Developing Employees

The Town of Appomattox is dedicated to creating a workplace where employees are motivated, connected, and empowered to contribute their best. We recognize that engaged employees are the foundation of a skilled, service-oriented workforce, and their commitment directly impacts the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of services delivered to our community.

### Why Engagement Matters

Engaged employees are:

- Invested in their work, taking ownership and pride in their contributions.
- Committed to the Town’s mission, values, and goals.
- More satisfied and fulfilled, leading to improved retention, morale, and workplace culture.
- Better positioned to serve citizens, ensuring responsive, high-quality public services.

### Key Drivers of Employee Engagement

1. Performance Management – Clear expectations, regular feedback, and recognition for achievements help employees grow, succeed, and feel valued.
2. Employee Involvement – Opportunities to provide input, participate in decision-making, and contribute ideas foster ownership, accountability, and collaboration.
3. Workforce Development – Training, professional growth, and career advancement opportunities ensure employees have the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in their roles.
4. Organizational Investment – Supporting employee well-being, providing resources, and creating a positive work environment demonstrate the Town’s commitment to its workforce.

### Our Commitment

The Town of Appomattox strives to:

- Maintain open communication and transparency between leadership and staff.
- Recognize and celebrate individual and team accomplishments.
- Provide tools, training, and resources to help employees succeed.
- Foster a culture of respect, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

By promoting engagement at every level, the Town ensures employees feel heard, valued, and empowered, while strengthening the quality and impact of services provided to our citizens

# Performance Management

The Town of Appomattox is committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement through performance management. Performance management, delivered through formal and informal coaching, feedback, and evaluation, is a process designed to identify, assess, and develop employee performance to achieve the Town Council's goals and objectives.

Effective performance management promotes employee engagement, job satisfaction, and morale by:

- Establishing clear expectations,
- Demonstrating management's interest in employee growth, and
- Providing regular feedback to recognize success and guide improvement.

Performance feedback is most effective when it is ongoing. Formal, written feedback and appraisals will be completed at least annually using the Town's approved performance feedback tools, or an approved alternate tool as authorized by the Department Director. While the process is participatory, supervisors are responsible for ensuring timely completion. This policy ensures consistent and equitable application of performance management across all departments, divisions, and work groups within the Town.

## A. Objectives of Performance Management

The primary objectives of the Town's performance management system are to:

1. Identify and communicate the Town's expectations of employees and establish accountability for meeting those expectations.
2. Provide meaningful feedback to help employees achieve service delivery objectives.
3. Support employees in improving performance in their current roles.
4. Develop employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities to prepare them for future, higher-level positions.
5. Recognize and reward overall employee performance.

## B. Performance Feedback

Successful performance feedback relies on a partnership between employees and supervisors, strong working relationships, and a clear understanding of job expectations. Effective performance feedback will:

1. Be job-focused, evaluating performance against specific standards, goals, and objectives tied to actual workplace responsibilities.
2. Promote job satisfaction and morale by showing supervisors' investment in employee development.

3. Provide employees with clear information on areas where they are meeting or exceeding expectations and areas needing improvement.
4. Be consistent and equitable across all departments.
5. Offer a reasonable, objective assessment of sustained performance.
6. Include goals that are SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.

### C. Performance Feedback Summary

The formal performance review summarizes feedback provided throughout the year and evaluates performance in relation to:

- Town values,
- Core competencies, and
- Job-specific tasks and responsibilities.

Procedures for completing the annual performance summary:

1. A written summary and face-to-face discussion shall be completed at least annually. Frequent discussions and feedback are encouraged.
2. Supervisors and employees should review the feedback tool, including Town-valued behaviors, core competencies, and job responsibilities.
3. Supervisors are responsible for timely completion of performance summaries.
4. The employee's immediate supervisor completes the summary and, at the Department Director's discretion, may coordinate with a second-level supervisor or manager before meeting with the employee.
5. Employees are encouraged to complete a self-evaluation and share it with their supervisor in advance. While the supervisor makes the final rating decisions, the employee's perspective will be discussed during the face-to-face meeting.

### D. Performance Improvement

If an employee's performance falls to an unacceptable level, potentially resulting in reassignment, demotion, or dismissal, the supervisor must provide the employee with a reasonable opportunity to improve. Performance issues may be addressed anytime during the rating period.

Employees in this situation must be notified of:

1. The specific job requirements or expectations not being met.
2. Actions required to bring performance to an acceptable level.
3. Supportive actions management will provide, such as additional training, regular feedback, or written guidance.

4. A schedule of face-to-face meetings to review progress.
5. A deadline by which performance must reach an acceptable level.
6. Consequences if performance does not improve, which may include reassignment, demotion, or dismissal.

## Workforce Development

The Town of Appomattox is committed to ongoing employee learning and development, providing opportunities for personal and professional growth. Guided by a Personal Development Plan (PDP), employees are encouraged to participate in a variety of experiences that:

- Promote behavior change,
- Enable employees to meet the Town's current and future needs, and
- Enhance job satisfaction and engagement.

Human Resources develops and delivers training opportunities designed to strengthen employee skills, knowledge, and competencies while supporting the Town's organizational goals. The Town follows these principles to guide workforce development and training:

1. Partnerships: Training relies on collaboration between management and employees to ensure learning is responsible, relevant, and effective.
2. Participatory Development: Employees' skills and competencies are utilized in the development of curricula, workshops, and training programs.
3. Skill Alignment: Development activities are designed to close gaps between current employee skills and the requirements needed to effectively deliver services.
4. Individual Goals: Workforce development supports employees in achieving their personal and professional objectives.
5. Return on Investment: Programs are evaluated to ensure benefits for both employees and the organization.
6. Integration with Work: Learning experiences are directly applied to day-to-day job responsibilities, ensuring practical and meaningful development.

## Employee Involvement

The Town of Appomattox encourages employees to actively participate in initiatives that enhance collaboration, professional growth, and community engagement. Opportunities are designed to leverage employees' skills and interests while supporting the Town's mission and operations. Participation requires departmental or manager approval, including support for time, backup, or other resources as needed.

### Community Activities

Employees are encouraged to engage in activities that benefit the wider Appomattox community. Participation requires departmental or manager approval and appropriate support. Examples of community involvement opportunities include:

- United Way campaigns
- Leadership development programs
- Youth or recreational programs
- Non-profit board memberships

## Organization Investments

The Town provides tangible support for workforce development through a variety of programs, events, and opportunities.

### A. Employee Rewards and Recognition

1. Purpose: The Town acknowledges individual and team behaviors that support its vision, mission, and values through meaningful recognition programs. Formal and informal recognition reinforces customer service values, supports service delivery objectives, and helps retain top performers.
2. Methods of Recognition: The Town uses a variety of recognition methods, including:
  - Employee newsletter
  - Departmental award programs
  - Years of service awards
  - Other programs developed and maintained by Town management
3. Employee Events: These create camaraderie and demonstrate the Town's commitment to job satisfaction. Event Examples:
  - Annual Employee Appreciation
  - Volunteer Day
  - Wellness Retreat
  - Holiday Reception
  - Administrative Support Professional's Day
  - Take Your Daughter/Son to Work Day
4. Professional Memberships and Certifications: Funding is typically provided to support continuous professional development and learning.

### B. Tuition Assistance

The Town offers Tuition Assistance to eligible employees for coursework toward a college degree, professional certification, or developmental training. This support helps maintain a workforce capable of meeting the changing needs of departments and the organization.

The purpose of this policy is to support employee education and professional development that benefits Town operations, workforce capacity, succession planning, licensure, and the effective delivery of public services.

## 1. Applicability

- This policy applies to regular full-time employees unless otherwise expressly stated.
- This policy does not apply to elected officials.
- This policy does not apply to any employee serving under a separate written employment agreement or otherwise serving at the pleasure of Town Council, except as expressly approved by Town Council.

## 2. General Standards

- Tuition reimbursement may be approved for coursework that is job-related or otherwise reasonably determined to benefit the Town's operations, service delivery, workforce needs, licensure requirements, succession planning, or administrative capacity.
- All tuition reimbursement is subject to prior approval, available funding, and compliance with this policy and any administrative procedures adopted under it.
- Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to create an entitlement to tuition reimbursement in any particular case.

## 3. Academic Performance and Completion Standards

- Tuition reimbursement shall be made only upon successful completion of approved coursework.
- Successful completion means:
  - i. a grade of C or better for undergraduate coursework; or
  - ii. a grade of B (3.0) or its equivalent for graduate or professional coursework; or
  - iii. a Pass in a pass/fail course format; and
  - iv. where applicable, continued good standing in the relevant academic or professional program.

## 4. Eligible Expenses

- Eligible expenses may include:
  - tuition; and
  - required fees that are customary and necessary for enrollment and participation.
- Unless specifically approved in advance, ineligible expenses include optional or incidental costs, including travel, lodging, meals, parking, and non-required books, supplies, materials, equipment, or similar items.

## 5. Cost Limits and Exceptions

- Regular full-time employees may be reimbursed for approved tuition and required fees up to the actual amount incurred, not to exceed the approved annual budgeted amount.
- Reimbursement is also capped at the equivalent in-state tuition rate charged by a Virginia public college or university for comparable coursework.
- Total reimbursement may not exceed the annual maximum established in the Town budget or administrative schedule for the applicable fiscal year.
- The Town Manager may approve exceptions to these limits for regular full-time employees in cases of documented business necessity, workforce shortages, licensure requirements, or critical succession planning needs, subject to available funding

## 6. Documentation Requirements

- A request for tuition reimbursement shall be supported by documentation satisfactory to the Town, which may include:
  - i. an itemized tuition and fee statement or invoice;
  - ii. proof of payment, where applicable to the Town's reimbursement process; and
  - iii. proof of successful completion, including a final grade report, transcript, or institutional confirmation of completion or Pass.

## 7. Approval and Administration

- Requests by regular full-time employees shall be submitted through the Town's established administrative process.
- In reviewing requests under this policy, the Town may consider job relevance, organizational benefit, budget availability, documentation, employee standing, and any other factors reasonably related to the Town's operational interests.
- The Town Manager may adopt forms, schedules, and administrative procedures consistent with this policy for regular full-time employees.

## 8. Contract or Council-Appointed Employees

- Employees serving under a written employment agreement or at the pleasure of Town Council must submit any tuition reimbursement request directly to Town Council for review and approval.
- Town Council retains sole discretion in approving such requests, and any approval shall take precedence over this policy in the event of a conflict.

- All approved terms and conditions must be formally documented in an official Council action, such as a motion, resolution, employment agreement, or amendment.

#### 9. Repayment Obligation

- A regular full-time employee who voluntarily resigns or is terminated for cause within one year after receiving tuition reimbursement under this policy shall reimburse the Town for the full amount of tuition reimbursement paid on the employee's behalf during the preceding twelve months.
- Repayment shall not be required in the event of layoff, position elimination, disability separation, retirement approved by the Town, or other separation not initiated by the employee and not based on cause, unless otherwise required by law or by a separate written agreement.

This policy shall be administered in a manner consistent with applicable law, adopted budget limitations, and any separate employment agreement approved by Town Council.

Any question regarding the applicability of this policy to a council-appointed employee, contract employee, or employee serving at the pleasure of Town Council shall be referred to Town Council.

Employees interested in pursuing educational opportunities must contact Human Resources in advance to discuss their plans. A formal agreement or understanding outlining expectations, reimbursement terms, and any service commitments must be established and approved prior to enrolling in courses. Failure to obtain prior approval may result in ineligibility for reimbursement.

## Chapter 7

### Workplace Expectations and Procedures

Effective and efficient service to the citizens of the Town of Appomattox depends on employees and management working together as representatives of the Town. Individual responsibility is essential for maintaining professional and productive working relationships.

The following guidelines, in compliance with Virginia State Code, outline expectations for employee behavior and the procedures for addressing workplace concerns. They also reflect the Town's core values of personal responsibility, integrity, and service.

#### Code of Conduct

The Town of Appomattox, through Town Council resolution, requires that employees follow a Code of Conduct reflecting the highest ethical standards and promoting public confidence in Town government. This Code establishes standards of ethical conduct by identifying acts or actions that are incompatible with the best interests of the Town. Employees are expected to act and make decisions based on principles of public service and the Town's core values. Ethical public service principles include, but are not limited to:

- Building trust through honesty and transparency;
- Seeking no personal gain;
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect;
- Promoting the community through responsible stewardship.

This Code of Conduct applies to all Town of Appomattox employees. It shall govern all instances covered by its provisions except when superseded by a statutory or charter provision that is mandatory, or when application of a statutory or charter provision is discretionary and deemed more appropriate.

The effective operation of local government requires that public officials and employees be:

- Independent, impartial, and responsible to the public;
- Ensure that government decisions and policies are made through proper channels;
- Refrain from using public office for personal gain;
- Uphold public confidence in the integrity of Town government.

Violation of any section of this Code may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## A. Responsibilities

Employees of the Town of Appomattox are agents of the citizens and are entrusted to pursue the public good at all times. Employees are expected to:

- Uphold the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia and carry out the laws of the nation, state, and Town impartially;
- Maintain the highest ethical standards in their official acts;
- Discharge their duties faithfully, prioritizing the public interest above personal considerations;
- Foster respect for all levels of government.

## B. Dedicated Service

All employees are expected to be loyal to the objectives established by the Town Council and to adhere to the rules of work and performance standards established for their positions. Employees shall:

- Not exceed their authority or breach the law;
- Not ask others to act unlawfully;
- Cooperate fully with other employees unless prohibited by law or official confidentiality requirements.

## C. Fair and Equal Treatment

No employee shall grant special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen beyond what is available to all.

No employee shall use Town-owned vehicles, equipment, materials, or property for personal convenience or profit, except when such use is:

- Available to the public generally, or
- Permitted under Town policy for official business purposes.

## D. Conflict of Interest

As provided in Title 2.2 of the Code of Virginia (The Virginia Conflict of Interests Act), no employee shall engage in any private financial or other interest that might conflict with or affect the performance of their official duties. Employees are also bound by the following additional guidance:

### 1. Incompatible Employment

No employee shall engage in or accept other employment or provide services to private interests if such employment or service:

- Conflicts with the proper discharge of official duties, or
- Impairs independent judgment in performing Town duties.

With management approval, employees may engage in other employment that does not interfere with or create a conflict with Town employment.

## 2. Disclosure of Confidential Information

No employee shall, without proper authorization, disclose confidential information concerning the property, operations, or affairs of the Town if such disclosure could advance the financial or other special interest of the employee or any other person.

## 3. Representing Private Interests Before Town Agencies or Courts

No employee shall represent their own or any other private interest before any agency of the Town, unless acting as a member of a civic organization or speaking on an issue of the general public interest.

## E. Political Activity

These provisions maintain public trust, merit-based employment, and impartial service while protecting employees' rights to participate in politics outside of work.

1. Town of Appomattox employees may participate in political activities while off duty, out of uniform, and not on Town premises.
2. For the purpose of this policy, the term "political activities" includes, but is not limited to:
  - Voting; registering to vote;
  - Soliciting votes or endorsements on behalf of a political candidate or campaign;
  - Expressing opinions, privately or publicly, on political subjects and candidates;
  - Displaying political pictures, signs, stickers, badges, or buttons;
  - Participating in or contributing financially to a political party, candidate, campaign, or organization supporting a candidate;
  - Attending or participating in a political convention, caucus, rally, or other political gathering;
  - Initiating, circulating, or signing a political petition;
  - Engaging in fundraising activities for any political party, candidate, or campaign;
  - Acting as a recorder, watcher, challenger, or similar officer at the polls on behalf of a political party, candidate, or campaign;
  - Becoming a political candidate.

(Reference: VA Code § 15.2-1512.2)

3. These provisions are designed to:
  - Promote public trust and confidence in Town government by ensuring it remains free from the actual or apparent influence of partisan politics;
  - Ensure employment and advancement in the Town are based on merit, not political service or affiliation;
  - Protect every employee’s right to vote free from interference, solicitation, or pressure by colleagues, supervisors, or officials.
4. Employees are encouraged to vote in every appropriate election. Except during working hours or when officially representing the Town, employees may freely express opinions about candidates or issues and meet with candidates for office.
5. Employees may be candidates for political office but must resign or be released from employment if elected to a political office within the Town of Appomattox or other offices where responsibilities interfere with their ability to perform their Town duties.
6. Employees shall not engage in political activities while performing official duties, use Town property or equipment for political purposes, or appear as a candidate while in Town uniforms or clothing identifying them as Town employees. This prohibition does not apply to registering to vote or voting.
7. Employees shall not use the prestige of their position on behalf of any political organization or party. A “political organization” is defined as any group, formal or informal, which endorses candidates for elective office at any level of government—national, state, or local.
8. Employees shall not use official authority to coerce or attempt to coerce a subordinate employee to contribute to a political party, candidate, or campaign, or to discriminate against any employee or applicant based on political affiliations or activities.
9. Employees are prohibited from discriminating in the provision of Town services or responding to requests for services based on the political affiliations or activities of the individual or organization requesting such services.
10. Employees are prohibited from suggesting or implying that the Town officially endorses a political party, candidate, or campaign.

## Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Openness and transparency are fundamental to good government. Citizens of the Town of Appomattox have a right to access information about Town operations, and Town employees have a responsibility to respond to requests for information. Beyond legal requirements, employees are expected to assist citizens in understanding what the Town does and how services are provided. Responding promptly, accurately, and completely to information requests fosters trust and accountability in the community

The Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides citizens of the Commonwealth and representatives of the media access to public records and meetings, subject to certain exemptions

## A. Withholding Information

Information will only be withheld for valid, legally authorized reasons as stipulated in the Virginia Freedom of Information Act or other applicable statutes. The Town may charge reasonable costs incurred in responding to a request, including costs for accessing, searching, reviewing, redacting, and duplicating records, as permitted by law.

## B. Scope of FOIA

FOIA applies to public records, which includes electronic records, including emails, text messages, and data stored on Town systems or devices used for public business.

1. FOIA does not automatically make any record confidential; however, other statutes may require certain records to remain confidential. Examples of non-disclosable records include:
  - Tax returns
  - Scholastic and medical records
  - Court or probation records involving juveniles
  - Records of social services containing information about individual clients
2. The Town is not required to create new records; however, staff should make reasonable efforts to provide existing information in a helpful manner
3. Employees who receive a request for a record they cannot access must direct the requestor to the individual or department responsible for the record.
4. Unusual requests involving large numbers of records, potentially exempt information, or substantial staff time must be reported to the Town Manager.
5. Employees may inform requestors that a record is not immediately available. FOIA allows up to five working days to respond.
6. Requests may be verbal or written. Complex or unclear requests may reasonably be requested in writing to facilitate accurate processing.
7. Employees may ask for the requestor's name and contact information, but the requestor is not required to provide it.
8. Employees may not ask why a requestor wants the information.
9. Requestors need only identify records "with reasonable specificity." Employees should assist requestors in locating information.
10. Access to public records under FOIA is limited to citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia and representatives of the media, as defined by law

## C. Response Requirements

An initial response to a FOIA request must occur within (5) five working days of receipt. The five-working-day response period begins on the first working day after the request is received. Acceptable responses include:

- a. Provide the records as requested.
- b. Inform the requestor that no such records exist.

- c. Advise that the records are exempt under FOIA or other applicable statutes, citing the specific Virginia Code section.
- d. Any withholding or redaction must identify the specific section of the Code of Virginia that authorizes the exemption.
- e. If collecting the requested records cannot be completed within five working days, explain why; an additional seven (7) working days may be used to provide one of the above responses.

For responses under items c–e, the Town Clerk and Town Manager must be notified in advance. These cases are rare and generally require management oversight.

#### D. Charges for Copies

Requests involving numerous records or extensive staff time may warrant a fee for:

- Accessing
- Searching
- Duplicating
- Providing records

If estimated costs exceed \$200, the requestor may be asked to pay in advance. Situations requiring fees must be reviewed by the Town Manager. The requestor will be notified in advance of estimated costs.

The Town has designated a FOIA Officer responsible for coordinating responses to requests. Employees receiving FOIA requests must promptly forward them to the FOIA Officer or Town Clerk.

## Fraud, Theft, and Misconduct Reporting

This policy supplements the Town’s Financial Controls and Cash Handling Policy by establishing procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to suspected fraud or financial misconduct

Fraud is an act characterized by deceit, concealment, or violation of trust committed to:

- Obtain money, property, or services
- Avoid payment or loss of services
- Secure personal, business, or other advantages or benefits

#### A. Reporting Process

1. Any employee who has knowledge of work-related fraud or suspects that a fraudulent action has occurred must notify their Department Director as soon as possible.
2. Employees shall not discuss alleged fraud with others.
3. Upon receiving a report or allegation, the Department Director will:

- Notify appropriate authorities
- Develop an action plan
- Coordinate the investigative process

## B. Confidentiality

1. Confidentiality is critical in handling fraud allegations. All participants must keep details and results of investigations, as well as the identities of involved employees, confidential to the extent permitted by law.
2. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
3. Alleged fraud and investigations shall not be discussed with the media, except through the Town Clerk or Town Manager.
4. If the investigation confirms that fraudulent activity occurred, the involved employee may be subject to disciplinary action and/or legal action.

## C. Anti-Retaliation

1. Retaliation against individuals who:
  - Report suspected fraud, or
  - Cooperate, testify, or participate in any investigation, proceeding, or hearing is strictly prohibited.
2. Protection does not extend to unfounded or vindictive accusations. Employees making false or malicious reports may be subject to disciplinary action.

# Secondary Employment

Employees may hold outside employment in addition to their position with the Town of Appomattox, provided it does not interfere with the employee's job performance, create a conflict of interest, or violate Town policies or applicable law.

## A. Approval Requirement

To prevent conflicts of interest and ensure employee availability, secondary (outside) employment must be disclosed and approved in writing by the employee's supervisor and Department Director/Supervisor before starting.

### Approval Considerations:

- Duties, schedule, and responsibilities of the Town position
- Nature, duties, and time demands of the secondary employment
- Any actual or perceived conflict of interest, including compliance with the Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act
- Consistency with the Town's Code of Conduct and other policies
- Town operational needs, including overtime and emergency response

Approval may be denied or conditioned if the secondary employment is not in the Town's best interest.

#### B. Impact on Town Employment

Secondary employment must not interfere with Town duties. If it negatively affects:

- Job performance
- Attendance, punctuality, or reliability
- Ability to work required overtime or respond to emergencies

...the Town may require the employee to:

- Discontinue the secondary employment, or
- Resign from Town employment

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, up to termination.

#### C. Limitations While on Leave

Employees may not perform secondary employment while:

- On paid leave, or
- On leave without pay due to personal illness or injury

...unless expressly approved in writing by the Department Director/Supervisor and consistent with applicable law.

#### D. Notification for New Employees

New hires who plan to continue outside employment must disclose it prior to their first day. Continued outside employment is subject to review and approval under this policy.

Nothing in this policy interferes with employees' rights under federal or state law.

#### E. Employees Serving as Volunteers

Exempt employees may volunteer to assist with Town-sponsored events and activities. Non-exempt employees may volunteer only in capacities that are clearly distinct and unrelated to their regular job duties and for which they are not otherwise compensated. All volunteer service must comply with applicable wage and hour laws. Volunteer service must be truly voluntary and approved in advance if during work hours.

# Working Hours, Punctuality, and Attendance

Employees are expected to work their assigned hours, arrive on time, and notify their supervisor in advance of absences.

## A. Work Hours and Attendance

1. Each department sets work schedules, shifts, and hours. Employees are expected to be present and actively working during all assigned hours.
2. Time away from work must be covered by:
  - Properly approved leave (e.g., vacation, sick leave)
  - Paid holidays
  - Approved flexible work arrangements, if applicable
3. Even if individually approved, repeated or excessive absences may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, consistent with Town workplace expectations.
4. Employees who will be absent or late must notify their supervisor as soon as possible, ideally before the scheduled start of their shift. Notification should be made personally whenever feasible.
5. Failure to provide proper notice, or providing a reason deemed unacceptable by the supervisor, constitutes an unauthorized absence and may result in disciplinary action, in alignment with workplace expectations.

## B. Departmental Procedures

1. Departments may establish specific rules regarding:
  - Required advance notice for absences or tardiness
  - Reporting procedures, including call-in or electronic notification
2. Employees are responsible for understanding and following their department's procedures. When unsure, employees should consult their supervisor.

# Disciplinary Policy

The Town of Appomattox is committed to providing high-quality public services and maintaining a professional, respectful, and productive work environment. The objective of this Disciplinary Policy is to address employee conduct or performance issues promptly, fairly, and consistently, with a primary focus on correcting behavior, resolving problems, and supporting employee success whenever possible.

While most employees meet or exceed performance and conduct expectations, formal intervention may be necessary when standards are not met. Discipline is intended to be constructive and corrective, not punitive, except where the seriousness of the conduct warrants more severe action.

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit, expand, or modify any employee's rights under the Town of Appomattox Grievance Procedure adopted pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-1507. Grievability of

disciplinary actions shall be determined solely in accordance with the Town’s grievance procedure and applicable law.

#### A. Coverage

This policy applies to all Town employees, including full-time, part-time, and grant-funded classified employees who have completed their initial employment period. At the discretion of the Department Director/Supervisor, this policy may also be applied to employees in their initial employment period and to hourly or temporary employees.

Employees in their initial employment period may have limited or no grievance rights as defined in the Town of Appomattox Grievance Procedure adopted under Virginia Code § 15.2-1507.

#### B. Employee Responsibility

Employees are expected to be personally responsible for their conduct and to comply with all Town policies, the Code of Conduct, departmental rules, and applicable laws. When concerns arise, the Town seeks, whenever practicable, to address underlying causes through counseling, coaching, mediation, training, or other supportive measures before initiating formal discipline.

#### C. Performance vs Misconduct

The Town distinguishes between unsatisfactory performance and misconduct:

1. Unsatisfactory Performance refers to the inability to meet job expectations due to lack of skills, training, experience, or similar factors (excluding acts of gross negligence). These issues are typically addressed through the Town’s performance management process.
2. Misconduct generally involves intentional, willful, or negligent disregard of Town standards of conduct, policies, or departmental rules and is typically addressed through the disciplinary process described in this policy.

#### E. Informal Corrective Actions

Prior to formal disciplinary action, supervisors may use informal measures such as verbal counseling, performance guidance, or coaching discussions to notify the employee of a concern and clarify expectations for improvement. Documentation of these discussions may be maintained at the departmental level.

#### F. Alternative Corrective Strategies

In addition to traditional discipline, alternative approaches may be used when they better serve the Town's interests and are likely to resolve issues effectively and efficiently. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Individual corrective action plans
- Discipline without punishment
- Peer mentoring
- Mediation or conflict resolution
- Training or reassignment
- Demotion
- Negotiated separation agreements

Human Resources is available to provide guidance regarding the appropriateness and implementation of alternative strategies.

### G. Progressive Discipline

The Town generally follows a progressive discipline model that establishes guidelines rather than rigid steps. Progressive discipline is intended to give employees an opportunity to correct behavior before more serious action is taken. However, depending on the nature, severity, and circumstances of the misconduct, it is not required that discipline proceed in a specific sequence. The Town reserves the right to impose discipline appropriate to the situation.

When progressive disciplinary steps are bypassed, the reasons for doing so shall be documented and maintained with the disciplinary record.

### H. Types of Disciplinary Actions

The following actions describe the traditional disciplinary measures that may be used to address misconduct. Supervisors and Department Directors may use these measures or alternative strategies as appropriate.

1. Warning  
A formal face-to-face meeting between a supervisor or manager and an employee to address misconduct and outline expected corrective action. The warning shall be documented in writing, with a copy provided to the employee and retained within the department.
2. Written Reprimand  
A written notice issued by a supervisor or manager for uncorrected or more serious misconduct. A copy of the reprimand shall be placed in the employee's official personnel file maintained by Human Resources.
3. Suspension  
An action by a Department Director placing an employee in a non-pay, non-duty status for a specified number of working days. Suspensions for employees

exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) must comply with applicable law. Suspension is used when lesser action is inappropriate or ineffective and dismissal is not warranted.

#### 4. Dismissal

Separation from employment for cause, imposed as a last resort when serious misconduct remains uncorrected or when the misconduct is so severe that continued employment is not in the Town's best interest.

### I. Resignation in Lieu of Dismissal

An employee may request to resign while dismissal proceedings are pending by submitting a written resignation to the Department Director/Supervisor and Human Resources. The Department Director/Supervisor may accept or decline the resignation and proceed with dismissal. If accepted, documentation indicating resignation in lieu of dismissal shall be included in the employee's personnel file.

### J. Discipline During Initial Employment Period

Employees separated during their initial employment period are not entitled to progressive discipline. In such cases, the Department Director/Supervisor shall issue a written notice of separation stating the reason(s) for the action.

### K. Establishing the Appropriate Penalty

When determining disciplinary action, supervisors and Department Directors/Supervisors should:

1. Collect and review all relevant facts;
2. Consider the nature, seriousness, and consequences of the conduct;
3. Evaluate mitigating circumstances or possible misunderstandings;
4. Review the employee's work history, length of service, and prior performance;
5. Consult with Human Resources prior to imposing serious discipline.

### L. Factors Warranting More Serious Action

More severe discipline may be warranted when conduct jeopardizes safety, involves gross negligence, significantly disrupts Town operations, harms morale, or reflects repeated or cumulative offenses.

### M. Emergency and Investigatory Actions

In cases involving serious misconduct or safety concerns, an employee may be immediately removed from duty. Except where significant safety violations exist, such leave is typically administrative leave with pay pending investigation.

Administrative leave pending investigation is a temporary, non-disciplinary measure used to ensure workplace safety, preserve evidence, or maintain operational integrity. Such leave shall be reviewed periodically and limited in duration to the extent practicable.

Law enforcement may be notified when conduct may be illegal.

## N. Documentation

All disciplinary actions must be clearly documented and include:

- A factual description of the conduct, including dates and relevant details;
- Identification of the violated policy, rule, or standard;
- The impact of the conduct on Town operations, employees, or the public;
- Clear expectations and timelines for corrective action;
- Notice of the employee's rights, including the right to respond and the right to grieve, if applicable.

## O. Procedure for Major Actions

1. Suspension – Written notice of intent, opportunity to respond, and final determination generally provided at least 24 hours before the suspension begins.
2. Demotion for Cause – Written notice of intent, opportunity to respond, and written final determination prior to the effective date.
3. Dismissal – Written notice of intent, opportunity to respond, and written final determination generally provided at least 24 hours prior to separation. Employees may be placed on administrative leave pending final action.

## P. Inappropriate Conduct

Examples of unacceptable conduct are provided as guidance and are not all-inclusive.

Less Serious Infractions:

- Rudeness to the public or coworkers
- Minor negligence or careless workmanship
- Minor misuse of Town property
- First instances of tardiness or absenteeism
- Failure to follow safety practices
- Inappropriate language or horseplay
- Inappropriate use of Town electronic systems

More Serious Infractions (may warrant immediate severe action):

- Disorderly or immoral conduct that adversely affects the Town’s operations, workplace safety, or public trust
- Off-duty misconduct of such major significance that it demonstrably affects the employee’s ability to perform job responsibilities or has an adverse effect upon Town operations, reputation, or public
- Insubordination
- Gross negligence
- Dishonesty or falsification of records
- Theft or misuse of Town property
- Workplace violence or threats
- Substance abuse on duty
- Harassment or discrimination
- Criminal conduct affecting Town operations
- Serious violations of the Code of Conduct or Town policies

This policy is intended to support consistent, fair, and lawful discipline while preserving the Town of Appomattox’s ability to maintain an effective and professional workforce.

## Driving Policy

Effective service to the citizens of the Town of Appomattox and the efficient use of Town resources require the safe and accident-free operation of vehicles used to perform official duties. This policy establishes the guidelines and procedures that govern vehicle operation, including:

- Driving and accident record review;
- Disciplinary and rehabilitative measures;
- Driver accountability and training.

This policy relies on the philosophy of:

1. Acceptable driving history;
2. Driver training; and
3. Ongoing accountability for individual actions.

The Town’s core value of personal responsibility—taking ownership and accepting consequences—is central to these guidelines. Human Resources, in conjunction with Risk Management, ensures compliance with all state and local requirements regarding driving records and the security of all forms, records, and documentation.

### A. Eligibility and Training

1. All Town employees, contract and temporary agency employees, and unpaid interns who drive Town vehicles must possess a valid Virginia driver’s license.

2. Department Directors/Supervisors may require Defensive Driving training for employees who routinely drive personal vehicles to perform essential job functions.

## B. Driving Record Reviews

Driving record reviews apply to all current employees, contract and temporary agency employees, and unpaid interns and include:

1. Annual Review – HR/Risk Management conducts annual reviews for employees in positions requiring driving a Town vehicle or routinely driving a personal vehicle for Town business. Employees must complete the DMV Information Request form when requested.
2. For-Cause Review – Initiated at HR/Risk Management’s discretion, such as after an employee is involved in an accident or receives a traffic citation while operating a Town vehicle. Employees seeking reassignment to a driving-required position must meet all applicant requirements.
3. Periodic Review – Conducted case-by-case following notice of violations, citations, or suspensions.
4. Employee Notification – Any employee who drives for work must notify their supervisor and HR/Risk Management within 24 hours of any on- or off-duty citation, suspension, or revocation of their driver’s license.

## C. Minimally Acceptable Driving Record

To operate a Town vehicle, a current employee must meet these standards:

1. 4 or fewer demerit points;
2. No DWI/DUI convictions within the last three years (subject to review);
3. At least three years of continuously valid licensing;
4. An overall pattern of safe driving and vehicle operation.

## D. Unacceptable Driving Conditions

The following normally prevent an employee from driving a Town vehicle until their record improves or other requirements are met:

1. 5 or more demerit points;
2. DWI/DUI conviction within the last three years (subject to review);
3. License suspension due to violations or accidents, unless the employee has completed two full years with no subsequent moving violations, at-fault accidents, or penalties.

## E. Consequences and Remedial Actions

1. Driver Safety and Awareness Course – Employees whose record is minimally acceptable but at risk of becoming unacceptable will be notified and required to complete a DMV-certified Driver Safety and Awareness Course (Driver Improvement course). Employees may attend courses offered by HR/ Risk Management (considered regular working time) or elsewhere at their own expense. Failure to complete the course may result in driving restrictions and/or disciplinary action.
2. DWI/DUI Charges – Employees charged with an on- or off-duty DWI/DUI are normally prohibited from driving Town or personal vehicles for Town business until the court renders a decision. Assignment to a nondriving position, if available, is at the discretion of management. Employees may also be subject to the Town’s Drug and Alcohol Testing policy.
3. Driving with Suspended/Revoked License – Employees found driving with a suspended or revoked license are subject to disciplinary action and may undergo quarterly driving record reviews for one year.
4. Disciplinary Action – Employees with unacceptable driving records or loss of driving privileges may face disciplinary action up to termination. Misconduct or poor performance relative to operating a Town vehicle may also result in disciplinary action.
5. Driving Restrictions – Restrictions may be imposed in addition to disciplinary measures and may be implemented based on liability concerns regardless of court outcomes.
6. Consideration of Employee History – Department Directors/Supervisors and HR/Risk Management may review an employee’s overall performance and employment history before implementing restrictions.
7. DUI Recovery Requirements – Employees allowed to continue driving after a DUI charge or conviction must:
  - Complete the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (VASAP) if mandated;
  - Complete corrective action as determined by All Points EAP;
  - Authorize quarterly DMV record checks; and
  - Maintain a record free of subsequent citations or accidents.

## Drug and Alcohol Testing

The Town of Appomattox is committed to a safe, healthy, and productive workplace free from the risks associated with drug and alcohol misuse. This policy sets forth standards, testing circumstances, procedures, employee obligations, confidentiality safeguards, and corrective actions to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free work environment and protect public safety.

### A. Coverage & Definitions

1. Covered Positions: All Town positions. Additional requirements apply to safety-sensitive functions, including positions requiring a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) subject to FMCSA rules (49 CFR Part 382).

2. Reasonable Suspicion (Reasonable Cause): Specific, contemporaneous, articulable observations concerning appearance, behavior, speech, or body odors, or credible information suggesting possible influence.
3. Alcohol Concentration: Grams of alcohol per 210 liters of breath, as indicated by a breath test (DOT definition).
4. Medical Cannabis Oil: Lawful use of cannabis oil under a valid written certification per Va. Code § 4.1-1601 and § 40.1-27.4 (employment protections and limits).

## B. Prohibited Conduct & Employee Obligations

Employees must report fit for duty and shall not:

1. Work under the influence of alcohol or drugs; have a detectable presence of illegal drugs; or perform duties while impaired, including while on Town property, on duty or on call, in official capacity off Town property, or while operating Town vehicles/equipment. For non-DOT employees, the Town sets an internal threshold of  $\geq 0.04$  alcohol concentration as a violation of this policy. (DOT thresholds for CDL roles are governed by Part 382—see Section E.)
2. Use or possess alcohol at work, or report with the odor of alcohol on breath or person.
3. Consume, use, possess, sell, buy, distribute, or manufacture illegal drugs or controlled substances without a valid prescription; or any look-alike substances.
4. Refuse or fail to submit to testing as requested under this policy.
5. BYOD/Prescription Disclosure: Upon request, within 24 hours, provide a current valid prescription for any controlled substance that may cause a positive test; failure to provide may be treated as non-medical use.

The Town will not discharge, discipline, or discriminate against an employee solely for lawful use of cannabis oil under a valid certification. However, the Town may take action for work impairment, prohibit possession during work hours, and comply with federal law where required (including DOT).

## C. Testing Circumstances

The Town may require drug and/or alcohol testing under the following circumstances:

### 1. Pre-Employment / Pre-Placement / Promotion / Transfer Testing

Applicants or employees selected for hire, promotion, or transfer into covered or safety-sensitive positions may be required to undergo drug and/or alcohol testing

following a conditional offer of employment, in accordance with applicable law and this policy.

#### DOT/CDL Positions:

Applicants for positions subject to 49 CFR Part 382 must successfully complete a pre-employment controlled substances (drug) test as required by federal law.

Pre-employment alcohol testing is not required under DOT regulations. If the Town elects to conduct pre-employment alcohol testing for DOT-covered positions, such testing will be conducted only after a conditional offer of employment and will be uniformly applied to all applicants within the same job category, in accordance with federal requirements.

#### Non-DOT Positions:

Applicants for non-DOT positions may be required to submit to pre-employment drug testing. Alcohol testing may also be required where job-related and consistent with business necessity, provided it is applied consistently within the same job classification.

### 2. Reasonable Suspicion (Reasonable Cause) Testing

Testing may be required when specific, contemporaneous, and articulable observations or credible information indicate possible impairment during work hours. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Abnormal or erratic behavior
- Reliable third-party reports
- Work-related accidents or injuries possibly caused by human error
- Direct observation of drug or alcohol use
- Physical symptoms such as slurred speech, unsteady gait, or alcohol odor
- Disregard of safety procedures
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness patterns
- Possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or paraphernalia in an employee-controlled area
- Inability to reason at expected levels
- Fighting or assaultive behavior

### 3. Post-Accident / Incident Testing

Testing may be required following a workplace accident, injury, or incident when circumstances suggest possible drug or alcohol involvement, or when required by applicable law, regulation, or Town policy.

For CDL employees, testing will be conducted in accordance with 49 CFR Part 382.

### 4. Random Testing

#### DOT/CDL Positions:

Employees in safety-sensitive positions subject to FMCSA regulations are subject to random drug and alcohol testing in accordance with federal requirements. Testing is governed by federal regulations, including 49 CFR Parts 40 and 382.

#### Non-DOT Safety-Sensitive Positions:

The Town may designate additional safety-sensitive positions for random testing based on operational need and job-related safety risks. Designations require advance approval by the Department Director and Human Resources. Employees will receive at least 30 days' notice prior to program implementation.

### 5. Periodic / Annual Physicals

Testing may be included as part of required medical examinations for positions subject to periodic physicals, where job-related and consistent with applicable requirements.

### 6. Return-to-Duty and Follow-Up Testing

Employees returning to duty following a positive test or policy violation may be subject to return-to-duty and follow-up testing in accordance with Town policy.

For CDL employees, testing and monitoring will follow the Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) process and applicable DOT requirements under 49 CFR Part 382.

## D. DOT-Regulated Roles (CDL)

For employees required to hold a CDL, the Town will follow 49 CFR Part 382 (tests required, thresholds, and consequences) and 49 CFR Part 40 (collection and lab procedures). Key DOT points:

- DOT defines a positive alcohol test as  $\geq 0.04$  and mandates removal from safety-sensitive functions and DOT return-to-duty/SAP procedures; random testing rates and protocols are governed by FMCSA.
- DOT requires immediate reporting to the collection site when notified; urine/oral fluid specimens and evidential breath tests must follow Part 40 procedures, including confirmation testing protocols.

Note: The Town's internal 0.04 threshold applies to non-DOT employees. CDL roles follow DOT thresholds and consequences.

## E. Testing Procedures & Privacy

1. Supervisor Actions: Supervisors proceed sensitively, consult HR/Department Director, and document observations before requesting a test.

2. Notification & Escort: The employee is privately informed of reasons and escorted to the Town's designated testing facility. For random tests, employees are told selection was scientifically random and escorted the same day.
3. Collection & Confirmation:
  - o Alcohol: Screening followed by a confirmation test (per Part 40 protocols) after the required observation period.
  - o Drugs: Lab analysis with Medical Review Officer (MRO) verification; split specimen procedures available per Part 40.
4. Refusals/Adulteration/Substitution: Treated as a policy violation; for CDL, a DOT refusal with mandated consequences.
5. Confidentiality: All testing records are confidential medical records, stored separately from personnel files, with limited access per ADA/EEOC guidance and Town records procedures.
6. Records & FOIA: Virginia FOIA presumes public access to records, but personnel/medical records are protected and handled per exemptions and HR policies; the Town will interpret FOIA consistent with law and protect testing confidentiality to the fullest extent permitted.

#### F. Searches of Town Property

The Town may, without employee consent, search Town property and areas under Town control (e.g., desks, lockers, Town vehicles) for work-related purposes or investigations of workplace misconduct. Such searches must be reasonable in scope and justified at inception under the Fourth Amendment standard for public employers.

#### G. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Town recognizes substance dependency as a health issue and encourages voluntary use of the EAP. Referral to EAP does not shield employees from discipline for policy violations; continued employment may be conditioned on successful participation and remaining drug/alcohol-free at work.

#### H. Prescription & Over-the-Counter Medications

No employee will be disciplined for appropriate use of prescribed or OTC medications. Employees are responsible for assessing whether a medication could impair performance or the safe operation of Town vehicles/equipment and must inform their supervisor if impairment is possible. The Town may restrict duties to ensure safety.

#### I. Drug-Free Workplace Act

Employees engaged in covered awards must receive the Town's drug-free workplace notice and, as a condition of employment on the award, must notify the Town of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace within 5 days.

The Town will notify the federal contracting/grant agency within 10 days after receiving notice of such conviction and impose sanctions or require participation in rehabilitation per law.

#### J. Disciplinary Actions & Rehabilitation

1. Refusal to Test / Tampering: Refusal, adulteration, or substitution is a violation and may result in discipline up to termination; for CDL, treated as DOT refusal requiring removal from safety-sensitive duties and SAP process.
2. Positive Results (Non-DOT):
  - May result in suspension, last-chance agreement, mandatory EAP/rehabilitation, follow-up testing, reassignment, or termination depending on severity, role (e.g., safety-sensitive), and past violations.
3. Positive Results (DOT/CDL):
  - Immediate removal from safety-sensitive functions; SAP evaluation, return-to-duty test, and follow-up testing
4. Follow-Up Testing: Employees who test positive or complete rehabilitation may be subject to random follow-up testing for up to 12 months (or longer for CDL as required by DOT).

#### K. Random Program Administration (Non-DOT)

- The Town will use a scientifically valid random selection method; each employee in a designated work group has an equal chance of selection at all times.
- Employees will be notified on the day of test (preferably within two hours of scheduled testing) and escorted.

If any court of competent jurisdiction finds any provision invalid, the remainder remains in force. The Town may modify this policy to comply with changes in law or operational needs, with notice to employees.

Virginia law generally permits employer drug testing, and the Town will implement testing consistent with constitutional protections, federal requirements, and best practices

## Dress Code Policy

The Town of Appomattox is a public service organization and expects all employees to dress appropriately for a professional business environment and in accordance with their work assignments. Public image plays an important role in maintaining citizen confidence and support for the Town. Employees are expected to maintain an appearance that reflects the professionalism and integrity of the Town.

The Town promotes employee safety, consistency, and professionalism in positions where protective footwear and/or uniforms are required due to job-related hazards. This policy supports

the Town of Appomattox's Workplace Safety Policy and aligns with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements.

Department Directors/Supervisors shall establish clear expectations in alignment with this policy. Employees must exercise good judgment and professional decision-making while complying with departmental expectations. Safety is paramount; no clothing, jewelry, or accessories are allowed that may interfere with safe operations.

The following guidelines are to be used across all departments and are not exhaustive:

1. Clothing, jewelry, and accessories must not create a safety hazard for the employee or others.
2. Clothing must be clean, in good condition, and free of holes, excessive wear, or stains.
3. Clothing may not display profanity, either implied or explicit.
4. Clothing may not display advertisements or logos for alcohol, tobacco, or any items with illegal, racial, or sexual connotations.
5. Employees must be clean, well-groomed, and maintain acceptable personal hygiene.
6. Appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times.
7. Jewelry in facial or tongue piercings is generally not permitted while on duty; however, exceptions may be approved by the Department Director/Supervisor if the piercing does not pose a safety risk, interfere with job performance, or detract from a professional appearance.
8. Tattoos that are excessive or offensive (e.g., profanity, nudity, illegal acts, racial/ethnic slurs) must not be visible.
9. Appropriate footwear must be worn based on job requirements. Employees must wear appropriate protective footwear when working in areas where there is a potential for a foot injury due to:

- Falling or rolling objects
- Sharp objects or puncture hazards
- Electrical hazards
- Slippery or uneven walking surfaces

Unless otherwise specifically approved by the Town, required work boots must include:

- Closed-toe and closed-heel construction
- Durable, sturdy material suitable for the work environment
- Slip-resistant soles
- ANSI/ASTM-approved protective toe (steel or composite) when required for the position
- Electrical hazard protection when applicable

Work boots must be maintained in safe, serviceable condition. Boots that are excessively worn, damaged, or no longer provide adequate protection may not be worn on duty.

Employees may be removed from work assignments if required protective footwear is not worn, in accordance with the Town's Workplace Safety Policy.

10. Employees in designated positions may be issued Town-approved uniforms, safety apparel, or high-visibility clothing required for their duties.
  - When issued, uniforms must be worn during work hours unless otherwise authorized by a supervisor.
  - Uniforms must be clean, neat, and in good repair. Alterations are not permitted without supervisor approval.
  - All uniforms, safety apparel, and related issued items remain the property of the Town and must be returned upon separation, reassignment, or replacement.

### Compliance and Enforcement

Work boots, uniforms, and safety apparel may be designated as PPE. Employees must:

- Use PPE as instructed and trained
- Not modify, misuse, or remove PPE
- Report damaged or unsafe PPE to their supervisor immediately

Failure to follow PPE requirements is a violation of the Town's Workplace Safety Policy and may result in disciplinary action.

The Town will consider reasonable accommodations for employees with medical conditions, disabilities, or sincerely held religious beliefs. Requests must be submitted to the employee's supervisor and Human Resources and will be reviewed in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

This policy applies to employees assigned to safety-sensitive, operational, maintenance, field service, inspections, public works, utilities, parks, and similar positions, as determined through the Town's job hazard assessment process.

Failure to comply with this policy, including refusal or failure to wear required protective footwear or uniforms, may result in corrective or disciplinary action under the Town of Appomattox's disciplinary policy. Employees may be temporarily removed from duty until compliance is achieved.

Employees in direct service delivery or operational roles, such as public safety, public works, inspections, or other field capacities, may be issued Town uniforms. Uniforms must be worn while performing official duties.

### Special Considerations

Management and supervisors may approve alternative attire in certain situations, including:

- Medical accommodations

- Religious practices
- Inclement weather
- Town- or department-sanctioned events or activities

Employees are expected to follow departmental guidelines and supervisory instructions. Supervisors will address dress code concerns directly with employees to ensure understanding.

Failure to comply or repeated violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Town’s disciplinary policy.

## Harassment Policy

The Town of Appomattox will not tolerate harassment or bullying in any form. Allegations will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken.

- Retaliation against employees who report harassment is strictly prohibited.
- The Town does not condone unfounded or vindictive accusations.
- The Town will take steps to protect the legitimate interests of all parties involved.

### A. General Harassment

Harassment is verbal and/or physical conduct based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, military status, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions (including lactation), sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other class protected under Federal or Virginia law. Harassment occurs when such conduct substantially interferes with an individual’s work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

### B. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions; or
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

### C. Reporting Responsibilities

Employees who experience or witness harassment or bullying are expected to report the behavior to:

- Their immediate supervisor;
- The Department Director; or
- Human Resources.

### 1. Initial Response

- Individuals experiencing harassment should first inform the offending person that the behavior is offensive.
- If the behavior continues, the employee should report the matter to a supervisor or other appropriate official.

### 2. Alternative Reporting Channels

- Employees may report harassment to the Town Manager or Human Resources
- Employees may also contact an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselor for confidential consultation.
- Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible during information gathering.

### 3. Supervisor Responsibilities

- Supervisors, Department Directors, and other Town officials who become aware of harassment must take immediate action.
- Prompt reporting and corrective action are required to maintain a workplace free from harassing, abusive, or disruptive conduct.
- All parties' rights will be protected throughout any investigation.

## Workplace Violence

The Town of Appomattox is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and secure work environment for all employees, elected officials, residents, visitors, contractors, and vendors. Workplace violence in any form is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

The Town adopts a zero-tolerance policy toward workplace violence, threats, intimidation, or disruptive behavior that may compromise the safety or well-being of employees or the public.

This policy applies to:

- All Town employees (full-time, part-time, temporary, and seasonal)
- Elected and appointed officials
- Volunteers, interns, and contractors
- Members of the public interacting with Town facilities or employees

This policy applies to conduct occurring:

- On Town property or worksites
- During work-related travel or Town-sponsored events
- Through electronic communications (email, phone, text, social media)
- Off-duty conduct that impacts workplace safety or operations

Workplace Violence includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical assault or attempted assault
- Threats of violence (verbal, written, or implied)
- Intimidation, coercion, or harassment involving violent behavior
- Stalking or menacing behavior
- Possession or use of weapons in violation of Town policy or law
- Damage to Town or personal property as an act of aggression

Threat means any statement or behavior that would cause a reasonable person to believe that harm may occur.

#### Prohibited Conduct

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited:

- Acts or threats of violence toward employees, officials, residents, or visitors
- Fighting, pushing, or physical intimidation
- Brandishing weapons or objects used as weapons
- Verbal abuse or threats intended to instill fear
- Retaliation against individuals who report concerns under this policy

#### Weapons in the Workplace

Except as permitted by Virginia law, Town policy, or required for official duties (e.g., law enforcement), weapons are prohibited on Town property, in Town vehicles, and at Town-sponsored events.

Employees must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding weapons.

#### Reporting Workplace Violence or Threats

Employees are required to report any actual or suspected workplace violence, threats, or concerning behavior immediately.

Reports may be made to:

- A direct supervisor or Department Director
- Human Resources
- Town Manager
- Law enforcement (for emergencies or imminent threats)

- Reports may be verbal or written and should include as much detail as possible.

In emergencies or situations involving immediate danger, employees should call 911 first.

### Investigations

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and confidentially to the extent possible.

The Town may take interim measures, including:

- Temporary reassignment
- Administrative leave
- Restricting access to Town property or systems
- Contacting law enforcement

The Town reserves the right to determine appropriate corrective action based on the severity and circumstances of the incident.

### Non-Retaliation

The Town strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who:

- Reports workplace violence or threats in good faith
- Participates in an investigation
- Seeks assistance related to safety concerns

Any act of retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### Disciplinary Action

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including:

- Immediate removal from the workplace
- Suspension or termination of employment
- Criminal prosecution when applicable

Disciplinary decisions will be made in accordance with Town personnel policies and applicable laws.

### Employee Responsibilities

Employees are expected to:

- Conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner
- Refrain from violent, threatening, or intimidating behavior

- Report concerns promptly
- Cooperate fully in investigations
- Participate in required safety or violence prevention training

## Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Protective Order Accommodations

The Town of Appomattox recognizes that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking can affect employee safety and workplace operations. The Town is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to support affected employees and maintain a safe work environment, consistent with federal and Virginia law.

- Employees will not face discipline, discrimination, or retaliation for requesting assistance or accommodations related to these matters.
- Information regarding an employee’s experience or the existence of a protective order will be treated as confidential and shared only with individuals who have a legitimate business or safety need to know.
- Documentation will be maintained separately from personnel files whenever possible.

## Reasonable Accommodations

Upon request, and where feasible, the Town may provide reasonable accommodations to support employee safety, including but not limited to:

- Modified work schedules or temporary schedule adjustments
- Temporary job reassignments or alternative work locations
- Changes to work contact information (phone, email, directory listings)
- Adjusted parking arrangements or building access points
- Enhanced workplace security measures
- Leave consistent with Town leave policies or applicable law

Requests for accommodations should be made to Human Resources or a Department Director/Supervisor. The Town may request limited documentation where legally permitted but will not require disclosure of unnecessary details.

## Protective Orders

Employees are encouraged to notify Human Resources or their Department Director/Supervisor if a protective order (including emergency, preliminary, or permanent orders) involves:

- A Town facility,
- A Town worksite, or
- Another Town employee, contractor, or regular visitor.

Upon notification, the Town may take reasonable steps to assist with enforcement and workplace safety, which may include:

- Providing a photograph or description of the restrained individual to appropriate personnel
- Adjusting access controls or security protocols
- Coordinating with law enforcement when necessary

The Town does not act as an enforcement agency but will cooperate with law enforcement as required by law.

## Workplace Conduct and Safety

Employees who are subject to a protective order are expected to comply fully with the order at all times, including during work hours and on Town property.

Violations of protective orders or related threatening behavior occurring in the workplace may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may be referred to law enforcement.

## Reporting and Emergency Situations

Employees who believe they are in immediate danger should call 911 immediately.

Concerns related to domestic violence or protective orders that pose a workplace safety risk should be reported promptly to:

- Human Resources
- A Department Director/Supervisor
- The Town Manager
- Law enforcement, as appropriate

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with applicable laws and best practices.

## Information Technology Security

The Town of Appomattox provides information systems, devices, networks, applications, and data to support municipal operations. All employees, contractors, and users of Town systems must follow this policy to protect Town data, technology assets, public services, and the privacy of residents.

This policy applies to:

- All employees and authorized users of Town systems, whether on-site or remote
- Devices owned by the Town or personally owned but used for Town business

All electronic communications, files, and records on Town systems are Town property. Users have no expectation of personal privacy, and the Town may monitor, access, restrict, or remove access to any systems, accounts, or devices to ensure security and compliance.

## A. Acceptable Use

Town technology resources are primarily for Town business. Limited personal use is allowed if it:

- Does not interfere with work duties or Town operations
- Does not incur additional costs or resource strain
- Complies with all Town policies and applicable laws

## B. Prohibited Activities

Users must not:

- Engage in illegal activity, harassment, discrimination, or access obscene/explicit content
- Access or share unauthorized, confidential, or restricted information
- Install unapproved software or disable security tools
- Bypass security controls or connect unauthorized devices
- Use Town systems for personal business ventures or political campaigns
- Download or distribute pirated content
- Share passwords or use others' credentials

## C. Data Classification

Town data is classified as:

1. Public: Freely shareable information
2. Internal: Operational information not for public release
3. Confidential: Sensitive data, including personnel, legal, financial, or PII
4. Restricted: Highly sensitive data, including law enforcement, health, or critical infrastructure
  - Encrypt Confidential/Restricted data in transit and at rest
  - Share only with authorized recipients using approved tools
  - Store sensitive data only on Town servers or approved cloud storage
  - Do not copy sensitive data to personal devices or unapproved media

## D. Email, Messaging, and Remote Access

- Town email and messaging systems are for official communications
- Do not auto-forward Town email to personal accounts
- Conduct Town business only through official channels
- Remote access is allowed only via approved VPN, VDI, or secure gateways with multi-factor authentication (MFA)
- Mobile devices accessing Town data must be enrolled in Mobile Device Management (MDM), encrypted, and secured with a screen lock

- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) requires IT approval and compliance with MDM and security policies

#### E. Security Awareness and Incident Reporting

- All users must complete onboarding and annual security training, including phishing awareness
- Report any suspected or actual incidents (e.g., phishing, malware, lost device, unauthorized access, or data breach) immediately to the Town Office Manager
- Users must cooperate fully with investigations and incident response procedures

#### F. Vendor and Contractual Compliance

- All contractors and vendors must comply with this policy
- Access is limited, monitored, and included in contracts with confidentiality and breach notification requirements

#### G. Physical Security

- Lock devices when unattended
- Protect sensitive documents; use secure disposal methods (shredding, media sanitization)
- Guest networks must be separated from operational systems
- Devices and systems are monitored for security compliance

#### H. Violations

Violations may result in:

- Suspension or revocation of access
- Disciplinary action, up to and including termination
- Referral to law enforcement if applicable
- Civil or criminal penalties under Virginia or federal law

#### I. Exceptions

- Exceptions must be documented, risk-assessed, and approved in writing by the Town Office Manager and Town Manager
- Time-limited exceptions must be reviewed periodically

This policy will be reviewed annually or whenever significant changes occur in technology, operations, or legal requirements. The Town Office Manager is responsible for updates and communicating changes.

## Use of Town Business Equipment and Systems

The Town of Appomattox provides equipment and electronic systems to support official business and ensure compliance with Virginia records retention laws and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

#### A. Authorized Use

- Town equipment and systems—including computers, phones, fax machines, copiers, mail systems, and email—are for official Town business only.
- Personal use is prohibited unless specifically authorized.

#### B. Public Records and FOIA

- Records created, sent, received, or stored on Town systems may be public records under FOIA and retention laws.
- Such records may be disclosed upon request.
- Employees should conduct Town business understanding that electronic communications may be:
  - Reviewed
  - Retained
  - Disclosed as required by law
- Deleting, altering, or destroying records in violation of retention rules is prohibited.

#### C. Records Retention

- Comply with Town records retention schedules and state law.
- Records must be retained for the required period, regardless of format.
- Do not delete or dispose of records independently unless authorized.
- Questions regarding retention or disposal should be directed to the Town Clerk or Human Resources.

#### D. Security

Employees are responsible for:

- Safeguarding login credentials and passwords
- Preventing unauthorized access to systems or records
- Protecting sensitive or confidential information according to Town policy and law

#### E. Expectation of Privacy

- Use of Town equipment and systems may be monitored, accessed, or reviewed at any time under applicable law.
- Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using Town equipment or systems.

Noncompliance, improper use, or failure to protect systems or records may result in disciplinary action, up to termination.

## Public Speech

### A. Employee Rights

The Town of Appomattox respects and honors the First Amendment rights of employees to express personal opinions on matters of public concern and to post personal comments online (e.g., personal websites, blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or similar social media platforms).

However, Town employees have special responsibilities and obligations as public servants, which impose limits on speech that do not apply to private citizens. Employees must remain mindful of these responsibilities when engaging in personal activities, including social media and blogging.

### B. Limitations and Disciplinary Considerations

Employees whose public statements, internet postings, or social media activity interfere with the Town's ability to provide efficient and effective services may be subject to disciplinary action. Examples of conduct that may lead to discipline include, but are not limited to, statements or postings that:

1. Impair discipline or harmony among co-workers;
2. Interfere with the employee's job performance;
3. Disrupt or interfere with the operation of Town services;
4. Disclose confidential or sensitive governmental information; or
5. Harm working relationships that require personal loyalty, trust, or confidence.

Employees are encouraged to exercise caution and good judgment when posting online or making public statements. Personal expression must not:

- Represent or imply endorsement by the Town of Appomattox;
- Use Town equipment, time, or resources for political or personal commentary; or
- Violate other Town policies, such as Confidentiality, Political Activity, or Social Media Use.

## Gifts, Gratuities, and Conflict of Interest Policy

To maintain integrity, transparency, and public trust, employees of the Town of Appomattox must avoid actions that create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest.

### Prohibited Actions

- Employees may not solicit, accept, or receive any gift, gratuity, favor, service, reward, or anything of value—monetary or non-monetary—connected to their official duties, except as permitted by law.
- It is unlawful to solicit, offer, give, or accept anything of value in exchange for:
  1. Appointment to a position
  2. Selection for promotion or higher pay grade
  3. Granting special privileges or favorable treatment by any government agency
- Employees must avoid situations where acceptance of gifts or benefits could be perceived as influencing official judgment or decisions.
- Employees may not use non-public information from their position for personal benefit or disclose it to unauthorized individuals.

### Legal Requirements

- This policy is governed by the Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act (Va. Code § 2.2-3100 et seq.).
- Employees are responsible for understanding and complying with applicable conflict-of-interest laws, including disclosure and recusal requirements.
- Any potential or apparent conflict of interest must be promptly disclosed to a supervisor, Human Resources or the Town Clerk for guidance before taking action.

Violations of this policy or applicable laws may result in disciplinary action up to termination, and may also expose the employee to civil or criminal penalties under the law.

## Smoking

In accordance with the Virginia Clean Indoor Air Act (Virginia Code §§ 15.2-2823 and 15.2-2824) and to promote a safe, healthy, and comfortable environment for employees, visitors, and the public, the Town of Appomattox maintains a strict no-smoking policy on Town property.

This policy applies to all employees, visitors, contractors, and volunteers on Town-owned or Town-leased property, including buildings, vehicles, and workspaces.

For purposes of this policy, “smoking” includes the use of:

- Cigarettes, cigars, or pipes
- Electronic cigarettes and vaping devices
- Any other lighted or heated tobacco or nicotine-containing product, whether natural or synthetic

Smoking is prohibited in the following locations:

1. All enclosed areas of Town-owned or Town-leased buildings, including offices, meeting rooms, restrooms, hallways, and common areas.
2. All Town-owned or Town-leased vehicles.
3. All enclosed workspaces, whether permanent or temporary.

4. Within twenty-five (25) feet of any entrance, exit, operable window, or ventilation intake of a Town facility.

If designated smoking areas are established, they will be:

- Clearly identified
- Located to minimize interference with building access, pedestrian traffic, or ventilation systems

Employees, visitors, and contractors are expected to comply with this policy at all times. Failure to adhere may result in disciplinary action for employees or denial of access for visitors and contractors.

## Inclement Weather

Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled during inclement weather. Department Directors/Supervisors may approve leave when travel is unsafe, and the Town Manager may declare a weather emergency closing non-essential functions. Essential Employees must report to work unless otherwise directed and may be eligible for additional compensation or overtime.

- Municipal offices typically remain open during inclement weather to serve citizens.
- Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled unless otherwise directed.

### A. Departmental Adjustments

- Department Directors will assess staffing needs to ensure adequate service delivery.
- When travel is unsafe due to extreme weather, employees may request use of appropriate accrued leave (e.g., vacation, personal leave).
- Supervisory approval is required before leave may be used during inclement weather.

### B. Town Manager Declaration

- The Town Manager may declare a weather emergency and close non-essential Town functions.
- Employees who cannot report to work during emergency closures must generally use appropriate paid leave.

### C. Essential Employees

- Certain positions are designated essential to maintain critical operations, including emergency services, public safety, utilities, and other vital functions.

- Essential employees are required to report to work during inclement weather, even if non-essential functions are closed, unless otherwise directed by the Department Director/Supervisor or Town Manager.
- If unable to report due to documented unsafe conditions or personal emergencies, essential employees must notify their supervisor as soon as possible.
- Essential employees who work during inclement weather may be eligible for additional compensation or overtime according to Town policy and applicable law.

## Reporting Employee Accidents and Incidents

### A. Employee Responsibility

- Employees must report all on-the-job accidents or incidents, including minor injuries, near misses, or property damage, to their supervisor immediately—on the day of occurrence or as soon as reasonably possible.
- Timely reporting is critical. Failure to report may result in loss of Workers' Compensation benefits or delayed treatment.

### B. Supervisor Responsibility

Upon notification, supervisors must:

- Complete the Employee Accident Report form in writing
- Notify the Risk Management Team or Human Resources as soon as possible
- Ensure the injured employee receives appropriate medical attention and that the incident is properly documented

### C. Risk Management / HR Responsibilities

- Review the report and ensure proper Workers' Compensation procedures are followed
- Maintain records in compliance with Town policy and applicable law
- Initiate follow-up investigations to identify preventive measures and avoid recurrence

Prompt reporting protects both employees and the Town by ensuring:

- Timely medical evaluation
- Compliance with legal and insurance requirements
- Accurate documentation for safety improvement

## Financial Controls and Cash Handling

The Town is committed to safeguarding public funds and preventing loss, theft, or misuse through strong financial controls and accountability. These measures are designed to reduce the risk of fraud by appropriately dividing financial responsibilities, ensuring expenditures and adjustments are properly authorized, and maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct and public trust. This policy also supports audit readiness and transparency, promotes the timely detection of errors or irregularities, and ensures a prompt and consistent response to financial concerns.

### 1. Cash Handling

- Only authorized employees may accept or handle cash.
- Cash must never be left unattended or unsecured.
- Personal funds may not be commingled with Town funds.
- Cash drawers must be assigned to individual employees.
- Cash shortages or overages must be reported immediately.
- Employees may be held financially accountable for negligence.

### 2. Segregation of Duties

- No single employee shall control all phases of a transaction.
- Receiving payments, recording transactions, and reconciling accounts must be performed by different employees when feasible.
- Supervisory review is required where staffing limitations exist.

### 3. Authorization and Approval

- Written authorization required for refunds, voids, write-offs, and adjustments.
- Approval thresholds based on dollar amount.
- Documentation must support all approvals.

### 4. Ethical Conduct & Conflict of Interest

- Employees may not use their position for personal financial gain.
- Acceptance of gifts or gratuities from vendors or customers is prohibited.
- Outside employment must not create financial conflicts.

### 5. Records Retention & Documentation

- Receipts, logs, and reconciliation records must be retained per state retention schedules.
- Electronic records must be backed up and access-controlled.
- Falsification of financial records is grounds for discipline.

### 6. Audit & Monitoring

- Departments are subject to internal and external audits.
- Surprise cash counts may be conducted.
- Employees must cooperate fully with audits.

#### 7. Loss, Theft, and Incident Reporting

- Suspected theft or misuse must be reported immediately.
- Incidents must be documented in writing.
- Investigations may involve HR, Finance, or law enforcement.

Any suspected loss, theft, fraud, or financial irregularity shall be reported and handled in accordance with the Town's Suspected Theft and Fraudulent Transactions Policy

Employees assigned financial or cash-handling responsibilities are expected to exercise the highest level of integrity and care. Failure to comply with financial policies or procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

# Chapter 8

## Grievance Procedure

The Town of Appomattox is committed to maintaining a fair, respectful, and productive workplace. Employees deserve a prompt and impartial process for raising concerns regarding working conditions, disciplinary actions, or other employment matters. The Town encourages early, open communication and seeks to resolve concerns at the lowest organizational level possible.

Employees using this procedure will be free from discrimination, coercion, retaliation, restraint, or reprisal for filing a grievance or participating in another employee's grievance;

### I. Purpose and Eligibility

The grievance process is available to all regular full-time and part-time employees to address concerns related to the interpretation, application, or alleged violation of Town policies, procedures, or working conditions. Employees specifically excluded under Virginia Code § 15.2-1507 are not eligible, unless otherwise required by law.

This process does not apply to matters that are administrative in nature, including but not limited to position classification, pay structure, budget decisions, or other management rights, unless otherwise required by law. The Town reserves the right to determine the applicability of the grievance process in accordance with policy and operational needs.

The following positions are not covered by this grievance policy:

- Elected officials
- Town Manager
- Department Directors and Equivalent
- Temporary, seasonal, contract, and grant-funded employees
- Volunteers
- Any position designated as "at-will" by law or ordinance

### II. Definition of Grievance

A grievance is a written complaint by an eligible employee regarding:

1. Disciplinary actions, including written reprimands, suspensions, demotions, and terminations;
2. Application of Town personnel policies or procedures;
3. Alleged retaliation for using this grievance process or participating in another employee's grievance;

4. Alleged discrimination on the basis of any legally protected class;
5. Alleged retaliation for lawful reporting of violations of law, fraud, abuse, or gross mismanagement.

### Non-Grievable Matters

The following matters are NOT subject to this grievance process:

- Wage or salary levels, benefits, or position classifications
- Work assignments or job duties reasonably associated with the position
- Policies, procedures, ordinances, or laws adopted by the Town
- Performance evaluations, counseling, and coaching discussions
- Hiring, promotion, or transfer decisions (unless failure to follow established procedures is alleged)
- Management rights related to direction of the workforce
- Layoffs, job abolishment, or reorganization based on operational needs
- Voluntary resignations

Employees may still request administrative review of non-grievable matters through HR.

### III. Guiding Principles

- Issues should be raised promptly and in good faith.
- The process emphasizes resolution, not adversarial procedures.
- Only individuals with a direct role in the grievance will attend meetings.
- Information will be handled professionally and shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- Employees may have a support person or representative present beginning at Step 3; the employee is responsible for any personal representation costs.

### IV. Steps in the Grievance Process

#### Step 1: Informal Discussion (Supervisor Level)

- The employee should notify their immediate supervisor of the concern within 20 calendar days of the action or event.
- The supervisor will meet with the employee and attempt to resolve the matter informally.
- A verbal response will be provided within 10 calendar days.

If the issue is not resolved, the employee may proceed to Step 2.

#### Step 2: Formal Written Grievance (Department Director Level)

- Within 10 calendar days of receiving the Step 1 response, the employee must submit a written grievance to their Department Director using the Town's official grievance form.
- The Director will meet with the employee and relevant staff within 10 calendar days.

- The Director will issue a written response within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

### Step 3: Town Manager Review

- If unresolved, the employee may appeal to the Town Manager (or designee) within 10 calendar days of the Step 2 decision.
- A meeting will be scheduled within 10 calendar days.
- The Town Manager (or designee) may approve, modify, or reverse the previous decision.
- A written decision will be provided within 10 calendar days.

The Town Manager's determination may be appealed to Step 4.

### Step 4: Grievance Review Panel

- The employee may request a Panel review within 10 calendar days of the Step 3 decision.
- The Panel will be composed of three impartial members:
  1. One member appointed by the grievant
  2. One leadership representative
  3. One neutral third-party, appointed by those two
- A hearing will be scheduled within 15 calendar days.
- The Panel will review documentation, hear statements, and issue a written decision within 10 calendar days of the hearing.
- The Panel's decision is final, subject to applicable law.

## V. Representation

At Steps 3 and 4, employees may select a representative of their choice. If legal counsel is used, management may also include counsel. Employees are responsible for their own representation costs.

## VI. Requirements and Timeline

- Timelines may be extended by mutual written agreement.
- Failure to meet procedural deadlines without just cause may result in dismissal of the grievance or acceptance of the previous decision.
- New evidence should be presented as early as possible; withholding evidence may limit its consideration later.

## VII. Prohibition on Retaliation

Retaliation against any employee for filing or participating in a grievance is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

## VIII. Confidentiality

All grievance materials will be maintained as confidential personnel records and retained in accordance with the Town's records policy. Human Resources will maintain the official grievance file once a grievance is reduced to writing.

## IX. Finality and Good-Faith Use of Process

- Employees must clearly state the specific relief sought in the written grievance.
- Relief must be personal to the employee and compatible with Town policies and law.
- Once resolved or closed, the grievance is final.

The finality of this process is subject to compliance with applicable federal and state law, including employee rights to external administrative remedies.

## X. HR Support

- Assist employees in understanding the process
- Provide required forms
- Offer neutral administrative support
- Ensure consistent application of the policy
- HR does not advocate for either party

Human Resources will maintain documentation to ensure proper filing with the Circuit Court Clerk in accordance with Virginia Code § 15.2-1507.

Nothing in this policy limits the Town's authority to manage operations, assign work, or take actions necessary for safety, efficiency, service delivery, or legal compliance.

## XI. Statutory Certification and Filing

- This grievance procedure has been reviewed and certified by the Town Attorney and the Town Manager (or designee) as compliant with Virginia Code § 15.2-1507.
- A copy of the certified grievance procedure is filed with the Circuit Court Clerk of Appomattox County, as required by law.
- Any amendments or revisions to this policy will also be reviewed, certified, and filed in accordance with Virginia law.

Nothing in this grievance procedure limits an employee's rights under federal or state law, including the right to file a complaint with the EEOC, the Virginia Division of Human Rights, or other applicable agencies.

## Appendices

Appendix A – Handbook Acknowledgment Form

Appendix B – IT Acceptable Use Agreement

Appendix C - Confidentiality & Data Security Acknowledgment Agreement

Appendix D – Social Media Policy Acknowledgment

**Appendix E - Compensation Plan**

Appendix F – Organizational Chart

Appendix materials are provided for reference and may be updated independently of the Employee Handbook;

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

## Town of Appomattox

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Employee Handbook of the Town of Appomattox (“Employer”). I understand that the handbook contains important information regarding Employer policies, procedures, benefits, and employee responsibilities.

I understand and agree that:

1. Policy Compliance

I am responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with all policies and procedures in the handbook and any referenced appendices, policies, or separate agreements.

2. At-Will Employment

I understand that my employment is at-will and may be terminated by me or the Employer at any time, with or without cause or notice, except as otherwise provided by law or contract.

3. Separate Policy Acknowledgments

I acknowledge that I have received or will receive separate agreements for:

- Confidentiality and Data Security
- IT Acceptable Use
- Social Media Policy (if issued separately)

4. Public Records and FOIA

I understand that records created or maintained in the course of my employment may be public records subject to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Va. Code § 2.2-3700 et seq.) and the Virginia Public Records Act. I agree not to independently respond to FOIA requests and to follow Employer procedures for records management and disclosure.

5. Cybersecurity and Data Protection

I understand that I must follow all Employer cybersecurity, data protection, and records retention policies and must report suspected security incidents or unauthorized disclosures immediately.

6. Benefits and VRS

I understand that retirement benefits, if applicable, are administered through the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and that official plan terms are governed by VRS statutes and plan documents.

7. No Contract of Employment

I understand that the handbook is not a contract of employment and that the Employer may modify, revoke, suspend, terminate, or change any policy at any time, with or without notice, subject to applicable law.

8. Acknowledgment of Updates

I agree that I am responsible for staying informed of policy updates and that revised policies may be issued separately or electronically.

### Employee Acknowledgment

I certify that I have received the Employee Handbook, understand its contents, and agree to comply with its policies and procedures.

Employee Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Confidentiality & Data Security Acknowledgment Agreement

I acknowledge that, in the course of my employment with the Town of Appomattox (“Employer”), I may have access to confidential, sensitive, or protected information, including but not limited to personnel records, protected health information, financial data, security-related information, and other information exempt from disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Va. Code § 2.2-3700 et seq.

I agree to:

1. Maintain the confidentiality of all non-public information obtained through my employment.
2. Use such information solely for legitimate business purposes.
3. Not disclose confidential or protected information to unauthorized persons during or after my employment.
4. Comply with all Employer data security, cybersecurity, records retention, and information technology policies.
5. Immediately report any suspected data breach, unauthorized disclosure, or cybersecurity incident to my supervisor or the Employer’s designated security officer.

I understand that certain records are public records subject to FOIA and that only authorized officials may release public records. I agree not to independently respond to FOIA requests or disclose public records without authorization.

I understand that this obligation continues after my employment ends and that violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may result in civil or criminal penalties.

Employee Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## IT Acceptable Use Agreement

I acknowledge that the Town of Appomattox provides access to information technology systems, including computers, networks, email, internet access, mobile devices, and software (“IT Systems”) for business purposes.

I agree to:

1. Use Employer IT Systems primarily for legitimate business purposes and in compliance with all Employer policies and applicable laws.
2. Protect passwords and authentication credentials and not share them with others.
3. Not install unauthorized software, hardware, or external devices without approval.
4. Not access, transmit, or store inappropriate, illegal, or non-work-related content that violates Employer policy or law.
5. Protect sensitive and confidential information from unauthorized access, disclosure, or loss.
6. Report suspected cybersecurity incidents, phishing attempts, malware, or unauthorized access immediately.

I understand that:

- Employer IT Systems are the property of the Employer.
- There is no expectation of privacy when using Employer IT Systems, subject to applicable law.
- Electronic records created or stored on Employer systems may be public records subject to FOIA and records retention laws.

I understand that violations of this agreement may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may result in civil or criminal penalties.

Employee Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Social Media Policy Acknowledgment

I acknowledge receipt of the Town Appomattox Social Media Policy and understand my responsibilities regarding the use of social media.

I understand that:

1. When speaking as an employee or representing the Employer, I must comply with all Employer policies, including professionalism, confidentiality, and anti-harassment standards.
2. I may not disclose confidential, sensitive, or non-public information, including information exempt from disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
3. I may not use Employer logos, insignia, or official titles in a manner that implies official endorsement without authorization.
4. I must not make statements that are discriminatory, harassing, or that undermine public trust in the Employer while acting in my official capacity.

I understand that this policy is not intended to restrict lawful speech protected under the First Amendment or applicable labor laws, including lawful discussion of working conditions. However, violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Employee Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_