



Meeting Date: September 28, 2026

Submitter: Ashley Monroe, Assistant City Administrator/HR Director

Department: Administration / Human Resources

Agenda Item: Draft 2026 City of Crest Hill Employee Handbook Updates

Summary: At the July 27th and August 24th Work Sessions, staff presented recommended legal updates and preliminary conceptual changes to the Employee Handbook. The following memo and attached exhibits comprehensively summarize the proposed amendments for the Employee Handbook in 2026.

Representation from our City labor attorney Melissa Wolf, of Storino, Ramello, & Durkin will also be present to provide clarifications as needed, related to these requests for changes.

All minor cleanup and corrections proposed are now included in this summary and within the redline version of the Handbook (Exhibit B).

Highlights: Included, you will find a “Handbook Updates Summary Chart” attached as Exhibit A. Organized by section, this chart shows all current language, proposed language, and the reason for making a change.

Beyond the legal recommendations shared in July, there are a few topics that Council directed be given more attention or requested specific draft policy language. Here are the sections and page numbers that address these questions:

1) Appointments (Section 3.9)

Resolving questions about conflicting policy and ordinances, the subsection now specifies that the appointment of employees are made in accordance with the City’s Ordinances.

2) Recruitment and Employment (Section 3)

A temporary offsite work policy had been suggested at prior Work Sessions, but taking into consideration feedback received from Council and staff, along with our current practice, no new policy is recommended at this time. Based upon the updated Code of Conduct in Section 5.2, sufficient policy is in place to address concern, should a potential violation of work conduct occur.

3) Work Day (Section 4.2)

Practice is not changed but language gives additional direction to supervisors and employees for establishing break, meal and adjustments to work days. Additional provision specifies operational expectations while allowing administrative discretion.

4) Compensation and Salary Increase (Section 4.3)

Adds an explanation of when personnel performance and merit evaluations occur for employees hired or promoted prior to and after June 1, 2025.

5) Break and Meal Periods (Section 4.8)

Language is clarified so employees and supervisors have improved guidance and removes conflicting language with subsection 4.2 Work Day.

6) Overtime Pay (Section 4.9)

Current practice has not changed but the updated language and charts provide clarification on how overtime is paid.

7) Code of Conduct (Section 5.2)

Updates subsection to include behavior and conduct commonly included in employee manuals.

8) Confidentiality Policy (Section 5.7)

Adds provision that mirrors City Council Confidentiality policy adopted in summer 2026, for employees attending closed meetings.

9) Insurance Opt-Out Policy – NEW (Section 7.12)

If the City moves forward with this program, it will allow employees that would otherwise be eligible for City health insurance to get a monetary benefit for waiver of City insurance. This benefit is shared between the employer and the employee, because even with a stipend for waiving insurance, an opt-out program saves City insurance cost. The inclusion of the language does not require the City to provide this benefit. If the City does move forward, the provision permits the City to establish and follow a policy if such a benefit program is approved and budgeted. An example of comparison communities & staff's proposed benefit options are attached as Exhibit C.

10) Personal Use of Electric Devices – NEW (Section 9.9)

Includes new policy requiring employees to verify that use of personal electric devices and appliances will be in alignment with building safety and utility capacity.

11) Artificial Intelligence Policy – NEW (Section 11.7)

Artificial intelligence continues to evolve rapidly, and municipalities are increasingly using these tools in daily operations. Rather than prohibiting AI or allowing unrestricted use, this proposal establishes a basic framework for responsible use.

12) Performance Evaluation Form (Section 16)

The previous version of the Handbook did not include the current evaluation tool.

Recommended Action

Discuss any final changes for this update to the Handbook, provide direction, and authorize staff to prepare a resolution to incorporate and adopt changes recommended by staff and Council for the 2026 Handbook.

Budget Impact

No direct budgetary impact is anticipated with an update to the Employee Handbook. Matters that could require changes to budgeted projects, programs or benefits, will follow City policy and procedures at the time they are considered for implementation.

Attachments

- Exhibit A – Handbook Updates Summary
- Exhibit B – Redlined Crest Hill Employee Handbook
- Exhibit C – Insurance Opt-Out Waiver Comparison and Examples