

Executive Summary – Personnel Policy Revisions (2014 to Draft v4)

The City of Castroville Personnel Policies have undergone their first major revision since 2014. This document summarizes the key changes incorporated into Draft v4, including those required by federal and state law, those recommended by the Texas Municipal League (TML), and those adopted by administrative or Council direction to improve operations.

1. Federal and State Law Driven Changes

- **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):** Expanded protected classes per federal and Texas Labor Code (disability, pregnancy, genetic information, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, hairstyle protections).
- **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** Expanded detail to include eligibility, intermittent leave, restoration rights, and required notices (federal law).
- **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (2023):** Added requirement for reasonable accommodations and lactation breaks (federal law).
- **Whistleblower Protections:** Incorporated protections under Texas Whistleblower Act (Gov't Code Ch. 554).
- **First Responder Leave:** Added quarantine, mental health, and line-of-duty illness leave in line with Texas statutes.
- **Overtime Calculation:** Clarified compliance with FLSA; holiday hours included for hourly staff (except police), sick/vacation excluded.
- **OSHA/Safety Programs:** Referenced Hazard Communication, PPE, Confined Space, Lockout/Tagout, Bloodborne Pathogens, and Driving Safety compliance.

2. Council/Administrative Policy Updates

- **Longevity Pay:** Updated provisions to reflect current practice and equity goals.
- **Certification Pay:** Added policy for professional certifications to improve recruitment and retention.
- **Police Holidays:** Increased from 8 to 12 hours per holiday to reflect equity with other schedules.
- **Compensatory Time:** Removed due to ADP system limitations and audit compliance concerns.
- **Vacation Leave:** Corrected gaps in accrual schedule for years of service.

- **Holiday Schedule:** Updated annually; clarified that the City no longer credits separate holiday leave.
- **Inclement Weather/Emergency Situations:** Incorporated new provisions for closure, admin leave, and emergency response pay (double time for called-in employees).
- **Communicable Disease/COVID-19 Protocols:** Added detailed exposure response policies in line with CDC and Texas DSHS guidance.

3. Best Practices and Clarifications

- **At-Will Employment:** Clarified orientation period does not change at-will status.
- **Discipline:** Modified from rigid progressive discipline to a flexible model allowing management discretion.
- **Pay Transparency:** Affirmed employees may discuss wages/working conditions consistent with NLRA protections.
- **Sick Leave Documentation:** Limited to 3+ consecutive days unless otherwise required, reducing risk of leave law violations.
- **Social Media/Technology Use:** Narrowed restrictions to protect confidential information and city reputation without infringing employee rights.
- **Removed any language allowing appeals to the Mayor and City Council consistent with legal counsel's advice.**

These revisions bring the City of Castroville's Personnel Policies into compliance with current legal standards, address administrative needs identified since 2014, and modernize the handbook to reflect best practices for municipal government operations.