



# Town of Georgia Personnel Policy

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## 2 Title and Authority

- 2.1.1** This policy shall be known as the Town of Georgia personnel policy. It has been adopted by the Town of Georgia Selectboard pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §§ 1121 and 1122. This policy supersedes and replaces all prior manuals, policies, benefits, and practices of the Town of Georgia, hereafter “the Town” regarding employment and personnel matters.
- 2.1.2** Unless otherwise provided by statute or written contract, employment with the Town of Georgia is at-will and not for any definite period or succession of periods of time. The Town or the employee may terminate employment at any time, for any reason or no reason, with or without notice or cause. This policy is not, and should not, be construed as an express or implied contract and it does not modify any existing at-will status or any Town employee. The selectboard reserves the right to revise, modify, delete, or add to any and all policies, rules or benefits described in this personnel policy for any reason and at any time, with or without notice.
- 2.1.3** This personnel policy will be administered by the Town Selectboard or its authorized representative.
- 2.1.4** **Selectboard Administration.** Except as otherwise stated herein, these Policies and Rules shall be administered by the Selectboard or its authorized representative(s), and all references herein to the Selectboard shall include such authorized representatives.
- 2.1.5. Library Board of Trustees.** With regard to Georgia Public Library employees, the administration of rules and regulations are reserved to the Library Board of Trustees. The Selectboard and Library Trustees may agree to consult regarding such administration and may further agree **in writing** to Selectboard oversight and handling of matters such as payroll and benefits.
- 2.1.6** **Department Head.** For the purposes of administration of these policies and rules, “Department Head” or “Supervisors” shall be defined as follows unless otherwise designated: The Highway Department Head shall be the Director of Public Works; The Department Head of the Municipal Offices, and for employees not covered under another department, shall be the Town Administrator; The Fire and Rescue Department Head shall be the Fire Chief; The Georgia Public Library Department Head shall be the Library Board of Trustee Chair.
- 2.1.7** **Resolving Employee Concerns.** An employee should present concerns related to these Policies and Rules, or otherwise related to employment with the Town, to their “Department Head”. If not resolved, the employee may submit to the Selectboard a written request to address such concerns and the Selectboard may in its discretion choose to address the matter.

## 3 HIRING and EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

- 3.1.1. Selectboard Hiring Authority.** Except as specified otherwise herein, only the Selectboard is authorized to appoint employees to work for the Town, except for the library staff who will be hired by the Library Board of Trustees.
- 3.1.2. Hiring criteria.** All appointments to positions in the service of the Town of Georgia shall be made based on merit and competence and the needs of the Town. Education, experience, aptitude, knowledge, skills, character, physical fitness (where necessary for the essential functions of the position), personality, and all other qualifications deemed necessary for the satisfactory performance of the duties of the position to be filled shall be considered and weighed as appropriate.

- 3.1.3. Equal Employment Opportunity.** It is the policy of the Town to provide equal employment opportunities to all persons. The Town does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, disability, veteran status, ancestry, pregnancy, gender identity, place of birth, HIV status, or any other basis recognized under local, state, or federal law ("Protected Bases"). This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, training, compensation, layoff, and termination.
- 3.1.4. Physical Examination.** Applicants may be offered positions in which good health or physical abilities are required for the essential functions of the job. Any such offer of employment may be conditioned upon a satisfactory physical examination at the expense of the Town.
- 3.1.5. Drug Testing.** All applicants may be required to take a drug test at the expense of the Town after an offer of employment which offer may be made conditioned on a negative test result. All such applicants for a position requiring a CDL license shall be drug tested prior to the start date, and again each year for entirety of employment. CDL licensed employees are subject to random drug testing, provided by the Town of Georgia, testing is performed by outside agent. All such information shall be shared only as reasonably necessary or as required by law. CDL licensed applicants and employees are required to read and acknowledge they have read the Town's Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing Policy for Employee-Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers.

## 4 Persons Not Covered and Covered

### Not Covered

- 4.1.1** This policy does not cover elected officials such as the municipal clerk who are independent officials answerable only to the electorate and not subject to a municipal personnel policy.
- 4.1.2** By state statute, the municipal clerk must appoint assistants. These statutory assistants serve at the pleasure of the Town Clerk and may hold office for the duration of the clerk or until the clerk revokes such appointments. These statutory assistants report to the officer appointing them and not to the Selectboard. Accordingly, though they are compensated by the Town for their work, statutory assistants are not covered by this policy except as noted below.

### Covered

- 4.1.3.** This personnel policy applies to full-time and part-time employees of the Town of Georgia.
- 4.1.4** With a separate written agreement, elected officers and their statutory assistants, members of the Town boards and commissions, including the Library Trustees, volunteers, seasonal employees and persons who provide the Town with services on a contract basis may be covered by this policy. See Attachment A "Personnel Acknowledgement" and/or Attachment B "Agreement by Independently Elected Officer to be Bound by Personnel Policy"
- 4.1.5** For the purposes of this policy, a full-time employee is an employee who works at least 40 hours per week on a regular and continuing basis. A part-time employee is an employee who works fewer than 34 hours per week on a regular and continuing basis.
- 4.1.6** Where a conflict exists between this policy and any collective bargaining agreement the latter will control.

## 5 TYPES OF APPOINTMENTS

- 5.1.1. In General.** All the following types of appointments are employed with the Town. All appointed employees are subject to all applicable Town policies pertaining to performance and conduct, including those set out in this Personnel Policy.
- 5.1.2. Full-Time.** A full-time employee works at least 40 hours per week on a continuing basis (indefinite term). Full-time employees receive in full all the benefits the Town provides pursuant to these Personnel Policies.”
- 5.1.3. Student Appointments.** Student appointments have the purpose of affording an opportunity to gain actual work experience and provide service to the Town. Such appointments are for a definite period, not to exceed 12 months, and may be paid or unpaid. Student appointees shall not be eligible for benefits.
- 5.1.4. Emergency Appointments.** When necessary, appointment of employees on a temporary basis may be authorized by the Department Head with the approval of the Selectboard for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days. Such appointees shall not be eligible for benefits.
- 5.1.5. Permanent Part-time Employees.** Permanent part-time employees are employees who work less than 34 hours per week but on a regular basis. Permanent part-time employees working at least 30 hours per week, as well as permanent part-time employees hired on or before January 1, 2014, shall receive benefits on a pro-rated scale, and all other permanent part-time employees shall not be eligible for benefits except as otherwise herein stated.
- 5.1.6. Per-Diem and Seasonal Employees.** Part-time and seasonal employees are employees who work on a seasonal or irregular basis and are not eligible for benefits.
- 5.1.7. Limited-term Appointments.** Limited term appointments are made when a special project requires the appointment of employees for a specific time, or to temporarily fill a the position of an employee on a leave of absence. Such employees may receive benefits at the discretion of the Selectboard.
- 5.1.8. Fire and Rescue Department.** The Selectboard shall appoint a Chief, an Assistant Chief, and Captains of the Fire Department as it deems necessary. Firefighters shall be appointed by the Fire Chief subject to these Policies and with the prior approval of the Selectboard. Fire and Rescue Department employees are not eligible for benefits and are not permanent part-time employees.

## 6 Probationary Period

**6.1.1** All new employees will be required to complete a six-month probationary period. The purpose of this probationary period is to determine whether the employee is suited for the job. During the probationary period, an employee may be terminated at any time at the sole discretion of the department head with the approval of the Selectboard. Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, an employee terminated during the probationary period will have no right to appeal such termination.

## 7 Conduct of Employees

- 7.1.1** All employees are considered representatives of the Town of Georgia and as such are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous, helpful, and respectful manner in all their interactions with the public, other employees, and elected and appointed officials.
- 7.1.2** All employees are expected to perform the duties and responsibilities of their office to the best of their ability and in compliance with the provisions of this personnel policy.
- 7.1.3. Maintenance and Access.** Personnel records will be maintained for each employee of the Town. An employee or employee's designated representative may inspect or copy their own personnel records at a mutually agreeable time during regular office hours. The Town reserves the right to have an authorized representative present at the time its files are examined or copied. Personnel records will be maintained in a secure fashion and shared only to the extent necessary or as required by law.
- 7.1.4. Reference Request.** Except as otherwise required by law, the Town will normally limit its response to a request for personnel information concerning a current or former employee to dates of employment and positions held.

## 8 Hours of Service

- 8.1.1** Regular work hours for people employed at the Town Hall or other Town offices shall be 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, with 30 minutes' paid time allowed for lunch.
- 8.1.2** Regular work hours for the road crew shall be 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with 30-minute unpaid lunch break. Employees may with the permission of their supervisor, work 7:00 AM to 3:00 Pm with no paid lunch break, as noted in the July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2027 Local Union 668 agreement.
- 8.1.3** Regular work hours may be changed at the discretion of the Town and employees may be asked to work additional hours that may exceed forty hours in each week, as circumstances require. All road crew employees asked to come in for work on an on-call basis, known as the Call Back/Call In section 9.3 of the July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2027, Local Union 668 agreement, especially during the winter months. All Town employees are required to be available for work in the event of an emergency, weather-related or otherwise.
- 8.1.4** All employees are expected to be in attendance during regular work hours. Employees who will be absent from work are expected to notify their supervisor in advance whenever possible. Employees who are sick and unable to work as scheduled are expected to notify their supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than 8 a.m., absent an emergency.

## 9 Outside Employment

- 9.1.1** The primary occupation of all full-time employees shall be with the Town. Employees may not engage in any outside business activities during their normal working hours. Employees are prohibited from undertaking outside employment that interferes with their job performance or constitutes a conflict of interest, as defined in our Ethics and Conflicts of Interest Policy.
- 9.1.2** Prior to accepting any outside employment, employees will disclose their intent to do so in writing and obtain prior approval from their supervisor that such employment does not constitute a conflict of interest.

## 10 Political Activity

- 10.1.1** No employee may use their official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the nomination or election of any candidate for public office, or demand or solicit from any individual direct or indirect participation in any political party, political organization or support of any political candidate. Employees are prohibited from using Town facilities, equipment or resources for political purposes and from pursuing political activities while working.
- 10.1.2** This personnel policy is not to be construed to prevent employees from becoming or continuing to be members of any political party or organization, from attending political party or organization meetings or events, or from expressing their views on political matters, so long as these views are clearly articulated as being those of the individual and not of the Town, and these activities do not interfere with the individual's ability to effectively perform their duties and take place or are expressed during non-working hours. Nor is this personnel policy to be construed as prohibiting, restraining or in any manner limiting an individual's right to vote with complete freedom in any election.

## 11 Alcohol and Drug Use

- 11.1.1** The Town maintains a drug-free workplace and workforce. The use of alcohol or illegal drugs and the abuse of prescription drugs are not tolerated in the workplace or at work-related events.
- 11.1.2** As a Town employee, you are prohibited from working, or presenting yourself for work, while under the influence, or severe after effects, of illegal drugs, controlled substances, and/or alcohol. This policy is designed to promote our goal of providing a safe, healthy and productive work environment. This policy covers all employees, including drivers and other employees who also are subject to drug testing programs performed in accordance with Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements.
- 11.1.3** It is the policy of the Town to prohibit the manufacture, distribution, transfer, display, transportation, sale, dispensation, possession, consumption or use of illegal drugs, controlled substances, and/or alcohol by Town employees at the workplace and/or during working hours.
- 11.1.4** For the purposes of this policy, the term “illegal drug” includes both: (a) all state and/or federally controlled substances, including look-alike and designer drugs, and drug paraphernalia, and (b) prescription medications that have not been prescribed for current use by an authorized medical practitioner or that are being used contrary to the prescribing medical practitioner’s instructions. Controlled substances include but are not limited to the following substances: marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP), barbiturates, benzodiazepine, methadone, methaqualone, and propoxyphene.
- 11.1.5** Violations of this policy may subject employees to discipline, up to and including termination of employment and referral for prosecution.
- 11.1.6** The Town reserves the right to search for and inspect all areas of the workplace and its premises for the purpose of maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.
- 11.1.7** The improper use of prescribed drugs is also prohibited. If an employee is legally taking prescription drugs that affect the employee’s ability to safely perform any of the essential functions of their job, their supervisor or the Town Administrator will determine whether the employee should continue to perform their functions until concerns regarding safety can be addressed. Medical certification may be required

#### **Exceptions**

- 11.1.8** Employees with valid prescriptions for use of medical marijuana are not permitted to work under the influence of marijuana. Employees may be disciplined for working under the influence of marijuana, whether prescribed or not, up to and including termination. Employees with valid prescriptions for medical marijuana use will not be disciplined unless they report for work or work under the influence of marijuana.

## **12 Tobacco/Vaping Use**

- 12.1.1** In recognition of the hazards that tobacco poses to the health of employees, and in accordance with 18 V.S.A. §§ 1421 et seq. and §§ 1741 et seq., the Town hereby prohibits employees’ use of tobacco in any form, including electronic cigarettes, vaping and chewing tobacco in all publicly-owned buildings, offices and enclosed areas, designated smoke-free areas of Town property, and in all Town vehicles.

## **13 Performance Evaluations**

**13.1.1** Employees may be subject to job performance evaluations at such times and in such a manner as the Town Selectboard or the Town Selectboard's authorized representative deems reasonable. The results of such evaluations will be provided to the employee, the employee's supervisor, and the Town Administrator and will become a part of the employee's personnel file.

## **14 Use of Town Equipment**

**14.1.1** The use of Town equipment or property for personal use is strictly prohibited. Employees should have no expectation of privacy regarding anything stored in or on Town-owned property or Town-owned equipment, including but not limited to desks, filing cabinets, lockers, and vehicles. Employees should expect that such areas are subject to search by the Town at any time to retrieve work-related materials or to investigate violations of workplace rules.

### **14.1.2 Driver Authorization Evaluation and Requirements to use Town Vehicles**

All Town employees, as well as volunteers, must receive prior Town authorization to operate municipal vehicles. The Town may require employees and volunteers to submit to authorization procedures on a periodic basis. The following are the minimum required for authorization.

- a. Employees must possess a valid driver's license of the proper type and class for the vehicle operated.
- b. Safe and lawful operation of municipal vehicles is a requirement of an authorized driver.
- c. Employees are required, upon request, to authorize the Town to access the Department of Motor Vehicle records.
- d. An employee must notify their department head within forty-eight (48) hours of being charged with a moving violation, regardless of whether the moving violations occurred during performance of Town duties and regardless of whether the employee was operating a private vehicle or the Town's vehicle.
- e. Employees must permit the Town to annually check the driving records of all first responders and all employees authorized to drive town vehicles.

## 15 Use of Town Computer System

- 15.1.1** For purposes of this policy, "computer system" means all computers and devices and any related hardware, equipment, components, or software, including, but not limited to, host computers, file servers, workstation terminals, laptops, tablets, smartphones, internal or external communication networks, the world wide web (www), the Internet, commercial online services, bulletin board systems, backup systems, and the internal and external e-mail systems accessed via the Town's computer equipment.
- 15.1.2** The Town provides electronic communications systems for use in carrying out its business. All communication and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of the Town and, as such, are intended to be used for job-related purposes only. Data and information on the system belongs to the Town and will not be considered personal to the employee. Town employees should avoid conducting Town business using their personal computer, device, or accounts, excluding patron records, in regards to library computers.
- 15.1.3** Employees should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality regarding anything created, sent or received on the Town computer system, whether they have been assigned a confidential password or not. The Town reserves the right to monitor at any time its computer system and data with or without notice. All files, documents, data and other electronic messages created, received or stored on the Town computer system are open to review and regulation by the Town and may be subject to the provisions of Vermont's Public Records Act and may be covered by the record retention requirements of the State of Vermont's General Records Schedules or Disposition Orders. Accordingly, employees shall not discard or delete any files, documents, data, and other electronic messages created, received, or stored on the Town's computer system except as in accordance with the law. Questions regarding the requirements of the Public Records Act, General Records Schedules, or Disposition Orders as they apply to specific files, documents or data should be directed to the employee's supervisor or the Town Administrator.
- 15.1.4.** Only legally licensed software can be installed on the Town's computers. Employees are prohibited from introducing software from any outside source on the Town's computer system without explicit prior authorization from their supervisor. Employees may be held responsible for any damage caused by using unauthorized software or viruses they introduce into the Town computer system. Software (including applications, demos, upgrades) shall not be copied or installed without the permission of the Town Administrator or Department Head. Virus protection software shall not be removed or disabled. Employees must follow Town guidelines for scanning all incoming communications and media. All data disks and files entering or leaving the Town should be scanned for viruses. Employees should log off of the network when they will be away from their desk for an extended period.
- 15.1.5** Transmission of electronic messages on the Town computer system shall be treated with the same degree of propriety, professionalism, and confidentiality as written correspondence.

### **Prohibited Usages**

- 15.1.6.** Communications that in any way may be construed by others as disruptive, offensive, abusive, discriminatory, harassing, or threatening.
- 15.1.7.** Communications of sexually explicit images or messages.

- 15.1.8.** Transmission of chain letters or solicitations for personal gain, commercial or investment ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-job-related solicitations during or after work hours.
- 15.1.9.** Accessing Internet resources, including web sites and news groups, that are inappropriate in a business setting.
- 15.1.10.** Any other use that may compromise the integrity of the Town and its business in any way.
- 15.1.11.** Nothing in this policy will be interpreted or applied in a manner that interferes with employee rights to organize, form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their choosing to the extent allowed by law, or to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of addressing the terms and conditions of employment.

## **16 Public Records**

- 16.1.1** Any written or recorded information that is produced or acquired by a Town employee during Town business is a public record, subject to Vermont's Public Records Act and may be covered by the State of Vermont's retention rules and disposition schedules for municipal records. Although the Town discourages the use of personal computers, devices, or accounts to conduct Town business (see Section 16, above), the use of a personal computer, device, or account does not prevent an otherwise public record from being subject to public inspection and copying. In the uncommon event that an employee uses their personal computer, device, or account to conduct Town business, the record created, sent, or received should be forwarded by the employee to the employee's Town computer system, or otherwise captured and retained as a Town record. All employees are required to respond in the manner prescribed by Vermont's Public Records Act regardless of where a Town public record may be stored. All employees must provide any public records stored in their personal computers, devices, or accounts that are responsive to a public records request.

## **17 Eligibility for Benefits**

- 17.1.1** Subject to the eligibility requirements of the insurance carriers, the Town offers group insurance and other benefit programs to its eligible full-time employees. Details about those benefits are available to employees at any time.
- 17.1.2.** This Personnel Policy is not contractual in nature and does not guarantee any continuance of insurance benefits. The Town reserves the right to change insurance carriers, or to add, delete or amend insurance or other benefit programs in its sole discretion. The Town also reserves the right to change the amount or percentage of its contribution to the cost of any group health insurance program. The Town will endeavor to provide employees with advance notice of any change in the contribution rate.

## 18 Holiday Leave

**18.1.1** Full- and part-time employees will receive the following paid holiday leave:

New Year's Day (January 1)

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday (3rd Monday in January)\*

Presidents Day (3rd Monday in February)

Town Meeting Day (1st Tuesday in March)\* Public Works/Highway Dept Only

Memorial Day (last Monday in May)

Independence Day (July 4)

Labor Day (1st Monday in September)

Indigenous Peoples' Day (second Monday in October)\*

Veterans' Day (November 11)

Thanksgiving Day (4th Thursday in November)

Christmas Day (December 25)

**18.1.2** Employees will receive holiday leave pay equal to the number of hours in the employee's regular work day on which the holiday falls, at the employee's regular rate of pay. Holiday leave that is not actually worked by an employee will not be included in calculating overtime for that employee.

**18.1.3** Holidays falling on a Saturday will be observed the preceding Friday. Holidays falling on a Sunday will be observed the following Monday.

**18.1.4** Holidays that fall during an employee's vacation leave will not be counted as vacation leave.

- a. Holidays marked \* may be used as a floating holiday and may be used with the prior authorization of the employee's department head.
- b. Employees will have half a day (1/2) before Christmas and half a day (1/2) before New Years Day, if falling on normal scheduled work day.

## 19 Vacation Leave

### Full-time employees only.

- 19.1.1** Vacation leave accrual begins on the date of hire on a **Per Pay Period basis**. Probationary employees accrue vacation time but may not use it during the employee's probationary period. An increase in the annual rate of accrual of vacation leave will occur on the anniversary of the date of hire.
- 19.1.2** Full-time employees will receive vacation leave pay at the employee's regular rate of pay. Leave must be taken in a minimum of half-hour increments.
- 19.1.3** Employees are strongly encouraged to take an annual vacation.
- 19.1.4** Employees are expected to make a timely request and make a reasonable effort to schedule vacations in accordance with the needs of the Town. Request for vacation should be submitted to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible but not less than one week in advance of the requested time off. Supervisors shall consider the Town's priorities of business and office coverage before granting such a request. Vacation will be scheduled at the discretion of the Supervisor upon consultation with the employee.
- 19.1.5** If an employee does not use all of the employee's accrued vacation leave in one calendar year, the employee may carry unused, accrued vacation leave forward to the next year up to a maximum of **40 vacation hours**. Any unused, accrued vacation leave that exceeds the amount carried forward will be forfeited.
- 19.1.6** An employee who resigns from employment with the Town will be compensated for unused, accrued vacation leave, with the exception that any employee who terminates during their probationary period will not be entitled to compensation for any accrued vacation time.

### Accrual rates

- 19.1.7** 1-3 years of employment accrues at 1.54 hours P.P.P, which is (2 weeks) per Year.
- 19.1.8** 4-7 years of employment accrues at 2.31 hours P.P.P, which is (3 weeks) per Year.
- 19.1.9** 8-13 years of employment accrues at 3.07 hours P.P.P, which is (4 weeks) per Year.
- 19.1.10** 14+ years of employment accrues at 3.84 hours P.P.P, which is (5 weeks) per Year.

## 20 Sick Leave

### Definition

- 20.1.1** For the purposes of this Section of the Policy, the following definition shall apply: “eligible employee” means an employee or an elected official of the Town who:
- a. is age 18 or older;
  - b. works an average of 18 or more hours per week during the year; and
  - c. is expected to work more than 20 weeks in a 12-month period.
- 20.1.2** This definition includes newly-hired employees and those who are still in their probationary period of employment.
- 20.1.3** This definition does not include an individual who:
- a. works on a per diem or intermittent basis.
  - b. works only when they indicate they are available to work.
  - c. is under no obligation to work for the Town; and
  - d. has no expectation of continuing employment with the Town.
- 20.1.4** Eligible employees earn one hour of paid sick leave for every fifty-two (52) hours worked by that employee. Such leave will accrue to the employee based on hours actually worked by that employee, including overtime hours worked.
- 20.1.5** The Town has no waiting period set for the use of accrued sick leave.
- 20.1.6** The Town sets a maximum of 120 hours of accrued sick leave that can be used within a calendar year.
- 20.1.7** Eligible employees may use paid leave in increments no smaller than 30 minutes.
- 20.1.8** An employee may use accrued sick leave for the purposes below:
- 20.1.9** The employee is ill or injured.
- 20.1.10** The employee obtains professional diagnostic, preventive, routine, or therapeutic health care.
- 20.1.11** The employee cares for a sick or injured parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, including helping that individual obtain diagnostic, preventive, routine, or therapeutic health treatment, or accompanying the employee’s parent, grandparent, spouse, or parent-in-law to an appointment related to their long-term care.
- 20.1.12** The employee is arranging for social or legal services or obtaining medical care or counseling for the employee or for the employee’s parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking or who is relocating as the result of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. As used in this section, “domestic violence,” “sexual assault,” and “stalking” shall have the same meanings as in 15 V.S.A. § 1151.
- 20.1.13** The employee cares for a parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, because the school or business where that individual is normally located during the employee’s workday is closed for public health or safety reasons.

- 20.1.14** Employees are expected to notify their supervisor prior to the first hour of the workday or sooner if they are unable to report to work due to illness or injury. For all other permitted purposes, employees are encouraged to provide written notice as soon as practicable of the intent to use earned sick time and the expected duration of the employee's absence. Employees are encouraged to make reasonable efforts to avoid scheduling routine or preventive health care or other appointments during regular work hours.
- 20.1.15** Compensation for the use of paid leave will be at the employee's regular rate of pay.
- 20.1.16** Use of this paid leave does not diminish the rights that an employee may have, if any, under the Vermont Parental Family Leave Act, 21 V.S.A. § 470.
- 20.1.17** The Town will not compensate eligible employees for unused, accrued sick leave at the time of separation from employment.

## **21 Bereavement Leave**

- 21.1.1** All employees may be provided with up to five days of paid bereavement leave related to the death of a close family member, domestic partner or member of an employee's household. The exact amount of time off is dependent upon the circumstances and subject to supervisor's/department head's approval. For purposes of this policy, close family members are defined as the following: spouse, domestic partner, parent, siblings, grandparent, child, stepchild, grandchild and up to three days for in-laws, cousins, aunts, uncles, niece/nephews.
- 21.1.2.** If additional time off is needed, or if time off is needed for the funeral of a friend or a relative who is not an immediate family member as defined above, nor a domestic partner, nor member of an employee's household, the employee's supervisor may grant, on a case-by-case basis, the use of a reasonable amount of accrued sick leave, if available, or, if not, unpaid leave. The amount of such time off, if approved, will depend upon the individual circumstances such as the distance to be traveled, closeness of the employee's relationship with the person who died or the employee's family, and the employee's level of responsibility in making funeral or other arrangements.
- 21.1.3.** Paid bereavement leave does not accrue and thus, when not used, is not carried forward into the next year nor compensated upon separation from employment.

## 22 Parental and Family Leave

- 22.1.1** Eligible employees may receive leave as described in the Vermont Parental and Family Leave Act (VPFLA). This State law will determine employee eligibility, the qualifying reasons for such leave and the length of leave.
- 22.1.2** The Town reserves the right to designate any qualifying leave of absence granted under this policy as leave under FMLA or the VPFLA. A request for leave must be made to the employee's supervisor. Where an employee's leave request is covered by the VPFLA and the FMLA, the Town will adhere to the law that provides the most benefits to the employee. If an employee is entitled to leave under both the VPFLA and FMLA, the leave periods will run concurrently.
- 22.1.3** For the purpose of determining the twelve-month period in which an employee may be entitled to VPFLA and/or FMLA leave, the Town will use a rolling twelve-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses such leave.

## 23 Short Term Family Leave

- 23.1.1** In accordance with 21 V.S.A. § 472a, eligible employees may be entitled to take unpaid leave not to exceed four hours in any thirty-day period and not to exceed twenty-four hours in any 12-month period for the following purposes:
- 23.1.2** To participate in preschool or school activities directly related to the academic educational advancement of the employee's child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee, such as a parent-teacher conference.
- 23.1.3** To attend or accompany the employee's child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee or the employee's parent, spouse or parent-in-law to routine medical or dental appointments.
- 23.1.4** To accompany the employee's parent, spouse or parent-in-law to other appointments for professional services related to their care and well-being; or
- 23.1.5** To respond to a medical emergency of the employee's child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee or the employee's parent, spouse or parent-in-law.
- 23.1.6** The Town may require that leave be taken in a minimum of two-hour segments. At the option of the employee, accrued paid leave may be used. Before taking leave under this section an employee shall make a reasonable attempt to schedule appointments outside of regular work hours. An employee shall provide the Town with the earliest possible notice of the intent to take short-term family leave, but in no case later than seven days before leave is to be taken, except in the case of an emergency where the required seven day notice could have a significant adverse impact on the family member of the employee.

## 24 Crime Victim Leave

- 24.1.1** In accordance with 21 V.S.A. § 472c, eligible employees who are crime victims may be entitled to take unpaid leave for the following purpose of attending a deposition or court proceeding related to:
- 24.1.2** A criminal proceeding when the employee has a legal right or obligation to appear at the proceeding.
- 24.1.3** A relief from abuse, neglect, or exploitation hearing when the employee is the plaintiff.

- 24.1.4 Hearings concerning an order against stalking or sexual assault, when the employee seeks the order as plaintiff.
- 24.1.5 A “crime victim” is a person who has:
  - 24.1.6 Obtained a relief from abuse order against a family or household member.
  - 24.1.7 Obtained a court order against stalking or sexual assault.
  - 24.1.8 Obtained a court order against abuse of a vulnerable adult; or
  - 24.1.9 Sustained physical, emotional or financial injury as the direct result of the commission or attempted commission of a crime or act of delinquency and is identified as a crime victim in an affidavit filed by law enforcement official with a prosecuting attorney. This also includes the victim’s child, foster child, parent, spouse, stepchild or ward of the victim who lives with the victim, or a parent of the victim’s spouse, provided that the individual is not identified in the affidavit as the defendant.
- 24.1.10 At the option of the employee, accrued sick leave, vacation leave, or any other accrued paid leave may be used.

## 25 Leave of Absence Without Pay

- 25.1.1 A request to take unpaid leave from employment for the purpose of attending Town meeting, must be made at least seven days prior to the date of the town meeting. Such leave will be granted by the employees’ supervisor if it does not cause an interruption in the essential operation of the town government.
- 25.1.2 Other requests for leaves of absence without pay for any reason other than those covered by federal or state law must be submitted in writing to the employee’s supervisor and must set forth the purpose for which the leave is requested. All leave requests must be for a definite period of time and include a specified date of return. If any leave is in excess of (5) five days, the request shall be forward to and approved by the Selectboard.
- 25.1.3 If a leave of absence without pay is granted, the employee may, at the Town’s sole discretion, continue the employee’s group health plan coverage by paying the required premium in accordance with the payment schedule established by the Town. Other employee benefits (e.g. sick leave, vacation, seniority, etc.) will not accrue during an unpaid leave period that exceeds 5 days.

## 26 Military Leave

- 26.1.1 Employees who take military leave subject to the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. §§ 4303 et seq., and 21 V.S.A. §§ 491 et seq. will be granted leave without pay. At the option of the employee, any unpaid leave accrued prior to the commencement of the leave may be used.

## 27 Civil Duty and Jury Duty Leave

- 27.1.1 All employees entitled to vote in national, state, and municipal elections shall be allowed sufficient time off with pay to exercise this right. Approval of such leaves shall be given by the employee’s supervisor.

- 27.1.2** The Town will compensate employees for their service as jurors or witnesses when their appearance is unrelated to their status as a Town employee at the employees' regular hourly rate. In accordance with 21 V.S.A. § 499, while serving as jurors or witnesses, employees will otherwise be considered in the service of the Town for purposes of determining seniority, benefits, credit towards vacations, sick leave, and other rights, privileges, and benefits of employment.
- 27.1.3** When Town employees are called to serve as a witness in a court proceeding due to their status as an employee of the Town, the Town will compensate the employee for the difference between their regular rate of pay and their compensation as a witness. The Town will pay the difference only when the employees' regular rate of pay exceeds their compensation as a witness.

## 28 Employee Compensation

- 28.1.1. Regular Pay and Hours of Service.** With the approval of the Selectboard, the department head shall create work schedule, for "On Duty" hours per day and per week for Town employees, hours may be more than forty (40) hours. The established schedule will be considered the "normal work week" schedule.
- 28.1.2. Regular Work Week or Pay Period.** Our regular week starts on Sundays at 12:00 am and ends on Saturdays at 11:59 pm. Employees are responsible for their daily timesheet maintenance using the payroll mechanism (Paychex Payroll Processor) as dedicated. Timesheets should include all the time off, unpaid, holiday time for proper accruals and use logs.
- 28.1.3. Overtime and Authorization.** Nonexempt employees are eligible to receive overtime pay at a rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times their regular pay for time actually worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime. No employee may work over forty (40) hours in a given work week without prior authorization of their Department Head/Supervisor and/or the Selectboard. The exception to this is the Highway Department (follows Local 668 Contract). Employees may be asked or required to change their schedules, in the effort to control overtime expenditures.
- 28.1.4. Call In Pay-Highway/Public Works Department.** A permanent full-time or permanent part-time Public Works Department/Highway Department employee shall receive call-in pay as follows:

- **Call-In and After-Hours Phone Response Compensation Policy**

To maintain consistency with the current union contract and ensure fair compensation for after-hours duties, the following provisions shall apply to all Highway/Public Works Department employees:

- **To Qualify as a Call-In:**

The employee must have left the worksite or been off duty following the completion of their regularly scheduled shift, or the request must occur on a non-scheduled workday (e.g., weekend or holiday).

The employee must be formally directed by a supervisor or other authorized official to return to work in response to an unplanned or urgent operational need.

**Note: Routine schedule adjustments, pre-scheduled road checks, or extensions of a current shift do not qualify as a call-in.**

- **After-Hours Phone Calls (No On-Site Response Required)**

Employees who receive a work-related phone call **outside of their regularly scheduled work hours** and **do not need to physically report to work** shall receive **15 minutes of compensation at the applicable pay rate** for each qualifying call as outline below.

- Multiple calls received within a 15-minute period will be compensated as a single event.
- If a call results in the employee being required to report to work, the four-hour call-in policy will apply instead (see below).

- 

- **Physical Call-In to Work**

Employees who are **called in to physically report to a job site or work location outside of their scheduled hours** shall receive a **minimum of four (4) hours of compensation at the applicable pay rate**, as outlined below and/or in accordance with the union agreement.

**28.1.5.** If the employee is called in more than once within that four-hour window, no additional compensation will be provided beyond the initial four hours unless the total time worked exceeds four hours, in which case actual hours worked will be compensated.

**28.1.6. Weekday Physical Call-Ins** For a report to work - call-ins occurring on weekdays after 3:30 p.m. and before 3:00 a.m. the following day, employees shall receive a minimum of four (4) hours of compensation at the applicable overtime rate.

If the employee works less than four (4) hours but is called back again within the same time period, they will not receive additional compensation beyond the initial four (4) hours.

**28.1.6. Weekend Physical Call-Ins** For call-ins on weekends, employees shall receive a minimum of four (4) hours of compensation at the applicable overtime rate. If the employee works less than four (4) hours but is called in again within 24 hours, they will only receive the initial four (4) hours of compensation.

**28.1.7. Holidays Physical Call-Ins** For call-ins on holidays, employees shall receive a minimum of four (4) hours of compensation at **2.5 times** their regular hourly rate.

If the employee works less than four (4) hours but is called in again during the same holiday, for the same or a different reason, they will only receive the initial four (4) hours of compensation.

**28.1.8. Extended Physical Call-Ins** For any call-in during which the employee works more than four (4) hours, compensation shall be paid at the applicable call-in rate for all hours actually worked.

The assigned work must be reasonably related to the original reason for the call-in.

## 29 Overtime and Compensatory Time Off

**29.1.1** In accordance with the provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Town compensates nonexempt employees at the rate of one and one-half hours for each hour worked in excess of (40) forty hours in any workweek. Holidays, sick time, and vacation days do not count as hours worked for purposes of calculating either overtime or compensatory time eligibility.

**29.1.2. Overtime Authorization.** No employee may work over forty (40) hours in each work week without prior authorization of their department head or the Selectboard. Acceptance of a directive to work overtime is considered a condition of employment. At the department head's or Selectboard's discretion, an employee's work schedule may be adjusted during a work week to avoid overtime.

**29.1.3. Under certain circumstances, employees may receive compensatory time off in lieu of cash compensation for earned overtime.**

**a. Procedure for receipt of compensatory time off in lieu of cash payment.**

**b.** Employees who wish to take time off, instead of receiving compensation for earned overtime must, prior to the performance of the work, have a written agreement with their supervisor that the overtime will be compensated as time off instead of as cash.

**c.** Overtime for employees who have chosen to be compensated with paid time off accrues at the same rate as the employee's regular overtime rate of pay.

**d.** The employee's supervisor shall maintain documentation that the employee's election to receive compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay was made prior to the performance of the work.

**e.** Employee's cannot be coerced or pressured into accepting compensatory time off instead of being paid for their overtime work.

**f.** At its sole discretion, the Town may elect not to offer compensatory time off.

**g.** Accrued compensatory time off may be preserved, used, or cashed out consistent with this policy.

**h.** An employee receiving payment for accrued compensatory time off will be paid at the regular rate of pay earned by the employee at the time the employee receives such payment.

**i.** Upon termination from employment, an employee will be paid for unused comp time at a rate not less than the average regular rate of pay received by the employee during the last three years of employment or the employee's final regular rate of pay, whichever is higher.

j. An employee may accrue a maximum of 40 hours of compensatory time, after which overtime will be monetarily paid.

**29.1.4. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime; they are expected to work as many hours as required to perform the duties of the position.**

**29.1.5.** An employee who has accrued comp time and requests use of comp time will be permitted to use such time off within a reasonable period after making the request if such use does not unduly disrupt the Town's operations. Requests for use of comp time must be submitted to the employee's supervisor, who will have sole discretion to grant or deny the request. Requests for use of comp time will not unreasonably be withheld.

#### **29.1.6. Fire and Rescue Department Employee Salary Procedure**

**29.1.7.** Minimum Call-In. Georgia Fire Department employees shall be paid a minimum of one hour, with fifteen-minute increments after one hour, for calls, approved training, and approved maintenance meetings.

**29.1.8.** Reporting in. Employees responding to a call shall notify the Incident Commander (IC) of arrival and departure times as soon as practicable. Failure to notify the IC will result in being paid only the one-hour minimum. If a call is cancelled prior to the employee's arrival, notice must be given to the department head or their designee within 24 hours of the call to be eligible for payment.

**29.1.9.** Time sheets. The IC shall enter employees' arrival and departure times on a time sheet, as well as the beginning time (first tone) and end time (all equipment back in service or per IC) for the call.

**29.1.10.** Pay period. Paid training time will begin and end with the training officer or department employee in charge of the training. Payment to GFRD employees will be on a Bi-weekly basis. The payroll period begins on a Sunday and ends on Saturday. All time sheets for pay must be submitted to the department head (Chief for GFRD, or designee appointed by Chief) no later than the Sunday following the end of the payroll period. Approved timesheets are to be turned into the Town payroll representative or their designee the following Monday. Payroll will then be processed that Monday and paychecks will be issued the following Thursday.

**29.1.11.** Rate of pay. Rate of pay for Georgia Fire and Rescue employees shall follow both State and Federal minimum wage laws. Officers shall be paid at a higher rate per hour than firefighters and regular GFR members. Employees of Georgia Fire and GFR attending approved training outside the Town of Georgia shall be compensated additional per day stipend per training, provided the employee submits a training certificate to the Town payroll representative through the chain of command within two weeks of receiving it.

## **30 Employment Harassment and Discrimination**

- 30.1.1** The Town is committed in all areas to providing a work environment that is free from unlawful harassment and discrimination. Vermont and federal law prohibit employment discrimination or retaliation based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, marital status, national origin, age, pregnancy, genetic information, crime victim or veteran status, any other recognized basis protected under federal or state law, or against a qualified individual with a disability with respect to all employment practices "Protected Bases". Vermont law also prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, ancestry, HIV status, and place of birth. It is also unlawful to retaliate against employees or applicants who have alleged employment discrimination.
- 30.1.2** All employees, including supervisors, department heads, and elected officials are required to abide by this policy.
- 30.1.3** Harassment of one employee by another employee or by a supervisor is prohibited. Harassment means unwelcome conduct that is based on any of these Protected Bases. An employee who commits harassment will be subject to discipline up to and including immediate dismissal. Any individual who believes that they have been the target of this type of harassment, or who believes they have been subjected to retaliation for having brought or supported a complaint of harassment, is encouraged to directly inform the offending person or person(s) that such conduct is offensive and must stop.
- 30.1.4** Examples of harassment include offensive jokes, gestures, slurs, epithets, or name calling, physical threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put downs, and offensive objects, pictures, or written materials. Simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not serious are not illegal. To be unlawful, conduct must be so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted).
- 30.1.5** Any employee who believes they have been subjected to harassment, or to retaliation for having brought or cooperated with a complaint or an investigation of harassment, should report it promptly to a supervisor. If reporting to a supervisor is not possible, then a report should be made to the Town Administrator or Selectboard.
- 30.1.6** All employees, including supervisors and other management personnel, are expected, and required to abide by this policy. Employees who are found to have engaged in harassment may face disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- 30.1.7** Employees may report harassment and file complaints with:
- 30.1.8** Their immediate Department Head/Supervisor, or
- 30.1.9** The Town Administrator, or
- 30.1.10** Any member of the Town Selectboard.

- 30.1.11** If the Town receives a complaint of harassment or discrimination or has reason to believe that harassment or discrimination has occurred, a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation will be conducted. Investigations will be conducted in a confidential and discrete manner to the extent possible. Complaints will be disclosed only to those necessary to thoroughly investigate and address the matter. If it is determined that unlawful harassment has occurred, the Town will take immediate and appropriate corrective action, and the offending employee shall be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from employment. No person will be adversely affected in employment with the Town by reporting or filing a complaint of unlawful harassment or being retaliated against.

## **31 Sexual Harassment**

- 31.1.1** Sexual harassment in the workplace is illegal under federal and Vermont law and is strictly prohibited. The Town is committed to providing a workplace free from this unlawful conduct. All employees have the right to work without being subjected to insulting, degrading or exploitative treatment on the basis of their gender. It is against the policies of the Town for any individual, to sexually harass another individual in the workplace.
- 31.1.2** **In accordance with 21 V.S.A. § 495h, the Town has adopted the following sexual harassment policy, as stated below. Employees must read this policy and acknowledge they have done so.**
- 31.1.3** Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when.
- 31.1.4** Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- 31.1.5** Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a component of the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- 31.1.6** Conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
- 31.1.7** Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following when such instances or behavior come within one of the above definitions:
- 31.1.8** Explicitly or implicitly conditioning any term of employment (e.g., continued employment, wages, evaluation, advancement, assigned duties or shifts) on the provision of sexual favors.
- 31.1.9** Touching or grabbing a sexual part of an individual's body.
- 31.1.10** Touching or grabbing any part of an individual's body after that party has indicated, or it is known, that such physical contact was unwelcome.
- 31.1.11** Continuing to ask an individual to socialize on or off-duty when that person has indicated they are not interested.
- 31.1.12** Displaying or transmitting sexually suggestive pictures, objects, cartoons or posters if it is known or should be known that the behavior is unwelcome.
- 31.1.13** Continuing to write sexually suggestive notes or letters if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior.
- 31.1.14** Referring to or calling a person by a sexualized name if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior.

- 31.1.15** Regularly telling sexual jokes or using sexually vulgar or explicit language in the presence of a person if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior.
- 31.1.16** Retaliation of any kind for having filed or supported a complaint of sexual harassment (e.g., ostracizing the person, pressuring the person to drop or not support the complaint, adversely altering that person's duties or work environment, etc.)
- 31.1.17** Derogatory or provoking remarks about or relating to an employee's sex.
- 31.1.18** Harassing acts or behavior directed against a person on the basis of their sex.
- 31.1.19** Off-duty conduct which falls within the above definition and affects the work environment.
- 31.1.20** It is also unlawful to retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of sexual harassment.
- 31.1.21** Any individual who believes that they have been the target of sexual harassment, or who believes they have been subjected to retaliation for having brought or supported a complaint of harassment, is encouraged to directly inform the offending person or persons that such conduct is offensive and must stop.
- 31.1.22** Employees who are found to have engaged in sexual harassment may face disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- 31.1.23** Employees may report or file complaints of sexual harassment or retaliation with:
- 31.1.24** Their immediate Department Head/Supervisor, or
- 31.1.25** The Town Administrator, or
- 31.1.26** Any member of the Town Selectboard.
- 31.1.27** If the Town receives a complaint of harassment or discrimination or has reason to believe that harassment or discrimination has occurred, a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation will be conducted. Investigations will be conducted in a confidential and discrete manner to the extent possible. Complaints will be disclosed only to those necessary to thoroughly investigate and address the matter. If it is determined that unlawful harassment has occurred, the Town will take immediate and appropriate corrective action, and the offending employee shall be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from employment. No person will be adversely affected in employment with the Town by reporting or filing a complaint of unlawful harassment or be retaliated against.
- 31.1.28** **Complaints of harassment or sexual harassment or retaliation may also be filed with the following agencies:**
- Civil Rights Unit  
Vermont Attorney General's Office  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609-1001  
Tel: (802) 828-3657 (voice)  
(888) 745-9195 (Toll Free VT)  
(802) 828-3665 (TTY)  
Fax: (802) 828-2154  
Email: [ago.civilrights@vermont.gov](mailto:ago.civilrights@vermont.gov)  
Online: <http://ago.vermont.gov/about-the-attorney-generals-office/divisions/civil-rights/>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
JFK Federal Building  
25 Sudbury Street, Room 475  
Boston, MA 02203-0506  
Tel: 1 (800) 669-4000 (voice)  
1 (800) 669-6820 (TTY)  
1 (844) 234-5122 (ASL Video)  
Fax: 617-565-3196 Email: [info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov) Online: [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

**31.1.29.** These agencies may conduct impartial investigations, facilitate conciliation, and, if they find that there is probable cause or reasonable grounds to believe sexual harassment occurred, they may file a complaint in court.

## 32 Cell Phone Use

### 32.1.3. General Use During Work Hours

- Personal cell phone use should be limited during working hours to avoid disruptions.
- Employees are expected to keep phones on silent or vibrate mode during meetings and work hours.
- Personal calls, texts, or app use should be restricted to break and lunch times unless there is an emergency.

### 32.1.4. Designated Areas and Times

- Use of personal phones is allowed in designated break areas and during scheduled breaks or lunch periods.
- Use of phones is prohibited in client-facing or production areas unless authorized.

### 32.1.5. Town-Issued Devices

- Employees issued a Town phone must use it primarily for work-related purposes.
- Inappropriate or unauthorized use (e.g., personal calls, streaming, social media) on Town phones may result in disciplinary action.

### 32.1.6 Prohibited Use/Texting Law

- Employees are not permitted to use handheld phones or electronic devices as defined in 23 V.S.A section 1095b and 1099 while driving company vehicles or operating heavy equipment.
- As used in this section, "texting" means the reading or the manual composing or sending of electronic communications, including text messages, instant messages, or e-mails, using a portable electronic device as defined in subdivision 4(82) of this title.

- A person shall not engage in texting while operating a moving motor vehicle in a place open temporarily or permanently to public or general circulation of vehicles.
- In addition, a person shall not engage in texting while operating a motor vehicle on a public highway in Vermont, including while the vehicle is stationary, unless otherwise provided under this section.

**32.1.7. Disciplinary Action**

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

### 33 Employee Discipline

- 33.1.1** Under the Town's discipline process, an employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for violation of the provisions of this personnel policy and/or failure to maintain an acceptable level of performance. The Town may take prior disciplinary action into consideration when disciplining or terminating an employee. Violations of different rules may be treated as repeated violations of the same rule for purposes of progressive discipline.
- 33.1.2** Most often, employee conduct that warrants discipline results from unacceptable behavior, poor performance, or violation of the Town's policies, practices, or procedures. However, discipline may be issued for conduct that falls outside of those identified areas. The Town also reserves the right to impose discipline for off-duty conduct that adversely impacts the legitimate interests of the Town. The Town reserves the right in its sole discretion to bypass progressive discipline and to take whatever action it deems necessary to address the issue at hand. This means that more or less severe discipline, up to and including termination, may be imposed in each situation at the Town's sole discretion.
- 33.1.3** The Town also retains the right to unilaterally eliminate positions or reduce the work hours of a position or positions due to economic conditions, shortage of work, organizational efficiency, changes in departmental functions, and/or reorganization or reclassification of positions resulting in the elimination of a position or for other related reasons.
- 33.1.4** The Town will normally adhere to the following progressive disciplinary process but reserves the right to bypass any or all steps of progressive discipline when it determines, in its sole discretion, that deviation from the process is warranted: (1) verbal warning; (2) written warning; (3) suspension (with or without pay); and (4) termination.
- 33.1.5** Employees are prohibited from engaging in the conduct listed below and could be disciplined, up to and including termination, for doing so. This list has been established to provide examples of behavior that could result in discipline. This list is not exhaustive.
- 33.1.6** Engaging in any illegal activity.
- 33.1.7** Refusing to do assigned work or failing to carry out the reasonable assignments of their Department Head/Supervisor, the Town Administrator or members of the Selectboard.
- 33.1.8** Being inattentive to duty, including sleeping on the job.
- 33.1.9** Falsifying a timecard or other record or giving false information to anyone whose duty is to make such a record.
- 33.1.10** Being repeatedly or continuously absent or late, being absent without notice or satisfactory reason or leaving one's work assignment without appropriate authorization.
- 33.1.11** Conducting oneself in any manner that is offensive, abusive or contrary to reasonable community standards and expectations of public employees.
- 33.1.12** Engaging in any form of discrimination or harassment including sexual harassment.
- 33.1.13** Misusing, misappropriating, or willfully neglecting Town property, funds, materials, equipment or supplies.

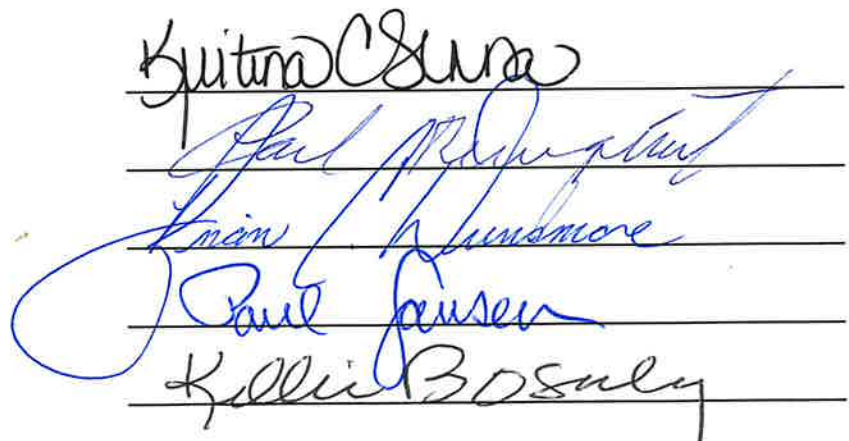
- 33.1.14** Unlawfully distributing, selling, possessing, using or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs when on the job or subject to duty. The only exception to this rule is use of a drug prescribed by a duly licensed health care provider, provided such use is in the manner prescribed and the employee is cleared to work while using such prescription drug.
- 33.1.15** Smoking or using smokeless tobacco within any Town-owned buildings, work areas or vehicles.
- 33.1.16** Fighting, engaging in horseplay or acting in any manner which endangers the safety of oneself or others. This includes acts of violence as well as threats of violence.
- 33.1.17** Stealing or possessing without authority any equipment, tools, materials or other property of the Town or attempting to remove them from the premises without approval or permission from the appropriate authority.
- 33.1.18** Marking or defacing walls, fixtures, equipment, tools, materials or other Town property, or willfully damaging or destroying property in any way.
- 33.1.19** Failure to search for or disclose public records upon request.
- 33.1.20** Disclosing confidential information about the Town's business.
- 33.1.21** Willful violation of Town rules or policies.

**34 Severability**

**34.1.1** If any provision of this personnel policy or the application hereof to any person or a circumstance(s) is held invalid, this invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of the personnel rules which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. For this purpose, this personnel policy is severable.

ADOPTED this 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2025.

SIGNATURES of SELECTBOARD:

  
The signatures are: Kaitira C. Stone, Paul [unclear], Kevin [unclear], Paul Jensen, and Kelli Bosely.

**Attachment A: Personnel Acknowledgement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that:

- A. I received a copy of the Town's personnel policy on \_\_\_\_\_ and it is my responsibility to read it and familiarize myself with its contents;
- B. I understand that it is my responsibility to ask questions if there is anything in the policy that I do not understand;
- C. I understand that the language used in this personnel policy is not intended to create, nor should it be construed to create, a contract of employment between myself and the Town;
- D. I understand that this policy replaces any and all prior versions and that the Town reserves the right to add, amend or discontinue any of the provisions of this policy for any reason or no reason, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice;

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Attachment B: Agreement by Independently-Elected Officer to be Bound by Personnel Policy**

This is a contract between the Selectboard of the Town of Georgia and \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ (name & title) collectively referred to as "parties."

In exchange for the provision of benefits by the Town as follows:

- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ agrees to be bound by the provisions of the Town of Georgia Personnel Policy, except the provisions on **Probationary Period, Performance Evaluations.**

\_\_\_\_\_ agrees as follows:

- They have received a copy of the Town’s Personnel Policy and understands that it is their responsibility to familiarize themselves with its contents;
- They have been given an opportunity to ask questions about said policy and have been provided with satisfactory information in response to those questions;
- They acknowledge that the Town reserves the right to add, amend or discontinue any of the provisions of this policy for any reason or no reason, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice;
- They acknowledge that they understand the Town’s personnel policy and agree that they will comply with all of its provisions.

The parties agree that this shall not constitute a contract for employment

If applicable, in addition to the above, they agree that their statutory assistant, who holds the position of \_\_\_\_\_ (position title), will also be subject to the Town's Personnel Policy except the provisions on Performance Evaluations, Discipline, and Termination, which do not apply to them. In return, said statutory assistant will receive benefits from the Town as follows:

- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_

Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered into this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Independently-Elected Official:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Selectboard:

**Attachment C: Sexual Harassment Acknowledgement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that:

- A. I received a copy of the Town’s personnel policy on \_\_\_\_\_ and, acknowledge the Sexual Harassment Policy as so written in the Personnel Policy Sexual Harassment Section, and acknowledge responsibility to read it and familiarize myself with its contents.
- B. I understand that it is my responsibility to ask questions if there is anything in the policy that I do not understand;
- C. I understand that this policy replaces any and all prior versions and that the Town reserves the right to add, amend or discontinue any of the provisions of this policy for any reason or no reason, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice;

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# GEORGIA VERMONT

## Town of Georgia Personnel Policy

### Addendum 2 – Background Check Policy

Effective Date: **August 25, 2025**

#### **Addendum: Background Checks for Personnel Working with Vulnerable Populations**

In accordance with Vermont State Statutes, including 33 V.S.A. § 4919 (Child Protection Registry), 33 V.S.A. § 6911 (Adult Abuse Registry), and 20 V.S.A. § 2056c (Criminal Records Access), the Town of Georgia hereby adopts this addendum to its Personnel Policy. This section establishes background check requirements for personnel who work with or have access to vulnerable populations, including minors and adults in care.

#### **Background Checks for Library and Parks & Recreation Personnel**

##### **1. Purpose**

To ensure the safety and protection of children and vulnerable adults participating in Town of Georgia programs, services, and facilities, this section mandates pre-employment and periodic (every 5 years) background checks for employees, contractors, and volunteers serving in the Library and Parks & Recreation Departments.

##### **2. Applicability**

This policy applies to all personnel, including but not limited to:

- Full-time and part-time staff of the Georgia Public Library and Georgia Parks & Recreation Department.
- Seasonal or temporary employees.
- Program instructors, coaches, camp counselors, and volunteers who may have unsupervised access to minors or vulnerable adults.

##### **3. Required Screenings**

All applicable personnel must undergo the following background checks (as applies):

- **Criminal History Record Check** through the Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC) pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 2056c;
- **Fingerprint-based FBI Record Check**, if required by statute or based on risk level;

- **Vermont Child Protection Registry Check** per 33 V.S.A. § 4919, for those working with children.
- **Adult Abuse Registry Check** per 33 V.S.A. § 6911, for those working with adults in care.
- **Sex Offender Registry Check**, as a standard part of criminal background screening.

**4. Consent and Confidentiality**

Individuals must sign written consent forms prior to any background screening. All information obtained through background checks will remain confidential and used solely for evaluating suitability for the position.

**5. Disqualification Criteria**

Any applicant or employee found to have a record of abuse, exploitation, or other disqualifying offenses may be ineligible for employment or service in roles involving vulnerable populations, subject to review by the Town Administrator and consistent with Vermont law.

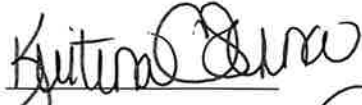
**6. Timing and Renewal**

- Background checks must be completed **prior to hire or volunteer start date**.
- **Periodic re-checks** (every 5 years) may be conducted for continued service, particularly in long-term or recurring roles.

**7. Compliance and Recordkeeping**

The Town of Georgia will maintain background check documentation in accordance with state and federal law and applicable retention policies. The Town will ensure compliance with all legal requirements and update procedures as laws or standards change.

Approved by:



Kristina Senna-Chair

Date: 8/25/2025



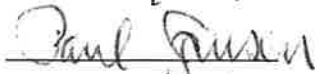
Brian Dunsmore Vice Chair

Date: 08/25/2025



Kellie Bosenberg-Member

Date: 8/25/23



Paul Jansen-Member

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Carl Rosenquist-Member

Date: 8/25/2025

### Adoption History

1. Agenda item at regular Town of Georgia Selectboard meeting held on August 25 2025 2025.
2. Read and approved at regular/special Town of Georgia Selectboard meeting on August 25, 2025 2025 and entered in the minutes of that meeting which were approved on September 8, 2025



# GEORGIA

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## VERMONT

### Town of Georgia Employee Notice

#### Background Check Policy

Effective August 25, 2025, the Town of Georgia has adopted an Addendum to the Personnel Policy requiring background checks for certain positions.

#### What This Means

In accordance with Vermont State Statutes, including 33 V.S.A. § 4919 (Child Protection Registry), 33 V.S.A. § 6911 (Adult Abuse Registry), and 20 V.S.A. § 2056c (Criminal Records Access), background checks are now required for all employees, contractors, and volunteers whose roles involve direct services or unsupervised access to:

- Children (including youth programs, camps, library activities, and recreation programs)
- Vulnerable adults (including senior or disability programs)

#### What Will Be Checked

- Vermont Criminal History Record (VCIC)
- Fingerprint-based FBI Record Check (if applicable)
- Vermont Child Protection Registry
- Adult Abuse Registry (if applicable)
- Sex Offender Registry

#### Employee Responsibility

- Employees in covered positions must provide written consent to undergo required checks.
- Refusal to consent or failure to pass required screenings may disqualify individuals from certain roles or assignments.

## Confidentiality

All background check information will remain confidential and will only be used for employment eligibility and compliance with state law.

## Questions

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the Town Administrator's Office.

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## Acknowledgment of Receipt

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Town of Georgia's Background Check Policy Notice.

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_