



Town of _____

Micanopy

Florida

October 13, 2026

COMMISSION AGENDA CORRESPONDENCE

Agenda Item: Personnel Policy Revisions – Retirement Contributions and Sick Leave Payout

Prepared By: Town Administrator

Background

As part of the Town's review and update of its Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook, the Town Commission expressed an interest in establishing an employer-funded retirement benefit for eligible full-time employees through the Florida Municipal Pension Trust Fund, administered by the Florida League of Cities.

The proposed benefit would be established through a 401(a) Defined Contribution Plan. The Commission must determine the employer contribution percentage, whether employees will be required to contribute, and whether employer contributions will be subject to a vesting period.

The attached analysis compares employer contribution rates of 5% and 10%, with estimated annual costs of \$5,808 and \$11,616, respectively. These estimates exclude the Town Administrator, whose retirement contribution is addressed separately through an employment agreement.

Currently, one eligible employee receives a \$75 biweekly employer contribution to a 457(b) deferred compensation account for declining Town-provided health insurance. This benefit would continue unless otherwise directed by the Commission.

Financial Considerations and Staff Recommendation

While establishing a retirement benefit would represent a meaningful investment in employee recruitment and retention, it would also create an additional recurring financial obligation for the Town.

Because retirement contributions were not included in the adopted FY 2026–2027 budget, **staff recommends beginning with a 5% employer contribution**, representing an estimated annual expense of \$5,808.

This approach would allow the Town to establish a retirement benefit without placing unnecessary strain on its current operating budget. The Commission could evaluate the program's financial impact and consider increasing the employer contribution percentage in subsequent fiscal years as funding permits.

The Commission will also need to determine whether employees should be required to contribute a percentage of their compensation and whether a vesting schedule should apply to employer contributions.

Sick Leave Payout

The existing Personnel Policy provides employees with at least ten years of service payment for 50% of accumulated unused sick leave upon separation, without a maximum payout limitation.

Staff recommends retaining the 50% benefit while limiting the calculation to a maximum of 1,000 accrued hours, resulting in a maximum payout of 500 hours of compensation.

Employees would continue to accumulate sick leave without limitation for use during employment. This amendment would establish a reasonable ceiling on the Town's long-term financial liability while preserving a substantial benefit for employees with extended service.

Requested Commission Action

Staff recommends that the Town Commission:

1. Approve an initial **5% employer contribution** to the proposed 401(a) Defined Contribution Plan and completion of the required plan documents.
2. Provide direction regarding required employee contributions, vesting provisions, and eligibility requirements.
3. Approve the proposed sick leave payout limitation of 500 hours of compensation, calculated as 50% of a maximum of 1,000 accrued unused sick leave hours, for employees with at least ten years of service.

Following Commission direction, staff will coordinate the necessary retirement plan documents, identify the required budget adjustments, and finalize the corresponding Personnel Policy revisions.

Attachment: Commission Decision Brief – Retirement and Sick Leave Payout

TOWN OF MICANOPY

COMMISSION DECISION BRIEF | RETIREMENT & SICK-LEAVE PAYOUT

Scope: Proposed 401(a) retirement contributions for David Holten and Patty Polk only. The Town Administrator is excluded from this cost comparison because her employment contract separately provides a 10% Town retirement contribution.

1 | Proposed 401(a) retirement plan

Decision option	Town contribution	Employee contribution	Annual Town cost
A — Employer-funded	5%	Not required	\$5,808.25
B — Shared contribution	5%	3% or 5% required	\$5,808.25
C — Employer-funded	10%	Not required	\$11,616.49

FY27 salary basis: David \$68,616.42; Patty \$47,548.49; combined \$116,164.91. At 5%: David \$3,430.82; Patty \$2,377.42. At 10%: David \$6,861.64; Patty \$4,754.85. Costs exclude administrative fees and assume full-year eligibility.

Fund allocation (based on current salary charging):

5% option — General Fund \$1,715.41; Enterprise/Water \$4,092.83.

10% option — General Fund \$3,430.82; Enterprise/Water \$8,185.67.

Commission must decide:

- Town rate: 5% or 10% of eligible compensation.
- Employee funding: no required contribution or a mandatory contribution
- Vesting: immediate ownership of employer contributions or a specified vesting schedule
- Eligibility and effective date: confirm participating positions, introductory-period treatment, and when contributions begin. For example, should new employees be exempt from the retirement plan until after a 6-month probationary period?

2 | Sick-leave payout — proposed policy amendment

Current policy	Proposed policy
After 10 years, 50% of all accrued unused sick leave; no payout ceiling.	After 10 years, 50% of accrued unused sick leave, counting no more than 1,000 accrued hours; maximum payout 500 hours of pay.

Sick leave would continue accruing without a limit for use during employment. David currently has slightly more than 1,100 hours accrued, making the proposed ceiling relevant to the Town's existing liability. His maximum payout under the proposal would be approximately \$16,494.33 at the FY27 salary rate, if otherwise eligible. This is a maximum, not a current payment obligation.



TOWN OF MICANOPY, FLORIDA

PERSONNEL POLICY AND EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Effective Date: October 1, 2026

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Welcome

Public service is both a privilege and a responsibility. Every employee of the Town of Micanopy contributes to preserving the character of one of Florida's oldest and most historic communities while providing dependable, professional, and courteous service to our residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Town of Micanopy is committed to maintaining a workplace founded on integrity, accountability, professionalism, teamwork, and mutual respect. As stewards of public resources, employees play an essential role in earning and maintaining the confidence of the citizens we serve through ethical conduct, sound judgment, and responsive service.

This Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook establishes the employment policies adopted by the Town Commission and the administrative practices that guide the Town's daily operations. These policies are intended to promote consistency, fairness, professionalism, and compliance with applicable federal and state laws while providing the flexibility necessary to efficiently manage a small municipal organization.

While this handbook provides guidance for most employment situations, it cannot anticipate every circumstance that may arise. Employees are encouraged to communicate openly with their supervisor or the Town Administrator whenever questions arise regarding employment policies, workplace expectations, or the performance of their duties.

Thank you for your commitment to serving the Town of Micanopy and the community we are privileged to represent.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Town of Micanopy is to provide responsive, fiscally responsible, and professional municipal services while preserving the Town's historic character, protecting its natural resources, and enhancing the quality of life for our residents, businesses, and visitors.

Guiding Principles and Core Values

The Town of Micanopy is guided by the principles of public service, integrity, stewardship, respect, and excellence. These values define how we serve our community, interact with one another, and carry out the responsibilities entrusted to us.

Public Service

We recognize that our first responsibility is to serve the public with professionalism, courtesy, responsiveness, fairness, and respect.

Integrity

We conduct ourselves honestly, ethically, and transparently in a manner that earns and maintains the public's trust.

Stewardship

We responsibly manage the public funds, equipment, facilities, records, and natural resources entrusted to our care, recognizing our obligation to use public resources wisely and efficiently.

Respect

We value teamwork, open communication, accountability, diversity of thought, and the dignity of every employee and every member of the public. We foster a workplace built on collaboration, professionalism, and mutual respect.

Excellence

We continually strive to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the municipal services we provide through innovation, accountability, and continuous improvement.

ARTICLE I

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PERSONNEL SYSTEM

Section 1.01 Purpose

The purpose of this Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook ("Handbook") is to establish uniform employment policies, personnel practices, and administrative procedures governing the employment relationship between the Town of Micanopy ("Town") and its employees.

The objectives of this Handbook are to:

- A. Promote consistent and equitable personnel administration.
- B. Recruit, develop, and retain qualified employees dedicated to public service.
- C. Establish clear expectations regarding employee conduct, performance, and accountability.
- D. Provide employees with information regarding compensation, benefits, leave, and other employment practices.
- E. Ensure compliance with applicable federal and state employment laws.
- F. Preserve the flexibility necessary for the efficient administration of municipal government.

Section 1.02 Scope

This Handbook applies to all employees of the Town of Micanopy unless specifically excluded by the Town Charter, applicable law, or written employment agreement approved by the Town Commission.

This Handbook does not apply to:

- Members of the Town Commission;
- The Town Administrator when serving under an individual employment agreement;
- The Town Attorney or Special Counsel retained by the Town;

- Independent contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other individuals who are not employees of the Town.
-

Section 1.03 Nature of Employment

Employment with the Town is governed by applicable federal and Florida law, the Town Charter, and policies adopted by the Town Commission.

This Handbook is intended solely as a statement of personnel policies and administrative practices. It does not constitute an employment contract, express or implied, nor does it create any contractual rights or guarantee continued employment.

The Town Commission retains the authority granted by the Town Charter to establish personnel policy and employee compensation. The Town Administrator is responsible for administering these policies and supervising the day-to-day operations of the Town.

Section 1.04 Equal Employment Opportunity

The Town is committed to providing equal employment opportunities in all aspects of employment.

Employment decisions shall be based upon qualifications, merit, experience, demonstrated ability, and the operational needs of the Town without regard to any characteristic protected by applicable federal or Florida law.

The Town prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in recruitment, hiring, promotion, compensation, training, discipline, termination, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

The Town will provide reasonable accommodation as required by applicable law.

Section 1.05 Management Rights

Except as otherwise provided by law, the Town Charter, or action of the Town Commission, the Town retains the exclusive right to manage its operations.

Management rights include, but are not limited to, the authority to:



- determine organizational structure;
- assign work and establish work schedules;
- direct employees in the performance of their duties;
- establish administrative procedures;
- determine staffing levels;
- hire, promote, transfer, discipline, and separate employees;
- establish performance expectations;
- determine methods and means of providing municipal services; and
- take actions necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare during emergencies.

Nothing in this Handbook shall be interpreted to limit the lawful authority of the Town Commission or the Town Administrator.

ARTICLE II

EMPLOYMENT

Section 2.01. Employment Philosophy

The Town of Micanopy is committed to recruiting, selecting, and retaining qualified employees based upon merit, education, experience, demonstrated ability, character, and the needs of the organization.

Employment decisions shall be based upon the qualifications of the applicant, the requirements of the position, and the operational needs of the Town. The Town seeks to provide equal employment opportunities while maintaining a highly qualified and professional workforce dedicated to public service.

Section 2.02. Recruitment

When a vacancy occurs, the Town Administrator shall determine whether the position should be filled, reorganized, or remain vacant based upon operational needs and available funding. Vacancies may be advertised internally, externally, or both, as determined by the Town Administrator.

Section 2.03. Selection Process

Applicants shall be evaluated based upon the qualifications established for the position.

The selection process may include:

- application review
- interviews
- reference checks
- background investigations
- verification of education and certifications
- driver's license verification
- criminal history review when appropriate
- pre-employment drug testing when required by Town policy or law

The Town Administrator shall make hiring decisions unless otherwise provided by the Town Charter, employment agreement, or action of the Town Commission.

Section 2.04. Employment Classifications

For purposes of administration, employees shall be classified as follows:

Regular Full-Time Employee

An employee regularly scheduled to work forty (40) hours each workweek in an authorized position and eligible for benefits as provided by this handbook.

Regular Part-Time Employee

An employee regularly scheduled to work fewer than forty (40) hours each workweek. Eligibility for benefits shall be determined by Town policy and applicable law.

Temporary Employee

An employee hired for a specific project, seasonal assignment, emergency need, or limited duration.

Temporary employment does not create an expectation of continued employment.

Exempt Employee

An employee exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Non-Exempt Employee

An employee eligible for overtime compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Section 2.05. Introductory Period

All newly hired employees shall serve an introductory period of six (6) months.

The introductory period provides an opportunity for the employee to demonstrate the ability to perform the essential functions of the position while allowing the Town to evaluate the employee's overall suitability for continued employment.

Completion of the introductory period does not alter the employment relationship or guarantee continued employment.

The Town Administrator may extend an introductory period when additional time is needed to evaluate performance.

Section 2.06. Promotions

When practical, the Town encourages advancement opportunities for qualified employees.

Promotions shall be based upon:

- qualifications
- demonstrated performance
- work history
- leadership ability
- organizational needs
- successful completion of the selection process

Promotion is not based solely upon seniority.

Section 2.07. Transfers

The Town Administrator may transfer employees between positions or departments when such action serves the operational needs of the Town.

Transfers may be temporary or permanent.



Section 2.08. Reclassification

The Town Administrator may recommend reclassification of positions when job duties have substantially changed.

Position reclassifications shall be approved by the Town Commission when required through adoption or amendment of the Position Classification Plan or Pay Plan.

Section 2.09. Outside Employment

Employees may engage in outside employment provided such employment:

- does not interfere with Town duties;
- does not create an actual or apparent conflict of interest;
- does not impair the employee's availability for Town work;
- does not involve misuse of Town equipment, confidential information, or public position.

Employees shall notify the Town Administrator in writing before accepting outside employment.

The Town Administrator may approve, deny, or revoke approval if the outside employment becomes inconsistent with the interests of the Town.

Section 2.10. Employment of Relatives (Nepotism)

Employment practices shall comply with Section 112.3135, Florida Statutes, and any other applicable law governing nepotism.

No public official shall appoint, employ, promote, or advance a relative as prohibited by law.

ARTICLE III

HOURS OF WORK, COMPENSATION, AND PERFORMANCE

Section 3.01 Purpose

This Article establishes the Town's policies regarding work schedules, attendance, payroll administration, compensation, overtime, performance evaluations, and related employment practices. These policies are intended to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws while providing flexibility necessary to meet the operational needs of the Town.

Section 3.02 Workweek

The Town's standard administrative work week consists of forty (40) hours, Monday through Thursday.

Employees are expected to report for work as scheduled and remain at work during their assigned hours unless authorized leave has been approved.

The Town may modify work schedules when necessary to:

- provide public services;
 - accommodate seasonal or operational demands;
 - respond to emergencies;
 - attend meetings or training;
 - comply with legal requirements; or
 - otherwise meet the needs of the Town.
-

Section 3.03 Attendance and Punctuality

Reliable attendance is an essential function of every position.

Employees are expected to:

- report to work on time;
- be prepared to perform assigned duties;
- notify their supervisor as soon as practical when they are unable to report to work or expect to be late; and
- comply with established leave request procedures.

Excessive absenteeism, repeated tardiness, or failure to follow notification procedures may result in corrective action.

Section 3.04 Timekeeping

The Town shall maintain accurate records of employee work time in accordance with applicable law.

Employees shall not:

- falsify time records;
 - record time for another employee; or
 - knowingly permit inaccurate time records to be submitted.
-

Section 3.05 Meal and Rest Periods

Meal periods are unpaid unless an employee is required to remain actively engaged in work responsibilities.

Employees are expected to return from meal periods promptly.

Short rest breaks may be authorized by supervisors when operationally appropriate.

Section 3.06 Payroll Administration

Employees shall be paid on a biweekly basis in accordance with the Town's adopted payroll schedule.

Payroll shall be administered in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and established administrative procedures.

The Town encourages employees to promptly review each paycheck and immediately report any discrepancies.

Section 3.07 Overtime

Employees shall receive overtime compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Except in emergencies, overtime must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor or the Town Administrator.

Employees who work unauthorized overtime must report all hours worked. Working unauthorized overtime may result in corrective action; however, all hours worked will be compensated as required by law.

Paid leave, including vacation, sick leave, holidays, and other paid absences, shall not be considered hours worked for purposes of calculating overtime unless otherwise required by law.

The Town does not provide compensatory time in lieu of overtime compensation.

Section 3.8 Emergency Call-Back

Employees who are required to return to work after completing their scheduled workday due to an emergency or other authorized operational need shall be compensated in accordance with applicable law and Town policy.

Employees who are required to return to work after completing their scheduled workday due to an emergency or other authorized operational need shall receive compensation for the actual time worked or a minimum of two (2) hours, whichever is greater.

Emergency call-back compensation shall be administered in accordance with applicable wage and hour laws and Town policy.

The Town Administrator may establish administrative procedures governing call-back assignments and reporting requirements.

Section 3.9 Performance Evaluations

The Town is committed to fostering employee development through regular communication, coaching, and performance evaluations.

Performance evaluations are intended to:

- recognize accomplishments;
- establish performance expectations;
- identify opportunities for professional development;
- improve communication between supervisors and employees; and
- provide documentation supporting personnel decisions.

Employees shall normally receive a formal performance evaluation annually and at the conclusion of the introductory period.

Performance evaluations do not guarantee salary increases or continued employment.

Section 3.10 Compensation Adjustments

The Town Commission shall establish the Town's compensation plan through the annual budget process or other official action.

Compensation adjustments may include:

- cost-of-living adjustments;
- merit increases;
- market adjustments;
- promotional increases;
- reclassification adjustments; and
- other compensation changes approved by the Town Commission.

Unless otherwise authorized by the Commission, salary adjustments are subject to available funding and satisfactory job performance.

ARTICLE IV

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND LEAVE

Section 4.01 Purpose

The Town recognizes that a competitive benefits program supports employee well-being, recruitment, retention, and professional development.

The Town provides eligible employees with compensation and benefits consistent with applicable law, available funding, and policies adopted by the Town Commission.

Nothing in this Article creates a vested right to any benefit except as required by law.

Section 4.02 Employee Benefits

Eligible employees may participate in benefit programs approved by the Town Commission, which may include:

- Health Insurance

- Deferred Compensation Programs
- Workers' Compensation
- Other benefits approved by the Town Commission

Specific eligibility requirements shall be established through the applicable benefit plans.

The Town shall provide health insurance coverage for eligible regular full-time employees and shall pay the cost of employee-only coverage, subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable health insurance plan.

Employees may elect dependent or family coverage when available and shall be responsible for the additional premium attributable to such coverage unless otherwise authorized by the Town Commission.

Section 4.03 Retirement and Deferred Compensation Plans

The Town participates in a 401(a) Defined Contribution Plan administered through the Florida Municipal Pension Trust Fund and Florida League of Cities for eligible regular full-time employees. The Town shall make employer contributions on behalf of eligible employees at the contribution rate established by the Town Commission and reflected in the applicable plan documents.

Employee contribution requirements, eligibility, vesting, enrollment, distributions, and other plan provisions shall be governed by the applicable plan documents and actions of the Town Commission.

The Town also offers eligible employees the opportunity to participate in a 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan administered through the Florida League of Cities. Employee contributions to the 457(b) plan are voluntary and shall be made through payroll deduction in accordance with applicable plan requirements.

An eligible employee who elects not to participate in the Town's employee health insurance coverage shall receive an employer contribution of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per biweekly pay period to the employee's 457(b) deferred compensation account, subject to applicable plan requirements and federal law.

In the event of a conflict between this Handbook and the governing retirement or deferred compensation plan documents, the applicable plan documents shall control.



Section 4.04 Professional Development and Educational Assistance

The Town recognizes that investing in employee education and professional development strengthens the organization and enhances the quality of public services.

Subject to available funding and approval by the Town Administrator, eligible employees may receive financial assistance for:

- College courses;
- Technical education;
- Professional certifications;
- License renewal fees;
- Continuing education;
- Conferences;
- Workshops;
- Professional association memberships; and
- Other training directly related to the employee's position or future advancement within the Town.

Approval shall consider:

- relevance to the employee's position;
- organizational benefit;
- available budget;
- employee performance; and
- staffing needs.

Employees receiving educational assistance may be required to execute a reimbursement agreement requiring continued employment with the Town for a specified period following completion of the training. Employees who voluntarily separate from employment before satisfying that commitment may be required to reimburse the Town for all or a portion of the educational expenses as provided in the agreement.

The Town Administrator shall establish administrative procedures governing eligibility, reimbursement limits, documentation requirements, and repayment provisions.

Section 4.05 Leave and Holidays

The Town shall provide leave and other employment protections required by applicable federal and Florida law. Such protections may include, as applicable, leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, military leave, jury duty, workers' compensation laws, legally required disability or pregnancy accommodation, and other protected leave.

The Town Administrator may establish administrative procedures for requesting and documenting protected leave, provided such procedures are consistent with applicable law.

In the event of a conflict between this Handbook and applicable law, applicable law shall control.

The holidays listed below will be those observed by the Town and the offices will be closed for those holidays listed:

- Christmas Day through New Year's Day
- M.L. King Birthday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day

If a holiday occurs on a Friday or Saturday, it will be observed the preceding Thursday. If a holiday occurs on a Sunday, it will be observed the following Monday.

Vacation leave for regular full-time employees will be earned on a prorated basis at four (4) hours per pay period (26 pay periods per calendar year equates to 104 hours per year) from the beginning of employment with the Town but does not become available for use until the completion of the introductory period. Annual leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until December 31st of each calendar year. On December 31st, any employee with more than 30 days or 240 hours accrued shall have the excess leave cancelled. The Town will buy up to eighty (80) hours of vacation leave in one calendar year from an employee provided that at least forty (40) hours always remains. Employees can



sell hours in June and December of each calendar year with the approval of the Town Administrator. Any employee separated from service to the Town shall be paid for accrued annual leave up to a maximum of 30 days or 240 hours. At the date of separation, leave shall be calculated to the nearest one-half day and paid at the employee's current rate of pay. If any advanced leave is not yet accrued on the payroll records, then it shall be deducted from the employee's final pay. The estate of an employee who dies while in the service of the Town shall be entitled to payment for accumulated annual leave up to but not to exceed 30 days or 240 hours. Advanced leave is not acceptable whereby the employee is left in a negative position for annual leave.

Only regular, full-time employees shall be eligible to accrue sick leave. Sick leave shall be earned at the rate of four hours per pay period. Sick leave may be accumulated with no maximum limit restrictions. Notification of the need to utilize sick leave should be requested prior to use or not later than two hours after the beginning of a scheduled work period. Upon request of the employee and approval of the Town Administrator, sick leave may be utilized for employee sickness, sickness of members of the immediate family living in the same household and for necessary medical appointments.

A regular full-time employee who separates from Town employment after completing at least ten (10) years of service shall be eligible to receive payment for fifty percent (50%) of the employee's accrued, unused sick leave, **up to a maximum of one thousand (1,000) accrued sick leave hours considered for purposes of calculating the payout. In no event shall the sick leave payout exceed five hundred (500) hours of compensation.**

An employee who separates from Town employment before completing ten (10) years of service shall not be eligible for payment of accrued, unused sick leave unless otherwise provided by an individual employment agreement approved by the Town Commission or required by law.

A regular full-time employee may be granted reasonable time away from work following the death of an immediate family member. Bereavement leave shall be charged against the employee's available sick leave or vacation leave, as appropriate.

For purposes of this provision, immediate family includes the employee's spouse, parent, child, sibling, stepparent, stepchild, stepsibling, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, or another person whose relationship to the employee is substantially similar.

The amount of leave granted shall be determined by the Town Administrator based upon the circumstances, including travel requirements, funeral or memorial arrangements, and operational needs.



ARTICLE V

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Section 5.01 Purpose

The Town of Micanopy is committed to maintaining a professional, ethical, safe, and respectful workplace. Every employee contributes to the quality of municipal services and to the public's confidence in local government.

Section 5.02 Professional Responsibility

Every employee is expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the Town and promotes public confidence in municipal government.

Employees are expected to:

- Perform assigned duties competently and efficiently.
- Exercise sound judgment in carrying out their responsibilities.
- Follow lawful directives from supervisors.
- Treat coworkers, elected officials, contractors, volunteers, and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Maintain a professional demeanor while representing the Town.
- Safeguard Town property and public resources.
- Report concerns regarding safety, ethics, fraud, or policy violations.

Employees serve the public and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

Section 5.03 Customer Service

Providing excellent customer service is a fundamental responsibility of every Town employee.

Employees shall strive to:

- Respond to the public promptly and professionally.
- Communicate respectfully and courteously.
- Provide accurate information or direct individuals to the appropriate staff member.
- Treat every member of the public fairly and impartially.
- Resolve concerns whenever possible in a courteous and constructive manner.

Employees should remember that every interaction with the public reflects upon the Town of Micanopy.

Section 5.04 Respectful Workplace

The Town is committed to maintaining a workplace where employees are treated with dignity and respect.

Employees are expected to:

- Foster teamwork and cooperation.
- Communicate professionally.
- Respect differing viewpoints.
- Refrain from disruptive or abusive behavior.
- Resolve workplace disagreements constructively.

Conduct that undermines teamwork, creates unnecessary conflict, or interferes with the efficient operation of the Town may result in corrective action.

Section 5.05 Ethics and Public Trust

Public employment is a public trust.

Employees shall conduct themselves in accordance with the ethical standards established by Florida law and Town policy.

Employees shall:

- Avoid conflicts between personal interests and official duties.
- Use public resources only for authorized purposes.
- Perform duties impartially.
- Avoid conduct that could undermine public confidence in the Town.
- Promptly disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest as required by law or Town policy.

Nothing in this section replaces or limits the requirements of the Florida Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees.

Section 5.06 Conflicts of Interest

Employees shall avoid financial, personal, or professional interests that conflict—or appear to conflict—with their official duties.

Employees shall immediately disclose any actual or potential conflict to the Town Administrator.

The Town Administrator shall determine whether additional action is necessary to protect the integrity of Town operations.

Section 5.07 Outside Employment

Employees may engage in outside employment provided such employment:

- Does not interfere with Town responsibilities;
- Does not create a conflict of interest;
- Does not impair the employee's performance;
- Does not involve misuse of Town resources or confidential information; and
- Complies with all applicable laws and Town policies.

The Town Administrator may require written disclosure and may prohibit outside employment that conflicts with the interests of the Town.

Section 5.08 Confidential Information

Employees may have access to confidential, exempt, or sensitive information while performing their duties.

Employees shall protect such information in accordance with applicable law and Town policy and shall not disclose confidential information except as authorized or required by law.

The obligation to protect confidential information continues after employment ends.

Section 5.09 Use of Town Property

Town property, equipment, vehicles, technology, tools, and supplies are provided to conduct official Town business.

Employees are expected to exercise reasonable care in the use of Town property and promptly report loss, damage, or malfunction.

Unauthorized personal use, theft, misuse, or intentional damage to Town property may result in corrective action and may subject an employee to civil or criminal liability.

Section 5.10 Attendance and Dependability

Regular attendance and dependable performance are essential to the efficient operation of the Town.

Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled, complete assigned duties, and promptly notify their supervisor when circumstances prevent timely reporting.

Repeated absenteeism, excessive tardiness, or failure to comply with attendance procedures may result in corrective action.

Section 5.11 Dress and Personal Appearance

Employees are expected to maintain a neat, clean, and professional appearance appropriate to their assigned duties.

Department supervisors may establish reasonable dress and safety requirements consistent with operational needs.

Employees required to wear uniforms or personal protective equipment shall do so as directed.

Section 5.12 Duty to Report Organizational Concerns

Employees are encouraged to report operational concerns, safety hazards, suspected fraud, policy violations, unethical conduct, or opportunities for improving Town operations.

Employees who make reports in good faith will not be subjected to retaliation for raising legitimate concerns.

Nothing in this section requires an employee to make an internal report before making a disclosure or complaint protected by federal or Florida law or limits any rights or remedies available under sections 112.3187–112.31895, Florida Statutes, section 448.102, Florida Statutes, or other applicable law.

Section 5.13 Anti-Harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity

The Town of Micanopy is committed to providing a workplace free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Harassment based on any characteristic protected by federal or Florida law is prohibited. Prohibited conduct includes unwelcome verbal, visual, physical, or electronic conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances;
- Requests for sexual favors;
- Unwelcome physical contact;
- Sexually suggestive comments, jokes, or gestures;
- Displaying or transmitting offensive images or materials; and
- Other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature.

Employees who believe they have experienced or witnessed harassment should promptly report the matter through the procedures established in this Handbook.

Retaliation against an individual who, in good faith, reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

The Town will promptly review reported concerns and take appropriate corrective action when warranted.

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation may be made to the employee's supervisor, the Town Administrator, or another person designated by the Town. If the complaint concerns the Town Administrator, the employee may report the matter directly to the Town Attorney or Mayor. If the complaint concerns the Mayor or a Commissioner, the employee may report the matter to the Town Attorney.



Section 5.14 Workplace Violence

The Town is committed to maintaining a workplace free from violence, threats, intimidation, and disruptive behavior.

Employees shall not engage in:

- Physical violence;
- Threatening or intimidating behavior;
- Fighting;
- Stalking;
- Deliberate destruction of property;
- Bringing or using weapons in violation of Town policy or applicable law; or
- Any other conduct that jeopardizes the safety of employees or the public.

Employees shall immediately report any threats, acts of violence, or other safety concerns to their supervisor or the Town Administrator.

When appropriate, the Town may contact law enforcement or take immediate action necessary to protect employees and the public.

Section 5.15 Drug-Free Workplace

The Town is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive work environment.

Employees shall not report to work or remain on duty while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of prescription medication.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, sale, or use of controlled substances in the workplace or while conducting Town business is prohibited.

The Town may conduct drug and alcohol testing as authorized by applicable law and Town policy.

Employees taking legally prescribed medication that may impair their ability to safely perform essential job duties are responsible for notifying their supervisor when such impairment may affect workplace safety or job performance.



Section 5.16 Smoking, Tobacco, and Nicotine Products

To promote a healthy workplace and comply with applicable law, smoking, vaping, and the use of other tobacco or nicotine products are prohibited in Town buildings, Town vehicles, and other areas designated as tobacco-free.

Employees are expected to comply with all applicable local ordinances and workplace restrictions.

Section 5.17 Weapons

Except as authorized by law, employees shall not possess, display, or use firearms or other dangerous weapons while engaged in Town business, in Town facilities, or in Town vehicles.

Nothing in this section is intended to prohibit or restrict the lawful possession, storage, carrying, or use of a firearm or other weapon where such possession, storage, carrying, or use is protected by applicable federal or Florida law.

Section 5.18 Political Activities

Employees retain the rights afforded to them as private citizens to participate in the political process.

However, employees shall not:

- Use Town property, equipment, or resources for political purposes;
- Represent personal political views as those of the Town;
- Engage in political campaigning during working hours; or
- Allow political activities to interfere with the performance of official duties.

Nothing in this section is intended to restrict rights protected by law.

Section 5.19 Arrests and Criminal Convictions

Employees shall promptly notify the Town Administrator if they are arrested for or convicted of a criminal offense when the offense may affect their ability to perform their job, maintain required licenses or certifications, operate Town vehicles, or otherwise impact Town operations.

An arrest alone shall not automatically result in disciplinary action.

The Town may evaluate the circumstances to determine whether the employee can continue to perform the essential functions of the position and whether continued employment is appropriate.

Section 5.20 Falsification of Records

Employees shall maintain accurate and truthful Town records.

Knowingly falsifying, altering, destroying, or misrepresenting official records, reports, applications, payroll documents, inspection reports, financial records, or other Town documents is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may also subject an employee to criminal or civil penalties.

Section 5.21 Fraud, Theft, and Misuse of Public Resources

Employees are entrusted with public funds, equipment, and property.

Fraud, theft, embezzlement, unauthorized use of Town resources, or other dishonest conduct is strictly prohibited.

Employees who become aware of suspected fraud or misuse of public resources shall promptly report the matter to the Town Administrator.

The Town will investigate credible allegations and take appropriate corrective action.

Section 5.22 Standards Are Not All-Inclusive

The standards contained in this Article are intended to provide guidance regarding employee expectations.

Because it is impossible to anticipate every circumstance, employees are expected to exercise sound judgment and conduct themselves professionally at all times.

The Town reserves the right to address conduct not specifically identified in this Handbook when such conduct adversely affects Town operations, employee safety, public trust, or the efficient delivery of municipal services.

ARTICLE VI



TECHNOLOGY, INFORMATION, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Section 6.01 Purpose

Technology and information systems are essential tools for delivering municipal services. This Article establishes standards for the appropriate use of Town technology, electronic communications, information systems, and records while protecting the Town's operational integrity, cybersecurity, and compliance with Florida law.

Employees are expected to use Town technology responsibly, professionally, and in a manner that supports efficient public service.

Section 6.02 Ownership of Town Information

All records, documents, emails, text messages, photographs, electronic files, databases, reports, maps, recordings, and other information created, received, or maintained in connection with Town business are the property of the Town of Micanopy unless otherwise provided by law.

Employees shall not claim personal ownership of Town records or information created in the course of their employment.

Section 6.03 Acceptable Use of Technology

Town computers, networks, software, internet access, telephones, mobile devices, and other technology resources are provided primarily for conducting official Town business.

Employees shall use Town technology in a professional, lawful, and responsible manner.

Limited incidental personal use may be permitted provided it:

- Does not interfere with work responsibilities;
- Does not create additional costs for the Town;
- Does not violate law or Town policy;
- Does not compromise network security; and
- Does not interfere with the efficient operation of the workplace.

The Town may restrict or prohibit personal use whenever necessary.

Section 6.04 Electronic Communications

Electronic communications conducted in the course of Town business—including email, text messages, instant messaging, collaboration platforms, and other electronic communications—may constitute public records under Florida law.

Employees are expected to communicate professionally, courteously, and accurately in all electronic communications.

Electronic communications shall not be used to:

- Harass or intimidate others;
 - Transmit offensive or discriminatory material;
 - Conduct unauthorized political or commercial activities;
 - Disclose confidential or exempt information; or
 - Violate Town policy or applicable law.
-

Section 6.05 Public Records

Employees are responsible for preserving public records in accordance with Florida law and the Town's records retention requirements.

Employees shall promptly forward public records requests to the designated records custodian or Town Administrator unless otherwise authorized.

Employees shall not delete, destroy, alter, conceal, or improperly withhold public records.

The Town Administrator may establish administrative procedures governing electronic record retention and records management.

Section 6.06 Cybersecurity

Every employee plays an important role in protecting the Town's information systems.

Employees shall:

- Protect usernames and passwords;
- Use multi-factor authentication when required;
- Secure Town-issued devices;

- Immediately report suspected phishing attempts, malware, ransomware, or other cybersecurity incidents;
- Install only authorized software;
- Follow Town cybersecurity procedures.

Failure to follow cybersecurity requirements may result in corrective action.

Section 6.07 Password Security

Employees are responsible for safeguarding passwords and other authentication credentials.

Employees shall not:

- Share passwords with unauthorized persons;
 - Circumvent security controls;
 - Store passwords in unsecured locations; or
 - Use another employee's login credentials.
-

Section 6.08 Artificial Intelligence

The Town recognizes that artificial intelligence (AI) technologies may improve efficiency, research, document preparation, data analysis, and customer service when used responsibly.

Employees may use Town-approved AI tools only in accordance with applicable law and administrative procedures.

Employees shall not:

- Enter confidential, exempt, or sensitive information into unauthorized AI systems;
- Rely solely on AI-generated information without independent review;
- Represent AI-generated work as official Town information without verification; or
- Use AI in a manner that violates copyright, privacy, ethics, or applicable law.

Employees remain responsible for the accuracy, legality, and appropriateness of all work product generated or assisted by AI.

The Town Administrator may approve AI technologies and establish administrative procedures governing their use.

Section 6.09 Social Media

Employees shall use social media responsibly.

When using personal social media accounts, employees should avoid representing personal opinions as official Town positions.

Only employees authorized by the Town Administrator may publish official information through Town-operated social media accounts.

Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with employee rights protected by applicable law.

Section 6.10 Personal Devices

Employees authorized to conduct Town business using personal devices shall comply with Town security requirements and public records obligations.

Employees should understand that communications relating to Town business conducted on personal devices may constitute public records subject to disclosure.

The Town Administrator may establish procedures governing the use of personal devices for Town business.

Section 6.11 Photography, Audio, and Video Recordings

Employees shall not create, distribute, or publish photographs, audio recordings, or video recordings obtained through their employment except as authorized or required in the performance of official duties.

Nothing in this section prohibits recording activities authorized by law or protected employee rights.

Section 6.12 Monitoring and Privacy

Town technology resources are provided for official business.

To the extent permitted by law, employees should have no expectation of privacy in information stored, transmitted, or received using Town-owned equipment, networks, email systems, internet services, or other Town technology resources.

The Town reserves the right to monitor, inspect, access, and review Town technology resources when necessary for legitimate governmental purposes, including:

- System maintenance;
- Cybersecurity;
- Public records compliance;
- Internal investigations;
- Legal proceedings; or
- Operational needs.

Monitoring shall be conducted in accordance with applicable law.

ARTICLE VII

SAFETY, RISK MANAGEMENT, AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Section 7.01 Purpose

The Town of Micanopy is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for employees, volunteers, contractors, and members of the public.

Safety is a shared responsibility. Every employee is expected to perform assigned duties safely, comply with applicable safety regulations, promptly report hazards, and actively contribute to a culture of accident prevention and continuous improvement.

Section 7.02 Safety Responsibilities

Every employee shall:

- Follow established safety procedures.
- Use required personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Operate equipment safely and only when authorized.
- Report unsafe conditions immediately.
- Report accidents, injuries, and near misses promptly.



- Participate in required safety training.
- Cooperate during safety inspections and investigations.

Supervisors are responsible for promoting safe work practices and correcting unsafe conditions whenever reasonably possible.

Section 7.03 Workplace Safety

Employees shall comply with all applicable federal and state safety regulations and Town safety procedures.

Employees shall immediately report:

- Unsafe working conditions.
- Defective equipment.
- Utility hazards.
- Traffic hazards.
- Environmental hazards.
- Security concerns.
- Workplace violence concerns.

No employee shall knowingly create or ignore a hazardous condition that could endanger employees or the public.

Section 7.04 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Employees required to use personal protective equipment shall wear and maintain such equipment in accordance with applicable safety requirements.

The Town will provide required PPE appropriate for assigned job duties.

Employees are responsible for:

- Proper use;
- Routine inspection;
- Reasonable care; and



- Prompt reporting of damaged or defective equipment.
-

Section 7.05 Reporting Injuries

All workplace injuries, occupational illnesses, vehicle accidents, property damage, and near-miss incidents shall be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately, regardless of severity.

Prompt reporting allows the Town to:

- Obtain medical treatment when necessary.
- Comply with workers' compensation requirements.
- Investigate the incident.
- Identify corrective measures.
- Reduce future risk.

Failure to promptly report an incident may result in corrective action unless circumstances reasonably prevented immediate notification.

Section 7.06 Workers' Compensation

The Town provides workers' compensation coverage in accordance with Florida law.

Employees injured in the course and scope of employment shall:

- Report the injury immediately;
- Cooperate with medical treatment;
- Comply with return-to-work requirements;
- Provide requested documentation; and
- Cooperate in the administration of the workers' compensation claim.

Nothing in this policy alters any rights or obligations established by Florida workers' compensation law.

Section 7.07 Vehicle Safety



Employees authorized to operate Town-owned or Town-leased vehicles shall:

- Possess a valid driver's license appropriate for the vehicle operated.
- Operate vehicles safely and lawfully.
- Wear seat belts.
- Promptly report accidents.
- Conduct reasonable pre-trip inspections when appropriate.
- Avoid distracted driving.

The use of handheld electronic devices while operating Town vehicles is prohibited except as permitted by law or during emergencies.

The Town Administrator may establish additional fleet management procedures.

Section 7.08 Drug and Alcohol Safety

Employees shall not perform safety-sensitive duties while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, or medications that impair the employee's ability to safely perform assigned duties.

Employees have an obligation to notify their supervisor if a prescribed medication may affect safe job performance.

Section 7.09 Emergency Operations

The Town may activate emergency operations during hurricanes, severe weather, utility emergencies, public health incidents, infrastructure failures, or other emergencies.

Employees designated as emergency personnel may be required to:

- Report to work outside normal schedules;
- Perform emergency assignments;
- Assist other departments;
- Support emergency response operations; or
- Continue providing essential municipal services.

Employees are expected to comply with lawful emergency directives issued by the Town Administrator or Incident Commander.

Section 7.10 Return-to-Work Program

The Town supports returning injured employees to productive employment whenever medically appropriate.

Employees released to temporary or modified duty shall cooperate with reasonable work assignments consistent with medical restrictions and operational needs.

Participation in temporary duty assignments does not alter the employee's employment classification or compensation unless otherwise authorized.

Section 7.11 Accident Investigation

The purpose of accident investigations is prevention—not blame.

Following workplace accidents or significant incidents, the Town may conduct an investigation to:

- Determine contributing factors;
- Identify corrective actions;
- Improve safety practices;
- Protect employees and the public; and
- Reduce future risk.

Employees are expected to cooperate fully with accident investigations.

Section 7.12 Safety Training

The Town shall provide safety training appropriate to employee job responsibilities.

Employees are expected to attend required training and apply the knowledge gained in performing assigned duties.

Training may include:

- Defensive driving;



- OSHA-related safety topics;
 - Utility safety;
 - Equipment operation;
 - Emergency preparedness;
 - Workplace violence prevention;
 - Cybersecurity awareness; and
 - Other training determined necessary by the Town Administrator.
-

ARTICLE VIII

CORRECTIVE ACTION AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Section 8.01 Purpose

The Town of Micanopy is committed to maintaining a workplace where employees understand performance expectations, receive timely feedback, and are afforded opportunities to improve when appropriate.

Corrective action is intended to address performance deficiencies, policy violations, misconduct, and other workplace concerns in a fair, consistent, and constructive manner while preserving the Town's ability to efficiently operate and protect the public interest.

Nothing in this Article alters the at-will employment relationship or limits the Town's authority to impose appropriate corrective or disciplinary action.

Section 8.02 Management Philosophy

The Town believes that most workplace issues can be resolved through effective communication, coaching, supervision, and employee development.

Supervisors are encouraged to:

- Communicate expectations clearly.
- Address concerns promptly.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Document significant performance issues.



- Recognize employee improvement.
- Seek lasting solutions rather than simply imposing discipline.

Corrective action should be administered consistently while considering the circumstances of each situation.

Section 8.03 Progressive Corrective Action

When appropriate, the Town may utilize progressive corrective action to address employee performance or conduct.

Progressive corrective action may include:

- Coaching or counseling;
- Verbal warning;
- Written warning;
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP);
- Suspension;
- Demotion;
- Termination.

Not every situation requires each step.

The Town reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of corrective action based upon the circumstances of each case.

Section 8.04 Performance Improvement Plans

When appropriate, an employee may be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

A Performance Improvement Plan should generally include:

- The performance concern;
- Expected level of improvement;
- Specific performance goals;
- Resources available to assist the employee;
- Timeframe for improvement; and

- Consequences if improvement is not achieved.

Completion of a Performance Improvement Plan does not guarantee continued employment.

Section 8.05 Immediate Corrective Action

Certain conduct is so serious that progressive corrective action may not be appropriate.

The Town reserves the right to suspend, demote, or terminate employment without prior corrective action when circumstances warrant.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Violence or threats of violence;
- Theft or fraud;
- Falsification of records;
- Serious insubordination;
- Possession of illegal drugs in the workplace;
- Serious safety violations;
- Criminal conduct affecting employment;
- Breach of confidential information;
- Gross misconduct; or
- Other conduct determined by the Town to warrant immediate action.

This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

Section 8.06 Administrative Leave

The Town Administrator may place an employee on administrative leave, with or without pay as permitted by law, while the Town reviews allegations of misconduct, safety concerns, workplace complaints, criminal investigations, or other circumstances affecting Town operations.

Administrative leave is not disciplinary action unless expressly designated as such.

Section 8.07 Investigations

The Town may investigate allegations involving:

- Policy violations;
- Misconduct;
- Harassment;
- Safety concerns;
- Fraud;
- Theft;
- Workplace violence;
- Ethics concerns;
- Public records violations; or
- Other matters affecting Town operations.

Employees are expected to cooperate fully during investigations.

Knowingly providing false or misleading information during an investigation may result in corrective action.

Section 8.08 Employee Response

Employees will generally be given an opportunity to respond to allegations before disciplinary action is imposed, unless circumstances require immediate action.

Nothing in this section creates a contractual right to any specific disciplinary procedure.

Section 8.09 Documentation

Supervisors are expected to document significant performance concerns, coaching efforts, corrective action, investigations, and disciplinary decisions.

Documentation should be:

- Accurate;
- Objective;
- Timely;
- Respectful; and



- Maintained in accordance with Town procedures.
-

Section 8.10 Employee Assistance

When appropriate, supervisors are encouraged to identify resources that may help employees improve performance or address workplace concerns.

Such resources may include:

- Additional training;
- Coaching;
- Professional development;
- Employee Assistance Programs (if available);
- Temporary mentoring; or
- Other appropriate support.

Providing assistance does not prevent the Town from taking corrective action when warranted.

Section 8.11 Corrective Action Is Not Contractual

Corrective action is intended to promote fairness and consistency but is not intended to create contractual rights or mandatory disciplinary procedures.

The Town reserves the right to:

- Skip disciplinary steps;
- Repeat disciplinary steps;
- Combine disciplinary actions;
- Modify corrective measures;
- Take immediate disciplinary action; or
- Separate an employee from employment whenever determined appropriate.

Each situation shall be evaluated individually.



Section 8.12 Prohibited Retaliation

The Town prohibits retaliation against employees who, in good faith:

- Report violations of law or Town policy;
- Participate in investigations;
- Report workplace safety concerns;
- Report fraud or unethical conduct;
- Request legally protected accommodations or leave; or
- Exercise rights protected by law.

Employees who engage in retaliation are subject to corrective action.

Section 8.13 Employee Recognition

The Town encourages supervisors to recognize employees whose performance exemplifies the Town's mission and core values. Recognition may include commendations, letters of appreciation, professional development opportunities, service awards, or other forms of acknowledgment approved by the Town Administrator.

Recognition programs are discretionary and may be modified based on organizational needs and available resources.

ARTICLE IX

SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

Section 9.01 Purpose

This Article establishes policies governing the separation of employees from employment with the Town of Micanopy. The Town recognizes that employment may end for many reasons, and it is committed to administering separations fairly, professionally, and in accordance with applicable law.

Section 9.02 Types of Separation

Employment with the Town may end through one or more of the following:



- Voluntary resignation;
- Retirement;
- Completion of temporary or seasonal employment;
- Expiration of an employment agreement;
- Reduction in force;
- Medical separation, when appropriate;
- Job abandonment;
- Dismissal; or
- Death.

The Town Administrator shall determine the appropriate classification of separation consistent with this Handbook and applicable law.

Section 9.03 Resignation

Employees who voluntarily resign are encouraged to provide written notice at least:

- Two (2) weeks for most employees;
- Four (4) weeks for department heads or management positions, when practical.

The Town may waive all or part of the notice period based upon operational needs.

Failure to provide notice does not prevent resignation but may be considered in determining future employment eligibility.

Section 9.04 Retirement

Employees who retire are encouraged to provide advance notice to facilitate succession planning and the orderly transfer of responsibilities.

The Town appreciates the service and contributions of retiring employees and may recognize retirement through appropriate ceremonies or acknowledgments approved by the Town Administrator.

Section 9.05 Reduction in Force

The Town reserves the right to eliminate positions or reduce staffing due to:

- Budgetary constraints;
- Organizational restructuring;
- Operational efficiencies;
- Lack of work;
- Elimination of programs;
- Grant expiration; or
- Other legitimate governmental purposes.

Nothing in this section creates seniority rights or guarantees continued employment.

When practical, the Town will provide advance notice of reductions in force.

Section 9.06 Job Abandonment

Employees who fail to report to work for three (3) consecutive scheduled workdays without notifying the Town, unless circumstances reasonably prevent notification, may be considered to have voluntarily abandoned their position.

Prior to classifying an employee as having abandoned employment, the Town will make reasonable efforts to contact the employee.

Section 9.07 Exit Interviews

The Town may conduct exit interviews to obtain feedback regarding employment experiences and opportunities for organizational improvement.

Participation is voluntary unless otherwise required by law or employment agreement.

Information obtained through exit interviews may be used to improve Town operations and employment practices.



Section 9.08 Return of Town Property

Before separation from employment, employees shall return all Town property, including but not limited to:

- Keys;
- Identification cards;
- Computers;
- Mobile devices;
- Credit cards;
- Uniforms;
- Tools;
- Equipment;
- Records; and
- Other Town-owned property.

The Town may delay administrative processing of separation until Town property has been accounted for, consistent with applicable law.

Section 9.09 Final Compensation

Employees separating from employment shall receive final compensation in accordance with applicable law and Town policy.

Final compensation may include:

- Regular wages;
- Approved overtime;
- Accrued leave benefits, if eligible;
- Other compensation authorized by Town policy or law.

The Town may make deductions authorized by law or voluntarily authorized by the employee.



Section 9.10 Benefits Continuation

Employees separating from employment will be provided information regarding continuation of benefits as required by applicable law and applicable benefit plans.

Questions regarding retirement benefits, health insurance continuation, deferred compensation, and other post-employment benefits should be directed to the Town Administrator.

Section 9.11 Eligibility for Reemployment

Former employees may be considered for reemployment based upon:

- Previous work performance;
- Circumstances of separation;
- Qualifications for the position;
- Employment history; and
- The needs of the Town.

Previous employment with the Town does not guarantee reemployment or restoration of prior benefits unless required by law.

Section 9.12 Post-Employment Responsibilities

Former employees remain responsible for:

- Protecting confidential information;
- Complying with applicable ethics laws;
- Returning Town records not previously surrendered;
- Cooperating with lawful requests relating to Town business conducted during employment; and
- Complying with any continuing obligations established by law or written agreement.

ARTICLE X



EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION, PROBLEM RESOLUTION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Section 10.01 Purpose

The Town encourages open communication and the prompt resolution of workplace concerns at the lowest appropriate level.

Employees are encouraged to discuss questions, concerns, or workplace issues with their supervisors whenever practical. Early communication often leads to timely and effective solutions while fostering a positive and professional work environment.

This Article establishes procedures for raising workplace concerns while preserving the Town's ability to efficiently manage its operations.

Section 10.02 Open Door Policy

The Town maintains an Open Door Policy that encourages employees to communicate openly with supervisors and management.

Employees are encouraged to:

- Ask questions regarding Town policies or procedures;
- Discuss workplace concerns;
- Suggest improvements to Town operations;
- Seek clarification regarding job expectations; and
- Raise concerns regarding working conditions or employee relations.

Employees may request a meeting with their immediate supervisor or, when appropriate, the Town Administrator.

No employee shall be discouraged from raising legitimate workplace concerns in good faith.

Section 10.03 Informal Resolution

Employees are encouraged to attempt to resolve routine workplace concerns through informal discussion whenever appropriate.

Many misunderstandings can be resolved through respectful communication without the need for formal review.

Supervisors are expected to listen carefully, consider concerns objectively, and work toward practical solutions consistent with Town policy.

Section 10.04 Administrative Review

When an employee believes a workplace issue cannot be resolved informally, the employee may request administrative review by the Town Administrator.

Administrative review may include matters involving:

- Application of Town policies;
- Working conditions;
- Interpersonal workplace conflicts;
- Supervisory concerns;
- Performance expectations;
- Operational issues; or
- Other employment-related concerns.

The Town Administrator may review the matter, gather information, meet with involved parties, and issue an administrative determination as appropriate.

Section 10.05 Matters Excluded from Administrative Review

Administrative review is not intended to replace procedures established by federal or state law or other provisions of this Handbook.

This Article does not apply to:

- Workers' compensation claims;
- Unemployment compensation;
- Public records requests;
- Matters subject to external administrative or judicial review;



- Issues governed by statutory appeal rights; or
 - Other matters excluded by applicable law.
-

Section 10.06 Reporting Unlawful Conduct

Nothing in this Handbook limits an employee's right to report suspected violations of law to appropriate governmental authorities.

Employees are encouraged to report suspected:

- Fraud;
- Waste or abuse of public resources;
- Safety violations;
- Discrimination;
- Harassment;
- Retaliation;
- Ethics violations; or
- Other unlawful conduct.

The Town prohibits retaliation against employees who make good-faith reports or participate in investigations.

Section 10.07 Confidentiality

The Town will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of individuals involved in workplace concerns and investigations.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed because information may need to be shared to:

- Conduct an investigation;
- Comply with public records laws;
- Meet legal obligations;

- Protect employee safety; or
- Resolve workplace issues.

Employees participating in investigations are expected to respect the privacy of others while recognizing that protected rights under applicable law are not restricted by this policy.

Section 10.08 Non-Retaliation

The Town strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who, in good faith:

- Reports suspected violations of law or Town policy;
- Requests an accommodation;
- Requests protected leave;
- Participates in an investigation;
- Reports workplace safety concerns; or
- Exercises rights protected by law.

Retaliation itself is a violation of this Handbook and may result in corrective action.

Section 10.09 Final Administrative Determination

Following administrative review, the Town Administrator may issue a written or verbal determination as appropriate to the circumstances.

Administrative determinations are intended to provide guidance, resolve workplace concerns, and promote the efficient operation of the Town.

Nothing in this Article creates contractual appeal rights or limits the Town Administrator's authority to administer Town operations consistent with the Town Charter and policies adopted by the Town Commission.

ARTICLE XI

GENERAL PROVISIONS



Section 11.01 Order of Precedence

In the event of a conflict between this Handbook and applicable federal or state law, the Town Charter, an applicable ordinance, collective bargaining agreement, or individual employment agreement approved by the Town Commission, the controlling law, Charter provision, ordinance, or agreement shall govern.

Administrative procedures adopted by the Town Administrator shall be consistent with and shall not supersede this Handbook or action taken by the Town Commission.

Section 11.02 No Waiver of Legal Rights

Nothing in this Handbook shall be construed to waive, limit, or interfere with any right, protection, remedy, or obligation provided by federal or Florida law, the United States Constitution, the Florida Constitution, the Town Charter, an applicable collective bargaining agreement, or an approved employment agreement.

Section 11.03 Severability

If any provision of this Handbook is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect to the extent permitted by law.

Section 11.04 Amendment

The Town Commission may amend, repeal, or replace this Handbook by appropriate action. The Town Administrator may recommend amendments and may establish administrative procedures necessary to implement policies adopted by the Town Commission, provided such procedures are consistent with this Handbook and applicable law.