

## Town of Pineville Employee Handbook revision 2024

We have conducted a complete review of our Employee Handbook of policies. Our handbook was already in overall good shape, but this review was conducted to update to any new law or regulations, and to address any areas that were vague or no longer working in all situations, or any new topics that need a policy. No handbook can anticipate all employee questions or issues, but a comprehensive Handbook will accomplish this in most all circumstances.

We enlisted the assistance of H.R. consultant Susan Nunn, who worked with the Town's H.R. Director to revise and update policies. The changes were reviewed by Town Attorney, Janelle Lyons. Below are highlights of the changes we deem necessary at this time. These should also carry us into the future, unless we experience a pressing need to adopt a revision to a policy at some point.

Below are the most significant changes. The rest on the full list are basically wording clean-up, clearer language, and some reorganization.

1. Throughout, used gender neutral pronouns.
2. Throughout, deleted unnecessary or repetitive, or too limiting wording. Often, by trying to name every example or instance that could occur, the organization gets trapped or limited by trying to be too specific.
3. Throughout, moved administrative procedures out of the policy handbook into a new Procedures Manual. There were many procedures (such as payroll preparation) in our policy handbook that did not belong there. They belong in a Procedure Manual.
4. Section 1: Organization of the Personnel System, enhanced EEO and diversity language, clarified roles and chain of command when addressing concerns.
5. Section 3: Recruitment and Selection, enhanced EEO statement.
6. Section 4: Compensation, starting salaries above mid-point are not always Council approved, they are Town Manager approved.
7. Section 4: Compensation, clarify demotion.
8. Section 4: Compensation, Longevity pay, clarify/define continuous service, effects of breaks in service.
9. Section 4: Compensation, Performance Management and Merit Pay, updated to current practice and terminology.
10. Section 5: Conditions of Employment, Employment of Relatives, prohibitions, added relationships to elected officials, but kept the before 3/9/2021 exemption for direct family members working in the same department (grandfathered in).
11. Section 5: Conditions of Employment, combined and updated harassment policies.
12. Section 5: Conditions of Employment, new Personal Relationships in the Workplace policy

13. Section 6: Added a remote/flexible work policy just in case. Currently there are no remote workers, unless occasional in Administration as needed.
14. Section 7: Employee Benefits, Short Term Disability referenced the Leave section p. 52 for policy. Further procedure will be included in Procedure Manual.
15. Section 7: Employee Benefits for Retired 25 or More Years of Service, incorporated the Post-retirement Medical Benefits Policy adopted 09/10/2019 that has been an amendment to the handbook. If hired after 9/10/2019 retirees do not receive medical benefits. If hired prior to 09/10/2019 and meet other criteria listed they can receive medical benefits until Medicare eligible and then \$150/month stipend toward a Medigap plan.
16. Section 7: Employee Benefits, Tuition Assistance, increased \$500 per year reimbursement to \$1000 per year. One semester at CPCC is now \$500, so this benefit amount is not adequate any longer.
17. Section 8: Holidays and Leaves, added annual limit on accumulated sick leave that can be used for care of sick family member. No limit for the employee.
18. Section 8: Holidays and Leaves, Vacation Leave, required to use comp time before vacation to reduce buildup of comp time.
19. Section 8: Holidays and Leaves, Sick Leave, added annual limit on accumulated sick leave that can be used for care of sick family member. No limit for employee.
20. Section 8: Holidays and Leaves, new pregnant and nursing mothers section conforms to new laws and regulations.
21. Section 10: Discipline, process, eliminated too restrictive “progressive discipline” wording and step. Although we practice progressive discipline, we need the flexibility to move faster through the steps when the circumstances dictate that.
22. Section 11: Grievance procedure, timeframes for each person in the process to respond are lengthened to more standard time frames. Ours were too short causing each party to have to respond too quickly.

The full list summarizing all of the edits is available, as well as the current version that was last updated in March 2021 just to include the addition of the first Firefighters hired by the Town.

Once this revision is approved it will be rolled out effective April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024.

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