

Employee Handbook



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WELCOME

Welcome to the City of Tifton! We are pleased that you have joined us, and we know that your contributions will assist us in remaining a model employer in this community.

As an employee of the City of Tifton (the "City"), you should know what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. This handbook gives you that information by outlining many of our City's current benefits, practices and policies.

The City of Tifton is an "at will" employer, meaning that the employment relationship can be terminated by either the City or the employee, with or without cause and with or without notice.

Please keep this handbook handy as a guide and ready reference throughout your employment here. If you have questions as you read through this handbook, please discuss them with your supervisor. Your supervisor is a very important source of information and will be more than happy to assist you. Additionally, the Human Resources Director is available to discuss any questions you may have with regard to information in this handbook or about any personnel policy matter in general.

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with our City and to give you a ready reference to answer many of your questions regarding your employment with us. Please remember that business conditions change, and this handbook reflects the employee benefits, personnel policies and employment rules that are in effect at the time the handbook is published.

This handbook does not create an “employment contract” or other enforceable entitlements or expectations, including constitutionally protected property interests. Although the City intends that the benefits, policies and regulations outlined in this handbook will generally remain in effect, the City reserves the right to, at any time, redefine eligibility for benefits and/or amend, curtail, terminate, or revise the benefits, policies, or regulations outlined in this handbook at its sole discretion.

Certain City departments may issue policies unique to the particular department. Departmental policies must be followed by employees and must be read in conjunction with this employee handbook. In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between a departmental policy and a City-wide policy, clarification should be sought from the Department Head. This handbook excludes elected and appointed officials, except as expressly stated otherwise.

INTRODUCTORY POLICIES

ETHICS AND CONDUCT POLICY

All employees are expected to comply with the City's Code of Ethics and Conduct as published in the municipal code, available at www.municode.com, as such code would be applicable to a City employee. The City's ethics code is summarized for employees as follows:

Act in the Public Interest:

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, employees will work for the common good of the people of Tifton and not for any private or personal interest. They will assure fair and equal treatment of all employees, claims and transactions coming before the City.

Comply with the Law:

Employees shall comply with the laws of the United States, the State and the City in the performance of their duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and Georgia constitutions; laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities and open processes of government; and City ordinances and policies.

Conduct of Employees:

The professional and personal conduct of employees must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Employees should maintain a reputation for serving equally and impartially all members of the City Council. To this end, employees should not engage in active participation in City election campaigns while at work, on City time, or in their official capacity.

Respect for Processes:

Employees shall perform their duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Council and boards and commissions governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the City Council by City staff.

Conduct at Public Meetings:

Employees shall prepare themselves for public issues and meetings, listen courteously and attentively to all public decisions, and focus on the business at hand. They shall refrain from interrupting other speakers, making personal comments not related to the business of the body, or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.

Decisions Based on Merit:

Employees shall base their decisions only on the merits and substance of the matter at hand.

Communication:

If an employee receives substantive information from a source outside the decision-making process regarding a matter under consideration by the Council, boards or commissions, the employee has an obligation to share that information with his or her supervisor.

Conflict of Interest:

In order to assure independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, employees shall not use their official positions to influence government decision in which they have a material financial interest or personal relationship that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. Where a conflict exists, the employee shall disclose the conflict and excuse himself/herself from participating in deliberations and decision-making regarding such matters.

Gifts and Favors:

No employee shall solicit or accept anything of value if it could reasonably be considered to influence the employee in the discharge of official duties. This prohibition shall not apply to an occasional nominal non-monetary gift, admission to a breakfast, lunch, dinner, function or event, or honorary or ex-officio memberships in civic organizations.

Use of Public Resources:

Employees shall not use public resources not available to the public in general, such as City staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purpose. Employees shall not utilize the City's name or logo for the purpose of endorsing any business.

Representative of Private Interests:

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, employees shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the Council, any board, commission, or proceeding of the City. Employees shall also not appear before the Council on behalf of the private interests of third parties on matters related to the areas of service.

Advocacy:

Employees shall represent the official policies or positions of the Council, board and commission to the best of their abilities when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, employees shall explicitly state that they do not represent the City, and shall not imply that they do.

Independence of Boards and Commissions:

Because of the value of the independent advice boards and commissions provide to the public decision-making process, employees shall refrain from using their positions to influence unduly the deliberations or outcomes of board and commission proceedings.

Positive Work Place Environment:

Employees shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive workplace environment for all City employees and for citizens and businesses dealing with the City.

Violations of this policy or the City's Code of Ethics and Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) and HARASSMENT

The City of Tifton provides equal opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression), national origin, age, disability, citizenship status, military or veteran status, genetic information, or any other classification protected by applicable federal, state and local laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation and training.

Harassment of or by applicants, employees, citizens, or vendors will not be tolerated and is impermissible however it is communicated, including but not limited to electronic, written, or spoken word. Any form of harassment relating to an individual's race; color; religion; sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression); national origin; age; disability; citizenship status; military or veteran status; genetic information; or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Violation of this policy will result in corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

Prohibited Conduct:

If you have any questions about what constitutes harassing behavior or what conduct is prohibited by this policy, discuss the questions with your immediate supervisor or one of the contacts listed under the section titled *Reporting Obligation and Procedure*. At a minimum, the term "harassment" as used in this policy includes:

- Offensive remarks, comments, jokes, slurs or verbal conduct either (a) pertaining to or (b) directed toward an individual or group because of his or her/their race; color; religion; sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression); national origin; age; disability; citizenship status; military or veteran status; genetic information; or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law.
- Offensive pictures, drawings, photographs, figurines, or other graphic images, conduct, or communications, including e-mail, faxes, and copies pertaining to an individual's race; color; religion; sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression); national origin; age; disability; citizenship status; military or veteran status; genetic information; or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law.

- Offensive sexual remarks, sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, regardless of the gender of the individuals involved.
- Offensive physical conduct, including touching and gestures, regardless of the gender of the individuals involved.

Sexual harassment for purposes of this policy is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct that is either of a sexual nature or because of the victim's sex when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting said individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

No supervisor, member of management or City official has the authority to suggest to any applicant or employee that employment or advancement will be affected by the individual entering into (or refusing to enter into) a personal relationship with the supervisor or manager, or for tolerating (or refusing to tolerate) conduct or communication that might violate this policy. Such conduct is a direct violation of this policy.

Supervisors and directors, as well as all City officials, are covered by this policy and are prohibited from engaging in any form of harassing, discriminatory or retaliatory conduct.

Whistleblower:

A whistleblower as defined by this policy is an employee of the City who reports an activity that he or she considers to be illegal or dishonest to one or more of the parties specified in this policy. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management are charged with these responsibilities.

Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state, or local laws; billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

If an employee has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the employee is to contact his or her Department Head or the Human Resources Director. The employee must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Whistleblower protections are provided in two important areas confidentiality and retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense. The City will not retaliate against a whistleblower. This includes but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any whistleblower who believes he or she is being retaliated against must contact the Human Resources Director immediately. The right of a whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

All reports of illegal and dishonest activities will be promptly submitted to the Human Resources Director who is responsible for investigating and coordinating corrective action.

Retaliation is Prohibited:

No employee who has made any report of unlawful harassment shall be allowed to suffer any sanction or retaliatory action as a result of such report. Retaliation is absolutely prohibited, including: threatening an individual or taking any adverse action against an individual for reporting a possible violation of this policy; or participating in an investigation conducted under this policy. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting Obligation and Procedure:

The City has adopted a complaint procedure that assures a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of all complaints, followed by swift and appropriate corrective action when warranted. Any employee who experiences or observes harassment, discrimination or retaliation should report it using the steps listed below in the *Problem-Solving Procedure (Grievances)* section. No employee should assume that the City is

aware of a problem. Complaints and concerns must be brought to the attention of the City so the City can take steps to correct any problem.

If you have any concern that the City's EEO and No Harassment policy may have been violated by anyone, you must immediately report the matter. Immediately report any harassing or discriminating behavior by non-employees, including but not limited to citizens, elected officials, appointed officials, contractors, subcontractors and vendors. Due to the very serious nature of harassment, discrimination and retaliation, you must report your concerns to a supervisor or manager. You may report your concerns to anyone with supervisory responsibility at the City of Tifton, including but not limited to, your immediate supervisor, any Department Head, the Human Resources Director, or the City Manager.

You should report any actions you believe may violate our policy, no matter how slight the actions may seem.

Investigation and Resolution Procedure:

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and impartially. At the discretion of the City Manager, an outside investigator may be utilized. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. Any complaint brought to a Department Head must be reported to the Human Resources Director prior to investigation. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent practical and legal.

We are serious about enforcing our policy against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Employees who violate this or any other City policy are subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination for an employee, or other appropriate remedial action for a non-employee.

PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCEDURE (GRIEVANCES)

The "Problem-Solving Procedure" offers all employees the freedom to discuss anything they wish with the appropriate members of management. These discussions might include but are not limited to discipline, termination, transfer, suspension, promotion or demotion. Follow the procedure below if you believe that a City policy may have been violated. Whenever you have a problem, it usually can be resolved by following these steps:

1. Discuss any problem with your immediate supervisor. Often, your supervisor is in the best position to handle your problem satisfactorily. This informal process often will resolve your problem. When practicable, employees should follow the chain of command within their department in this process. Employees should make every effort to discuss their problems with their immediate supervisor within five (5) working days of the action or decision giving rise to the issue. The employee's supervisor should respond within ten (10) working days, to the extent reasonably practicable under the circumstances. Throughout this procedure, the term "working day" is defined as Monday through Friday business days, excluding City holidays.
2. If you are not satisfied after you have spoken with your immediate supervisor, or if you feel that you cannot speak to your supervisor, you should submit a written grievance to the next level in your chain of command within five (5) working days of your immediate supervisor's decision or the action or decision giving rise to the issue, whichever is later. The next level chain of command should respond within ten (10) working days, to the extent reasonably practicable under the circumstances. If the immediate supervisor is bypassed, the written grievance should so indicate and include the reasons why you did not feel that you could speak to him/her.
3. If you are not satisfied after you have spoken with your immediate supervisor and have gone through the chain of command as applicable, or if you feel that you cannot speak to your supervisor or anyone in your chain of command, you should submit a written grievance to your Department Head. This written grievance should be submitted within five (5) working days of the last supervisor's decision in your chain of command or the action or decision giving rise to the issue, whichever is later. The Department Head will review the issue and respond within ten (10) working days, to the extent reasonably practicable under the circumstances. If any supervisor in the chain of command is bypassed, the written grievance should so indicate and include the reasons why you did not feel that you could submit your grievance to him or her/them.

4. If you still are not satisfied after working with your Department Head on a resolution, or if you feel that you cannot speak to your Department Head, you may submit a written grievance to the City Manager within five (5) working days of receiving the recommendation of your Department Head or supervisor, as applicable. If the Department Head is bypassed, the written grievance should so indicate and include the reasons why you did not feel that you could submit your grievance to him/her. The City Manager will respond within ten (10) working days, to the extent reasonably practicable under the circumstances. The City Manager's decision is final.

At any step in the process, city management will investigate the circumstances to the extent necessary to make an informed decision.

An employee may speak with the Human Resources Director at any time to express concerns or seek assistance; however, depending on the nature of the problem involved and other relevant circumstances, the employee may be directed to follow the above-described problem-solving procedure prior to the Human Resources Director's consideration of the problem.

Any supervisor (at any level) who is involved in the process may consult with the Human Resources Director at any time.

Employees in their introductory period whose employment is terminated for failure to perform their tasks, duties, or assignments in compliance with City or departmental policy and the requirements of the employee's job description shall not be afforded the above noted procedure. The decision of the Department Head shall be final.

NAME-CLEARING HEARINGS

The sole purpose of a name-clearing hearing is to afford certain terminated employees an opportunity to publicly refute, explain, or otherwise address the reason(s) for his or her termination. It does not allow the terminated employee to appeal or seek reversal, reduction, or modification of the termination decision.

Generally, a former employee may be offered the opportunity to seek a name-clearing hearing if his or her employment was terminated for a reason(s) which he or she contends to be both false and stigmatizing. The City Manager, or his or her designee, will decide when a name-clearing hearing will be offered at his or her sole discretion.

When the City chooses to offer a terminated employee a name-clearing hearing, the terminated employee will be notified in writing of his or her right to request the hearing.

The terminated employee will have five (5) business days to submit written notification to the Human Resources Director that he or she would like to have a hearing. "Business days" are defined as Monday through Friday, excluding City holidays.

The request for a name-clearing hearing will be approved or denied by the City Manager or his or her designee at his or her sole discretion. The Human Resources Director will notify the former employee of the City Manager's decision within ten (10) business days, or as soon as is practicable under the circumstances. The former employee will be notified of the date, time, and place of the hearing. Any request to reschedule or continue a name-clearing hearing must be submitted, in writing, to the Human Resources Director immediately upon discovery of the need for same, and must provide a detailed explanation of the reasons for the request. Such requests will only be granted upon a showing of good cause and a determination that the requested rescheduling or continuance will not result in undue prejudice or the imposition of undue burden or expense.

The terminated employee has the right to be represented by an attorney at the name-clearing hearing, at his or her own expense.

The name-clearing hearing will be open to the public. Notice of the date, time, location, and purpose (including the full name of the former employee) will be posted and published in the same manner as other public hearings and called meetings.

The name-clearing hearing will be conducted by a qualified hearing officer of the City of Tifton, who will be selected by the City Manager or his or her designee. The hearing officer will have the complete authority

and discretion to determine the proper scope of the hearing and to exclude any testimony, evidence, or argument that he or she determines is not reasonably related to the stated reasons for the termination decision or the overall purpose of the name-clearing hearing or which he or she determines to be unnecessarily redundant, confidential, unduly prejudicial, vindictive, or otherwise inappropriate.

The authority of the hearing officer does not extend to reviewing the merits of the termination, nor to examining its reasonableness, severity, or fairness, nor to comparing the stated reason(s) for the termination to the stated reason(s) for lesser adverse actions taken against other employees. The hearing officer shall have no authority to cause, recommend, or request the former employee's reinstatement or the reversal, reduction, or other modification of the termination decision, and thus should entertain no testimony, evidence, or argument directed to such issues. The hearing officer lacks the authority to issue subpoenas or otherwise compel the attendance or testimony of witnesses.

The City bears no burden of proof at the hearing and therefore need not offer any testimony, evidence, or argument in support of the termination. Rather, once the scope of the hearing is determined by the hearing officer, the former employee should be allowed to present testimony and evidence or argue why he or she contends the stated reason(s) for the termination to be false. The former employee may testify personally and/or may call witnesses to testify on his or her behalf subject to the authority and discretion of the hearing officer to disallow or limit the presentation of testimony or evidence at the hearing. The hearing officer may, but need not, ask questions of any witness, particularly in aid of determining the scope of the hearing, whether to allow any proposed testimony, evidence or argument, or to otherwise assist him or her in effectively presiding over the hearing.

The hearing will be audio recorded.

The hearing officer will conclude the hearing upon a determination that the former employee has had a meaningful opportunity to address the stated reason(s) for his or her termination through the presentation of testimony, evidence, and/or argument (subject to the hearing officer's authority to exclude or limit any such testimony, evidence, or argument as described in this policy).

Except as provided in this policy, the hearing officer will make no findings or conclusions or issue any decisions regarding the hearing.

The name-clearing hearing does not preclude the former employee from participating in the City's grievance process. [See Problem-Solving Procedure (Grievances) in this Employee Handbook.]

It is not the intent of this policy for the name-clearing hearing to be conducted as or to otherwise constitute a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding subject to judicial review pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 5-4-1, et seq. or otherwise.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The City of Tifton is committed to providing a safe work environment and to fostering the well-being and health of its employees. That commitment is jeopardized when any City employee illegally uses drugs on or off the job; comes to work under the influence; possesses, distributes or sells drugs in the workplace; or abuses alcohol on the job. Therefore, under authority of Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. 34-9-410), the City has established this policy based on these principles:

1. It is a violation of City policy for any employee to use, possess, sell, trade, offer for sale, buy, or offer to buy illegal drugs or otherwise engage in the illegal use of drugs on or off the job.
2. It is a violation of City policy for any employee to report to work under the influence of or while possessing in his/her body, blood, or urine illegal drugs in any detectable amount.
3. It is a violation of City policy for any employee to report to work under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or to use alcohol on the job, on City property, or in a City vehicle.
4. It is a violation of City policy for any employee to use prescription drugs illegally, i.e., to use prescription drugs that have not been legally obtained or in a manner or for a purpose other than as prescribed. (However, nothing in this policy precludes the appropriate use of legally prescribed medications.)

5. Violations of this policy are subject to termination.

General Procedures:

An employee reporting to work visibly impaired will be deemed unable to properly perform required duties and will not be allowed to work. If possible, the employee's supervisor will first seek another supervisor's opinion to confirm the employee's status. Next, a supervisor will consult privately with the employee to determine the cause of the observation, including whether substance abuse has occurred. If, in the opinion of the supervisor, the employee is considered impaired, the employee will be sent home or to a medical facility by taxi or other safe transportation alternative – depending on the determination of the observed impairment – and accompanied by the supervisor or another employee if necessary. A drug test may be in order. No employee considered to be impaired will be allowed to operate any City vehicle or machinery. If an impaired employee insists on driving while under the influence, law enforcement will be notified immediately.

Confidentiality:

The confidentiality of any information received by the City through a substance abuse testing program shall be maintained, except as otherwise provided by law.

Pre-Employment Drug Testing:

All job applicants offered employment will undergo testing for the presence of illegal drugs as a condition of employment. Any applicant with a confirmed positive test result for illegal drugs will be denied employment. Applicants will be required to submit to a specimen test at a laboratory chosen by the City and by signing a consent agreement will release the City from liability.

If the physician and/or his or her staff, Medical Review Officer (MRO), or lab personnel has reasonable suspicion to believe that the job applicant has tampered with the specimen, the applicant will not be considered for employment.

Individuals who have failed a pre-employment test must wait a period of not shorter than six (6) months before re-applying for employment and if selected must submit again to pre-employment drug testing as a condition of employment. Individuals who have failed a pre-employment test applying for positions in public safety may be disqualified from further consideration for such positions for longer periods of time or entirely.

Employee Testing:

The City has adopted testing practices to identify employees who use illegal drugs on or off the job or who abuse alcohol on the job. Refusal to submit to a substance abuse test constitutes insubordination, and the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. It shall be a condition of employment for all employees to submit to substance abuse testing under the following circumstances:

- A. When there is reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee is using illegal drugs or abusing alcohol. "Reasonable suspicion" is based on a belief that an employee is using or has used drugs or alcohol in violation of the City's policy, drawn from specific objective and articulable facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts in light of experience. Among other things, such facts and inferences may be based upon but not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Observable phenomena while at work, such as direct observation of substance abuse or of the physical symptoms or manifestations of being impaired due to substance abuse;
 - 2. Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at work or a significant deterioration in work performance;
 - 3. A report of substance abuse provided by a reliable and credible source;
 - 4. Evidence that an individual has tampered with, attempted to tamper with, or sought to have someone else tamper with, his or her substance abuse test during his/her employment with the current employer;
 - 5. Information that an employee has caused or contributed to an accident while at work; or,
 - 6. Evidence that an employee has used, possessed, sold, solicited or transferred drugs while working or while on the employer's premises or while operating the employer's vehicle, machinery or equipment.

- B. When an employee has caused or contributed to an on-the-job injury that resulted in a loss of worktime, which means any period of time during which an employee stops performing the normal duties of employment and leaves the place of employment to seek care from a licensed medical provider. The City also may send an employee for a substance abuse test if he or she is involved in an on-the-job accident where personal injury or damage to City property in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) occurs.
- C. As part of a follow-up program to treatment for drug abuse when an employee has involuntarily entered a rehabilitation program because of a positive confirmed test result, the frequency of such testing shall be a minimum of at least once a year for a two-year period after completion of the rehabilitation program. Advance notice of testing shall not be given to the employee.
- D. Within 24 hours after an employee uses deadly force or discharges a firearm in the line of duty.

If the physician and/or his or her staff, MRO or lab personnel have reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee has tampered with the specimen, the employee is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

An employee with a confirmed positive test result may, at his or her own option and expense, have a second confirmation test performed on the same specimen. An employee will not be allowed to submit another specimen for testing. The employee will be required to pay for any and all costs incurred by any additional test(s).

Alcohol Abuse:

The consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages on the City's premises is prohibited. An employee whose normal faculties are impaired due to the consumption of alcoholic beverages, or whose blood alcohol level tests positive while on duty/City business shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Opportunity to Contest or Explain Test Results:

Employees and job applicants who have a positive confirmed test result may explain or contest the result to the City within five (5) working days after the City contacts the employee or job applicant and shows him or her the positive written lab test result.

CITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This section of our handbook discusses your responsibilities to the City as an employee. Please thoroughly familiarize yourself with these policies and apply them in your work. Compliance with these policies will help ensure a more efficient, productive and pleasant atmosphere for you, your co-workers and our citizens.

EMPLOYEE STATUS AND DEFINITIONS

All City employees are employed “at-will,” which means that an employee can be terminated at any time, with or without cause and with or without advance notice.

Official:

An individual who is elected by the citizens of the City of Tifton (to include the Mayor and City Council Members) or is appointed by the Mayor and Council (to include but not limited to the City Manager, City Clerk, City Attorney, Municipal Court Judges, and the Solicitor[s]).

Department Head:

An individual who is assigned formal management responsibilities for an established department of City government.

Temporary Employee:

An employee who is scheduled to work any number of hours per week on a temporary basis during seasonal periods or on special projects. Temporary employees are not eligible for City benefits.

Supervisor:

Applies in general terms to any employee formally assigned to supervisory responsibilities for personnel and operations of a work unit with a larger department of City government. However, Department Heads and the City Manager should be understood to be “supervisors” of individuals who report directly to them.

Status for Employees:

Regular full-time employees are employees who normally are scheduled to work 40 hours or more per week.

Regular part-time employees are employees who normally are scheduled to work less than 30 hours each week on a consistent basis.

Employees are eligible for benefits as outlined in the preceding pages, subject to certain other requirements which may be described in individual policies.

Rehired Pensioner:

Employees that are receiving City of Tifton pension benefits and are hired to work part-time are titled rehired pensioners. A rehired pensioner is limited to part-time status. Rehired pensioners are limited to 1040 hours of work per year.

Others:

Volunteers, independent contractors, and the employees of temporary staffing agencies are not City employees and are not eligible for benefits.

For the purposes of family and medical leave, insurance, and certain other benefits, eligibility requirements may be different. If so, insurance plan documents or applicable law will control eligibility. If you have any questions concerning your status or the benefits for which you qualify, please ask your supervisor or contact Human Resources.

INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

For every new employee, the introductory period of employment is a trial period for both the employee and the City. During this time, the employee is able to learn about the City, his or her job, and his or her new surroundings. At the same time, the employee’s supervisor will assist him or her in learning the job. The introductory period is the first six months of employment for all employees except those in the Police Department. Police Department employees, with the exception of non-certified Police Officers, are subject

to a 12-month introductory period. Non-certified Police Officers are subject to an 18-month introductory period.

For internal transfers or promotions employee will have a 180-day introductory period and one (1) year introductory period for public safety.

During the introductory period, the City will review the employee's job performance and attendance, among other factors, and make a decision concerning continued employment. Employment status during the introductory period remains at-will. After the employee completes the introductory period, the City will continue to periodically review his or her overall job performance. Completion of the introductory period does not change the employee's at-will employment status.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

The City uses a yearly performance evaluation process to measure, monitor and communicate employee job performance. Employees who fail to maintain a satisfactory level of performance are subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

WORK SCHEDULE

Each employee shall have an established regular work schedule for the workweek. The schedule shall be determined in accordance with the needs of the City and the reasonable needs of the public who may be required to do business with various City departments.

On occasion, an employee may need to deviate from his or her regular work schedule. Said changes in schedule shall be at the direction of the employee's supervisor and shall be scheduled as far in advance as practical to minimize disruptions to both the City and the employee.

HOURS OF WORK

A regular work week will consist of 40 hours per week, except for firefighters and certified police officers. Your specific working hours will depend upon the work schedule of the department in which you work. If you work more than 40 hours in a workweek you will be compensated at a rate of 1½ times your regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of forty for that week. Overtime for firefighters and certified police officers is structured differently under FLSA guidelines. Please ask your department head for details. The City's workweek for purposes of computer overtime pay is from 12:01 AM on Monday to 12:00 midnight on Sunday.

COMPENSATORY TIME

From time to time, overtime may be necessary. The City and the employee may mutually agree for the employee to receive compensatory time, instead of overtime pay. Compensatory time, or "comp time" is the granting of time off with pay. If you have worked an hour of overtime and agree to be compensated using comp time, you will be credited with 1½ hours of comp time. You will be able to take this time at your convenience, as long as your absence does not unduly hinder the operation of your department. In order to be properly credited with comp time, please see your Department Head who is responsible for maintaining comp time hours for the department employees. Compensatory time that is not documented cannot be taken or paid. Departments are provided Non-Exempt Compensatory Time Agreement forms and these must be utilized by the employee to accrue and use comp time in lieu of an absence. The City has established the following requirements on the use of compensatory time:

1. No employee may accrue more than 40 hours of compensatory time for 26 over time hours worked without the written authorization from the City Manager.
2. The City of Tifton reserves the right to "buy back" accrued compensatory time at the employee's current wage rate.

3. Employees shall take compensatory time off as and when allowed by the Department Head, provided that the City of Tifton shall honor an employee's request to use compensatory time unless to do so would disrupt the operation of the employee's department or the City.

LUNCH PERIODS AND BREAKS

An unpaid, one (1) hour meal period is provided to all employees. The exact time for meals could vary by department needs. Your supervisor will have specific information regarding your scheduled meal break. Should you fail to get a bona fide meal break, you must report this to your supervisor.

If your workload allows, there are typically two (2) 15-minute paid break periods during an eight (8) hour shift. Your supervisor will advise you of the time of your break.

ABSENTEEISM AND TARDINESS

Absenteeism or tardiness, even for good reasons, is disruptive of City operations and interferes with the City's ability to satisfy its citizens' needs. Therefore, any unexcused absenteeism or tardiness can result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

If you are going to be late or absent from work for any reason, you must personally notify your supervisor as far in advance as possible so that proper arrangements can be made to handle your work during your absence. Some situations may arise in which prior notice cannot be given. In those circumstances, you are expected to notify your supervisor as soon as possible. Failure to notify your immediate supervisor may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. A phone call is the acceptable form of communication only if confirmation from the supervisor or Department Head is received. A termination due to violations of this policy may result in the loss of unemployment benefits, including terminations for absences due to the illness of the employee or a family member.

Failure to report to work for two (2) consecutive scheduled working days without notifying the City may result in immediate termination as job abandonment.

CALL-IN PAY

Some departments may be called upon to respond to an emergency at any time, day or night. Employees who are on-call will be required to respond to a call within the amount of time established by your Department Head. Employees on-call are permitted to pursue personal interests, but must report to work unimpaired. Your supervisor will provide you with additional information if you are expected to be on-call. If you are on-call, you will receive additional compensation for the hours that you actually report for work. When you are on-call and called in to work, you will be paid the greater of two (2) hours or the actual number of hours worked. If more than one (1) call is received in an eight (8) hour period, you will be paid the greater of the two (2) hour minimum or the actual hours that you work. Only hours actually worked count towards overtime.

RULES OF CONDUCT

This City has certain policies and rules to govern the conduct and performance of all employees. Violation of these or similar rules may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination. Please note the list below is not all inclusive, and there may be other circumstances for which employees may be disciplined or terminated.

The City strives to be constructive in nature and believes in a progressive approach to disciplinary matters in order to prevent recurrence and raise job performance levels. When a situation arises that calls for disciplinary action, the City will consider the seriousness of the infraction, the past record of the employee, and the circumstances surrounding the matter. The City does not guarantee that one form of disciplinary action will necessarily precede another. Nothing in this policy is designed to modify the City's employment at-will policy. If you have any questions about these rules or what we expect of all employees, please discuss them with your supervisor or Human Resources. For additional guidance as to the City's expectations regarding employee conduct, please refer to the Ethics and Conduct Policy on Page 3 of the Employee Handbook.

Breach of Confidence or Security:

Because of the nature of City business, we will not tolerate any breaches of our security measures, our confidential business relationships, or any other matter required by applicable law to be maintained securely and/or confidentially.

Confidential Information:

Employees shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning City property, personnel or proceedings of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal interests.

Damage to Property:

The City has made a tremendous investment in its facilities, equipment and other City property. Deliberate, reckless or careless damage to the property of the City, its citizens, or its employees will not be tolerated. If appropriate, damage to property will be reported to law enforcement agencies. Monetary reimbursement to the City may also be required if applicable.

Discourtesy or Disrespect:

The City expects all employees to be courteous, polite and friendly. No one should use unprofessional language or show disrespect to a citizen or co-worker or engage in any activity that could harm the City's reputation.

Discrimination, Harassment or Retaliation:

Violations of the City's EEO and No Harassment policies will not be tolerated and may subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Fighting, Threats or Weapons:

Employees are prohibited from fighting, assaulting, threatening, or engaging in any other loud or abusive conduct toward coworkers or members of the public, whether on or off City property or on or off duty. We also do not allow the possession of unauthorized weapons of any kind in City vehicles, in City facilities, or on your person at any time while you are working. This policy is not intended to limit employees within the Police Department from performing their job duties. If you are aware of a violation of this policy, you are required to report it to your supervisor or Human Resources immediately.

Fraud, Dishonesty or False Statements:

No employee or applicant may falsify or make any misrepresentations on or material omissions from or about any documents, employment applications, resume, document establishing identity or work status, medical record, insurance form, invoice, paperwork, time sheet, time card or any other document. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. If you observe or are aware of such a violation, please report it to your supervisor or Human Resources immediately.

The City also does not allow employees to knowingly make false statements or allegations against other employees or members of the public, and such conduct may subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Gambling:

Employees may not engage in any form of gambling on City premises or City time.

Insubordination:

Employees may not refuse to follow the lawful directions of a supervisor, Department Head or member of management.

Loss of Property:

Employees must report all loss of City property to a supervisor immediately. The negligent care of the City's property or its citizens' property will not be tolerated. Monetary reimbursement to the City may be required if applicable.

Misuse of Property:

Employees may not misuse or use without authorization any equipment, vehicle or other property belonging to citizens, other employees or the City.

Cellphone Use and Personal Business:

All employees should refrain from making or receiving excessive personal calls, texts, and emails, except for emergencies. In addition, employees should refrain from surfing the internet, using social media, or gaming on cellphones during working hours. (See Personal Use of Our Systems on Page 34 for clarification on this rule of conduct.) Additionally, employees should reasonably limit personal cellphone use to approved breaks and lunches. Cellphones should be turned off or set to silent or vibrate during working hours. Cellphone use should in no way disrupt City business or the productivity of other employees.

All visitors of the employee on City property are required to follow these same rules. Any visitor who refuses to obey these rules will not be allowed to return. Visits to employees by friends or relatives can be disrupting to the City's operations. We strongly discourage such visits during work hours.

All mail delivered to the City is presumed to be related to City business and may be opened by anyone in the office and routed to the employee's department. Employees should have no expectation of privacy in any mail delivered to the City. Employees should never use a City address for personal mail or package delivery.

Job Performance/Inefficiency:

We expect all employees to make every effort to learn their job and to perform at a satisfactory level. Employees who fail to maintain a satisfactory level of performance are subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

Shortages:

Employees who handle financial transactions as a part of their job duties will be held accountable and may be required to pay for all shortages. Employees who handle financial transactions as a part of their job duties also may be disciplined for such shortages, up to and including immediate termination.

Sleeping or Inattention:

To protect the safety of all employees and to properly serve our citizens, sleeping or inattention on the job is not allowed.

Solicitation or Distribution:

To minimize workplace distractions and disruption of City operations, it is the policy of the City to place reasonable limitations on solicitation and distribution-related activities by and of its employees.

Direct solicitation for non-City-related matters, including charitable contributions or other fundraising, subscriptions, membership or participation in clubs or organizations, signatures for petitions, the sale of consumer products, or other outside business is not permitted by or among employees in any form, including via e-mail, text message, or other forms of electronic communication, during working hours. Literature or other promotional or explanatory materials regarding such matters may be left only in designated areas of City Hall and other City facilities that are restricted to the public. Employees should refrain from discussing such literature or its contents during working hours.

Employees will not solicit or distribute literature to any visitor/citizen at any time for any non-City business purpose during working hours or under any circumstances which may create the appearance that they are doing so in their capacity as a City employee (e.g., using City email, equipment or supplies, while wearing a City-issued uniform or other clothing or items identifying the individual as a City employee, etc.).

Substance Abuse:

Employees are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for violations of the City's Substance Abuse Policy. (See Substance Abuse Policy on Page 8.)

Theft:

Stealing or attempting to steal City property or property belonging to others is strictly prohibited. The City reserves the right to inspect all City-owned or City-issued property such as vehicles, cabinets, lockers, desks, and tool boxes, and no employee should have any expectation of privacy in any such property. Furthermore, the City reserves the right to search any employee property on City premises, including purses, briefcases, packages, or vehicles, upon reasonable suspicion that such search will reveal evidence of theft or any other violation of these policies.

Unlawful Activity:

Employees should not engage in any unlawful activity, including, but not limited to activity either on City property, a job site, or off the job, since such activity can adversely affect public trust and confidence, bring discredit to the City, or interfere with the mission of the City.

Unsafe Work Practices:

The City is committed to providing a safe place for you to work, and we have established a safety program to ensure that everyone understands the importance of safety. This program requires all of us to exercise good judgment and common sense in our day-to-day work. Horseplay and practical jokes can cause accidents and injuries and, therefore, are prohibited. Employees are required to comply with departmental safety requirements, including the use of personal protective devices.

DISCIPLINE

The City has established rules and other policies to ensure the best and safest possible working conditions. These rules are designed and intended to protect all of us. Rules sometimes are broken. In most cases, the City believes that by applying progressive discipline, an employee's undesirable behavior can be corrected. Generally, the first step in the progressive discipline process will be counseling by an employee's supervisor. This step may be followed by a verbal reprimand, a written reprimand, suspension with or without pay, demotion and, finally, termination. In some instances, the employee's conduct may be such that the City, at its option, may advance the level of discipline to the step it deems appropriate, up to and including immediate termination. The City reserves the right to skip, advance or repeat any level of discipline it deems appropriate. Further, the City reserves the right to terminate employees at any time without cause or notice and without prior discipline.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

The City recognizes that many outside employment activities are of benefit to the City and its employees, and to the community as well. As such, the City does not prohibit outside employment, subject to the procedures, terms, and conditions of this policy.

Outside Employment Defined:

Except as otherwise provided herein, outside employment is any activity, not performed for or on behalf of the City, for which an employee receives economic benefit (whether monetary or non-monetary). This includes:

- Employment with any employer other than the City;
- Contracts, agreements, or understandings to provide goods to and/or to provide or perform services for persons or entities other than the City; and,
- Self-employment or operation of a business.

For purposes of this policy, military service is not considered outside employment.

Prior Approval Required:

All employees shall request and obtain prior written approval for any outside employment. For Police Department employees, written approval must be granted by the Chief of Police or his or her designee. No employee shall have a property interest, contractual right, or other enforceable expectation or entitlement to outside employment, and the City reserves the right to rescind any approval previously granted at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice.

Employees also must remain mindful of the fact that outside employment, once approved, is still subject to the procedures, terms, and conditions of this policy, including the restrictions set forth in the Restrictions on Outside Employment section of this policy.

Employees must promptly disclose any previously unknown information or change in circumstances relating to their outside employment which makes such outside employment impermissible under this policy or which might reasonably be expected to affect the supervisor's approval of such outside employment.

Restrictions on Outside Employment:

Outside employment that interferes or can be reasonably expected to interfere with the performance of the employee's duties to the City or that creates an actual or potential conflict of interest with the employee's duties to the City is prohibited. Except for sworn personnel performing outside employment authorized by the Chief of Police or his or her designee, use of City systems, equipment, supplies, or premises for the purpose of outside employment is prohibited.

Outside employment is prohibited during periods of military leave or paid sick leave, as well as during any unpaid leave of absence.

Violation of Policy:

Disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, may be imposed for violations of this policy. Such violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failing to obtain prior written approval for outside employment;
- Obtaining or retaining approval for outside employment through misrepresentation or omission of material facts regarding the outside employment; and,
- Engaging in outside employment in contravention of any restriction set forth in the Restrictions on Outside Employment section of this policy.

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE

The City recognizes the difficulty employees who are parents may have in caring for children after school and on school holidays. The City will make reasonable efforts to accommodate those parents. At the same time, the City requires that employees on the clock are productive and that the City does not unnecessarily expose itself to liability. Bringing a child into the work environment while the employee is working requires advance Department Head approval.

Children of employees are welcome to be in City buildings while their parent is working with the following limitations:

- Children are to remain in non-work areas. This means avoiding areas open to the citizenry for the conduct of business, as well as common work areas. The decision of which area to use should be made considering the work needs of others and proximity to the parent's work space, so the child can be monitored by the parent.
- Children must be able to sit quietly in non-work areas on an unsupervised basis. Disruptive children will be invited to leave.
- Children are not permitted to be in the workplace longer than one hour.
- Parents who need to transport a child during the day are encouraged to use the lunch period for this purpose. The time card should reflect this. If a parent needs to transport a child after taking a lunch break, the time card should reflect this as well.
- Sick children should not be brought into the work environment.

OVERTIME

Overtime is work performed by non-exempt employees beyond the scheduled work cycle as provided by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The City may periodically schedule overtime work to meet our business needs. We expect that all employees who are scheduled to work overtime or who are called out to work on a special project will report to work unless specifically excused by their supervisor. All employees (other than salaried-exempt employees) must receive approval from their supervisor prior to performing overtime work. Failure to report for scheduled overtime work or to receive approval to work overtime may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

For purposes of calculating overtime hours, only actual hours of work will be counted. Paid time off or holiday pay is not counted as hours worked for purposes of calculating overtime hours.

PAYROLL DEDUCTION - EXEMPT EMPLOYEE PAY POLICY

The City will make deductions from an employee's gross wages as required by law including, but not limited to, the following: applicable federal, state, and city taxes and any garnishment, child support order, or similar legal process. No other deductions will be made from an exempt employee's wages except deductions that are allowed by applicable law. Deductions from pay are permissible when an exempt employee: is absent from work for one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability; for absences of one or more full days due to sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide plan, policy or practice of providing compensation for salary lost due to illness; for penalties imposed in good faith for infractions of safety rules of major significance; or for unpaid disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for workplace conduct rule infractions. Also, an employer is not required to pay the full salary in the initial or terminal week of employment, or for weeks in which an exempt employee takes unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). An employee who believes that an improper deduction has been made from their wages should discuss it with the Human Resources Department personally or present it in writing before the next regular pay period. If it is determined that a deduction was made in error, the City will reimburse the employee for any improper deductions and take good faith efforts to prevent improper deductions in the future. No employee will be retaliated against for making a good faith inquiry as to the status of deductions made from an employee's paycheck.

PERSONNEL FILES

Upon written request to Human Resources, an employee may inspect his or her own personnel file other than confidential evaluations submitted to the City in connection with its decision to hire the employee or any examination taken by the employee in connection with his or her application for employment. Inspections will be held in the Human Resources office in the presence of Human Resources. No employee is allowed to remove anything from any file. Copies will be made by Human Resources upon the employee's request.

Information relative to employees and former employees shall be available for public inspection at reasonable times and in compliance with such requirements mandated by federal or state law. To the extent that disclosure is not required by law, all personnel records of employees covered under these regulations and all other records and materials shall be considered confidential. Confidential information, which is obtained in the course of official duties, shall not be released by an employee or elected official, unless mandated by federal or state law.

To keep your personnel records up to date, to ensure that the City has the ability to contact employees, and to ensure that the appropriate benefits are available, employees must promptly notify the City of any change of name, address, phone number, number of dependents, or other applicable information.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Our City's professional atmosphere is maintained, in part, by the image we present to our co-workers and the public. The City expects all employees to present a neat, well-groomed appearance, and a courteous disposition.

"Business casual" attire is the City's year-round dress code during normal business hours. Appropriate "business casual" attire includes pants, capris, skirts, dresses, slacks or khakis, casual shirts, blouses, and sweaters.

"Casual day" attire is a privilege for non-uniformed employees to wear jeans on Friday. Jeans should be free of tears, fraying and holes. Only T-shirts representing the City of Tifton are authorized to be worn. Rubber flip-flops are not permissible. Tennis shoes will be allowed on casual days. Casual days may be omitted at any time by the discretion of the City Manager.

"Business professional" attire is the appropriate dress when meeting with the public in a professional setting or capacity, including attending City Council meetings or other City board meetings. "Business professional" attire includes blazers, suits, sports coats, tailored dress pants, dresses, skirts, blouses, ties, dress shirts, dress shoes, and socks.

Employees must dress in a businesslike manner and avoid extremes in dress. Flashy, skimpy or revealing clothing is unacceptable. For example, denim of any color or style, shorts (more than 3" above the knee) (except as authorized by the Department Head), miniskirts (more than 3" above the knee), leggings (appropriate with dresses only), sweatpants, sweatshirts, t-shirts, short tops, halter tops, backless tops, thin-strap tops, tennis shoes (except as authorized by the Department Head), and hats (except as required for sun protection) are not acceptable attire.

Articles of clothing should not be too tight or too baggy. Clothing must not expose the chest, stomach, waistline or backside including when bending over, sitting down, or otherwise moving about. The City, in its sole discretion, will determine when clothing does not meet these requirements. Good personal hygiene also is important. Accordingly, employees are expected to come to work in a clean and well-groomed condition.

Employees provided with City uniforms should keep them in neat and clean condition. Employees provided with City uniforms must wear them as instructed when on duty.

The City also wants to meet the public's expectations in terms of the City's image and style. Thus, for the employees who have contact with the public, we limit the types of tattoos and piercings that may be visible. No employee may make visible a tattoo that might be offensive or a violation of the City's No Harassment Policy. Any employee who might have such a tattoo must keep it covered while at work or while representing the City. Likewise, we do not want to appear extreme by the number or location of piercings visible. As with articles of clothing, the City will determine whether particular tattoos or piercings (including earrings) should not be visible. If tattoos or piercings are not in keeping with the image that the City chooses to present to its citizens, employees may be required to cover the tattoo and cover/remove the piercing.

Employees are expected to observe our Personal Appearance Policy at all times while at work. Employees who report to work in unacceptable attire or appearance may be requested to leave work and return in acceptable attire or appearance. Such time away from work will be without pay for non-exempt employees. Violation of this policy may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

WORK AREA APPEARANCE

We expect employees to maintain their work areas in a neat, professional and acceptable manner. Each employee is expected to maintain the area in which he/she is working, and all employees are expected to maintain the common areas.

EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

The City generally permits the employment of a current employee's qualified relatives as long as such employment does not, in the opinion of the City, create conflict of interest. Notify the Human Resources Department before your family member applies for employment.

Individuals who are related by blood, marriage or adoption, or who are part of the same household, are not permitted to supervise the family member at any time during employment.

Employees who marry or become part of the same household while employed are also treated in accordance with these guidelines. Such action may include an involuntary transfer or termination of employment.

KEYS / ACCESS CARDS

Employees who need keys and/or access to an office, locked cabinets or other secured storage or equipment will be issued those keys. Keys/access cards must be safeguarded and must be returned immediately at the end of employment.

The City prohibits making duplicate sets of keys/access cards or letting someone borrow a key/access card assigned to you for any reason. In the event you lose a key/access card, immediately notify your Department Head. If you are responsible for the loss of a key that results in the lock being re-keyed, you may be asked to pay the cost.

TOBACCO AND SMOKING

Use of tobacco in any form, vaping and e-cigarettes are permitted only in designated outdoor places. Smoking is prohibited by law in any area where paint or other flammable materials may be present. Other than in the designated outdoor places, tobacco use in any form, vaping and e-cigarettes are not permitted in any City vehicle, nor within 25 feet of any building entrance, air intake duct or window. Employees who are in uniform or who are otherwise readily identifiable as employees or representatives of the City shall take reasonable steps to ensure that their tobacco use, in any form, vaping, or use of e-cigarettes is not observable by the public.

RESIGNATIONS / TERMINATIONS

An employee who desires to resign from employment should notify his or her supervisor at least two (2) calendar weeks in advance of the last day of work. Department Heads are required to notify the City Manager of their resignation at least 30 days in advance. The City encourages employees to submit a letter of resignation stating the reason for the resignation. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in the employee being classified as having "resigned in bad standing" and may be cause for denying such employee future employment with the City.

Voluntary Termination:

An employee who resigns from employment with the City will be paid for all accrued and unused vacation leave hours and compensatory time, provided he or she has completed the introductory period and has worked during the entire notice period. If it is determined to be in the best interest of the City, the City Manager may grant the employee "pay in lieu of notice." After receiving written notice of voluntary termination, the Department Head will notify the Human Resources Department who will schedule and conduct an exit interview for the employee.

Employees resigning, retiring or leaving the City cannot use accrued leave for any part of their notice period unless a physician statement is provided.

Involuntary Termination:

In the event of involuntary termination the Department Head or City Manager will notify the Human Resources Department of the intended termination.

Reduction in Force:

The City reserves the right to separate employees due to lack of work, operating requirements, funding or other reasons. The determination of who is to be separated is within the sole discretion of the City Manager.

CITY BENEFITS

PAID HOLIDAYS

Depending on job duties, some City employees may be required to work on a City paid holiday. The Department Head will set schedules in accordance with City needs. Regular full-time employees enjoy up to ten (10) paid holidays.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

Eligibility for holiday pay is upon commencement of employment. Part-time, seasonal and temporary employees scheduled to work an official paid holiday will be paid the hours worked at their regular rate. Part-time, seasonal and temporary employees not scheduled to work will not be paid for the official holiday.

A non-exempt employee who is required to work on an official holiday shall be paid straight time for hours worked that day and accrue hours equal to hours worked for that holiday to be used at a later date. Holiday pay is not considered hours worked. A non-exempt employee who is scheduled to be off on an observed official holiday will accrue holiday hours. Holiday hours accrued must be used by December 31st of the calendar year or they will be forfeited.

For purposes of determining eligibility for overtime compensation and calculating the amount of overtime compensation owed to non-exempt employees, only work hours will be considered. Leave time and holiday hours will not be treated as hours worked for overtime purposes.

An exempt employee who is required to work on an official paid holiday shall be given an alternative day off.

Any employee who is absent without the City's written approval on the scheduled workday before or after the holiday becomes ineligible for holiday pay. When a holiday occurs during the period an employee is on an authorized vacation leave, vacation shall not be charged for the holiday.

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, then non-shift City employees will observe the holiday on the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, then non-shift City employees will observe the holiday on the following Monday.

VACATION POLICY

Vacation leave is for the purpose of rejuvenating both mental and physical faculties, and all employees are urged to avail themselves of accumulated vacation leave.

Vacation Request/Approval:

Vacation leave can be used, subject to necessary request and approval procedures. Vacation leave may be taken in increments as little as one hour. At the employee's discretion, vacation leave can be used to supplement the pay difference of short- and long-term disability payments and workers' compensation, only up to the employee's regular wages. Requests for vacation leave, other than unexpected illness or injury, shall be approved at least five (5) working days in advance when practical. Use of vacation time will be subject to approval by the Department Head or immediate supervisor. If the employee has accrued compensatory time available, that time must be exhausted prior to the utilization of vacation leave. Approval shall be governed by the needs of the City, with due regard to the employee's request.

Eligibility:

All regular, full-time employees are eligible for vacation leave. Part-time, temporary or seasonal employees shall not be eligible for vacation leave. Annual leave may only be taken after the employee has successfully completed 60 days of employment, unless otherwise conditioned in their offer of employment. Only accrued vacation leave may be utilized.

The accrual of vacation leave shall begin the first pay period following the initial employment date.

Vacation Accrual Rates:

Vacation accrual rates for regular, full-time employees are as follows:

0 to 4.99 years of service:
80 hours per year

5 to 9.99 years of service:
120 hours per year

10 or more years of service:
160 hours per year

When an employee reaches the next accrual level, the new accrual rate begins in the pay period of the date of eligibility. Vacation leave will not accrue during any unpaid leave of absence.

For rehires, the original term of service will be included when calculating vacation accrual rates.

Maximum Accrual:

The maximum vacation accrual for regular full-time employees is 240 hours. An employee who resigns from employment with the City will be paid for all accrued and unused vacation leave hours up to the applicable maximum accrual limit, provided they have completed their introductory period and worked during the entire notice period, please refer to the *Resignation/Termination* section. At the discretion of the City Manager, an employee terminated for disciplinary reasons or fail to work out a notice will not be paid for accrued and unused vacation leave.

SICK LEAVE POLICY

Sick leave is a privilege and may be used when an employee is incapacitated or contagious due to personal illness or injury or has a health care appointment. Sick leave may be taken in increments as little as one hour. An employee may additionally use sick leave to care for immediate family members, which includes an employee's spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, or any dependents (as reflected on the employee's most recent tax return). Sick leave will not be paid out in the event of termination or separation of employment. Health care appointments should be approved at least one (1) work day in advance, whenever possible, by the supervisor or Department Head.

Sick Leave Notification/Approval:

In case of absence due to illness or injury, the employee shall notify his/her supervisor or Department Head within one (1) hour of the employee's scheduled starting time. Police officers shall report sick leave at least four (4) hours in advance of the scheduled shift starting time.

The employee shall contact a supervisor or Department Head for such absences. A phone call is considered the acceptable form of communication.

For any absence of more than one day attributed to illness or a doctor's visit, the employee may be required to submit written evidence from an attending physician directly to the Human Resources Department prior to returning to work, indicating that the employee was seen by a health care provider and is released to return to work.

Eligibility:

All full-time employees are eligible for sick leave. Part-time, temporary or seasonal employees shall not be eligible for sick leave. Sick leave may be taken any time once accrued. The accrual of sick leave shall begin the first pay period following the initial employment date.

Sick Leave Accrual Rates:

Full-time employees will accrue 96 sick leave hours per year. The maximum allowed sick time balance is uncapped. Sick leave will not accrue during any unpaid leave of absence.

Sick Leave Donation:

The Sick Leave Donation Program is designed to allow employees to donate accrued, unused annual and sick leave to an employee who would otherwise need to take leave without pay because of a serious medical emergency. A serious medical emergency is defined as an illness or injury which requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential medical facility, including any period of incapacity and/or subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care. Sick Leave Donation forms and guidelines can be requested from the Human Resources Department.

ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE POLICY

Failure to report for duty, including any failure immediately following the expiration of authorized leave, will be grounds for discipline. Failure to report for two (2) consecutive workdays shall be grounds for termination for abandonment of position.

SEPARATION PAYOUT POLICY

Any accrued leave balances including vacation, compensatory, holiday or sick leave cannot be used to extend the date of separation beyond the last day scheduled to work or instead of notice. When an employee is separated from the City, unless said employee is in the introductory period, resigns without proper notice, or is terminated for disciplinary reasons, such employee shall be paid for accrued and unused vacation leave and compensatory time, up to the applicable maximum accrual limits. At the discretion of the City Manager, an employee terminated for disciplinary reasons may not be paid for accrued and unused vacation leave. Employees terminated, resigning, retiring or leaving the City cannot use sick leave for any part of their notice period.

EMPLOYEE PAY

All employees are mandated to use automatic payroll direct deposit. Pay will be deposited on a bi-weekly pay cycle. City employees will be paid according to established schedules. When a scheduled payday falls on a holiday, employees shall be paid on the immediately preceding weekday. Pay for reimbursement purposes will be processed through the payroll department and included in the employee's scheduled pay.

No advance pay provisions will be made for employees at any time. Employees receiving retroactive pay will be paid the following scheduled pay period.

The City may make deductions from an employee's pay for many different reasons. For example, the City is required by law to deduct certain amounts for taxes, garnishments, etc. Likewise, an employee may authorize the City to make deductions for approved benefit premiums, retirement plans, flexible spending accounts, etc.

If you believe that a deduction has been made to your pay in error, promptly notify Human Resources. Every such report will be fully investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken, including reimbursement of any amount improperly deducted from your pay. In addition, the City will not tolerate any form of retaliation against an employee who reports a perceived improper deduction under this policy or who participates in the City's investigation into such a report. Any such retaliation will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Full-time employees are eligible to receive paid bereavement leave due to the death of a member of their family.

For Death in Immediate Family:

An employee shall be granted reasonable leave by his or her Department Head when necessary for death of a member of his or her immediate family. Reasonable leave shall consist of up to three (3) days, which will be considered leave and will not be deducted from the employee's accrued leave. For purposes of bereavement leave, the term "immediate family" means an employee's spouse, child, parent (of employee or spouse), brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law.

For Death in Non-Immediate Family:

In the event of the death of a relative who is not within the immediate family, as defined above, an employee may be permitted one (1) day off with pay to attend the funeral. This privilege can only be allowed two (2) times during any 12-month period. Non-immediate family is defined as: brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, and nephew.

Other Funeral Leave:

Funeral leave for a person other than those described above must still be approved by the Department Head, and will be taken as unpaid leave of absence or annual leave if requested by the employee.

All time off in connection with the death of one of the above-listed individuals must be coordinated with the employee's supervisor. The Department Head may approve time off due to the death of a non-immediate family member or additional time off for an immediate family member. This time off would be unpaid or would require the use of paid leave.

There is no accumulation of bereavement leave days and no payment upon separation from City employment. The approved bereavement leave days do not have to be taken consecutively.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES

We encourage all employees to accept their civic responsibilities. As a good corporate citizen, we are pleased to assist you in the performance of your civic duties.

Jury Duty:

If you receive a call to jury duty, please notify your Department Head immediately so we can plan the department's work with as little disruption as possible. While on jury duty, the employee will be paid for his or her regularly scheduled hours. Employees on jury duty will not be paid for any anticipated overtime, nor is time spent on jury duty considered working time for the calculation of overtime. Any monies received by the employee from the Court must be turned in to the City to be paid for his or her regular scheduled hours.

Employees on jury duty must provide their supervisor with a copy of the jury notice. Employees who are released from jury service before the end of their regularly scheduled shift or who are not asked to serve on a jury panel are expected to call their supervisor as soon as possible and report to work if requested.

Witness Duty:

If you are subpoenaed to appear as a witness, please notify your supervisor immediately so we can plan the department's work with as little disruption as possible. We do not pay an employee who is subpoenaed to appear as a witness for matters unrelated to City business, but an employee may use vacation leave or take unpaid leave.

A City employee who is subpoenaed or ordered to attend court to appear as a witness or to testify in an official capacity on behalf of the City of Tifton, the State of Georgia or the Federal Government will be compensated at his or her regular rate of pay for the period in which he or she is in court. An employee absent for court appearance will promptly return to work on any days in which he or she is excused from court.

An employee on witness duty must provide his or her supervisor with a copy of the subpoena. An employee who is released from witness service before the end of his or her regularly scheduled shift is expected to call his or her supervisor as soon as possible and report to work if requested.

Voting:

Although polls are open most of the day, we realize that in some instances employees are required to work overtime and may find that these hours are insufficient to get to the polls. If you have a problem in this regard, notify your supervisor so that we can make arrangements for you to have the necessary time to get to the polls.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

Employees may be eligible to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave each year for specified family and medical reasons. For family or medical reasons that qualify an employee for FMLA, the City is obligated by federal law to designate the leave as FMLA.

Employee Eligibility:

To be eligible for family or medical leave, an employee must have worked at least:

1. 12 months for the City; and,
2. 1,250 hours for the City over the previous 12 months.

Conditions Triggering Leave:

Family and medical leave must involve one or more of the following reasons:

1. To care for a newly born child, or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
2. To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or employee's parent) with a serious health condition.
3. The employee has a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job duties.
4. Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent being on covered active duty involving a foreign deployment (or being notified of an impending call or order to active duty involving a foreign deployment) in the Armed Forces (including National Guard or Reserves) in support of a contingency operation.
5. For a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin to care for a service member or covered veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in "outpatient status," or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list for a serious injury. A "serious injury" is one incurred or aggravated by the service member in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of the service member's office, grade, rank or rating.

Duration of Leave:

Eligible employees may receive up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any "rolling" 12-month period, measured backward from the date of any family or medical leave. Family and medical leave involving the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care must be concluded within 12 months of the birth or placement.

An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered service member shall be entitled to a total of 26 workweeks of leave during a single, 12-month period to care for the service member. During the single 12-month period, an eligible employee shall be entitled to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave under the FMLA.

Eligible employees may take family and medical leave intermittently which means taking leave in blocks of time, or by reducing your normal weekly or daily work schedule whenever it is medically necessary to care for a seriously ill family member or because you are seriously ill and unable to work.

In some cases, intermittent FMLA may be permitted related to the birth of a newborn child or the placement of a child with an employee for adoption or foster care. If intermittent leave is permitted in these circumstances, it must be used within one (1) year of the birth or placement of the child. Please see the Human Resources Department for more details.

Employees who are approved for intermittent FMLA leave must continue to comply with the City's regular absence reporting policies to the fullest extent possible.

The City requires the use of paid time off concurrently with family and medical leave. For example, if the employee is eligible for any paid leave under any other benefit programs such as accrued vacation, compensatory or sick time, the employee will be required to exhaust the paid leave upon the commencement of, and concurrently with, FMLA leave. Paid leave will run concurrently with and be counted toward the employee's total 12-week or 26-week period of FMLA leave. If an employee accepts a light duty position, any time spent working light duty will not count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

Maintenance of Health Benefits:

The City will maintain coverage for eligible employees and dependents (if applicable) during family and medical leave. This coverage will be provided if you or your family were covered under the plan before the leave was taken and on the same terms as if you had continued to work. Where appropriate, you must make arrangements to continue to pay your share of health plan premiums while on leave.

In some instances, the City may recover premiums it paid to maintain health coverage for you and your family if you do not return to work from your leave.

Job Restoration:

Upon returning from a family and medical leave, an eligible employee will normally be restored to his or her original job or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms and conditions.

Use of family and medical leave does not result in the loss of any employment benefit that an employee earned or was entitled to before using family and medical leave. However, an employee does not continue to accrue paid leave while on unpaid family and medical leave. When an employee is out on family and medical leave, that employee will accrue paid leave during the period of time the employee is using paid leave such as vacation and sick leave. If an employee on family and medical leave exhausts all paid leave in accordance with the Duration of Leave policy above and remains unable to return to work, then the remainder of the family and medical leave will be unpaid. During the period of unpaid family and medical leave, the employee will not continue to accrue paid leave.

Job restoration may be denied if conditions unrelated to the FMLA leave have resulted in the elimination of the employee's position or if the employee qualifies as a "key employee" (generally the highest paid 10% of the workforce). Key employees may be denied job restoration if it would cause substantial and grievous economic injury to the City, in which case the key employee will be notified of this.

Notice and Medical Certification:

When seeking family and medical leave, an employee may be required to provide:

1. 30 days of advance written notice to the Human Resources Director of the need to take family and medical leave, if the need is foreseeable. If the leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide written notice to the Human Resources Director of the need for leave as soon as practical and must comply with the City's standard procedures for reporting an absence.
2. Medical certifications supporting the need for leave, including any need for intermittent or reduced schedule leave, due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or an immediate family member.
3. Failure to provide the necessary requested certification forms will result in the delay or denial of FMLA leave.
4. Second or third medical opinions (at the City's expense) and periodic recertification may also be required.
5. Periodic reports during the leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.
6. Medical certification of fitness for duty before returning to work, if the leave was due to the employee's health condition.

When leave is needed to care for an immediate family member or for the employee's own illness, and is for planned medical treatment, the employee must try to schedule treatment so that it will not unduly disrupt the City's operation.

Upon receiving sufficient notice of an employee's need for FMLA-qualifying leave, the City will notify the employee of his or her eligibility to take FMLA leave within five (5) business days of the request, absent extenuating circumstances. At this time, the City will also provide the employee written notice of the employee's rights and obligations with respect to the leave (as well as providing copies of the required certification form).

Extended Medical Leave:

Eligible employees who have exhausted their FMLA leave and all other leave may be allowed to take an extended unpaid medical leave of absence, not to exceed 12 months following the last day worked. Employees who take such extended medical leave are not guaranteed to be returned to work or reinstated to a particular job, rate of pay or shift at the end of their extended medical leave. However, the City will attempt to return an employee to his or her regular position if it is available. If it is not available at the time reinstatement is sought, the City will attempt to place the employee in a similar job for which he or she is qualified, if such job is available. An employee on extended medical leave may maintain his or her insurance benefits, subject to policy terms and conditions, by paying in a timely manner any applicable continuation of benefits premiums for which he or she may be responsible. An employee on extended medical leave does not accrue any additional employee benefits such as paid time off while on extended medical leave.

Failure to Return from Leave or to Comply with City Policy:

An employee may be subject to immediate termination for:

1. Failure to return to work as scheduled following the end of a medical or family leave without express prior approval from the City;
2. Providing false or misleading information or omitting certain information in connection with a leave; or,
3. Violation of any of the City's rules and regulations relating to leave (or any other City policy or performance standard).

MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The City allows employees who require time off from work to fulfill military duties to meet those commitments. An employee with such a commitment is expected to notify his or her immediate supervisor and to provide the City with a copy of the orders as soon as possible.

An employee on military leave may, at his or her option, use any or all accrued paid compensatory, holiday or vacation time. Employees do not accrue vacation, sick or holiday leave during periods of unpaid military leave.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) is a federal law that protects the rights of individuals who leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. Under USERRA, employees have the opportunity to elect continuation of group health coverage for the shorter of up to 24 months or the length of their leave.

In compliance with USERRA, employees on leave for 30 days or less will not be required to make a premium contribution for any more than their regular share of premium while on leave.

Employees on active duty for more than 30 days may be covered by military health care along with their dependents. However, in the event that an employee on a military leave of absence is not eligible or does not qualify for medical, dental and/or vision coverage through the U.S. Armed Forces, the City will continue to provide coverage for the employee and covered dependents under the same terms and conditions as he or she had at the time of the commencement of their military leave for a period of up to 24 months.

With respect to the City's retirement plans, upon reemployment, an employee who has taken military leave will be credited for purposes of vesting with the time spent in military service and will be treated as not having incurred a break in service.

Notification upon Completion of Service:

Upon the completion of a military leave of absence, the employee should notify the City of the employee's intent to return to a position of employment with the City as follows:

- A. For periods of service of up to 30 consecutive days, the employee must report back to work for the first full regularly scheduled work period on the first full calendar day following the completion of the period of service and safe transportation home, plus an eight-hour period for rest. If reporting back within this deadline is "impossible or unreasonable" through no fault of the employee, he or she must report back as soon as possible after the expiration of the eight-hour period.
- B. After a period of service of 31-180 days, the employee must submit a written or verbal application for reemployment with the employer not later than 14 days after the completion of the period of service. If submitting the application within 14 days is impossible or unreasonable through no fault of the employee, he or she must submit the application as soon as possible thereafter.
- C. After a period of service of 181 days or more, the employee must submit an application for reemployment not later than 90 days after completion of the period of service. These deadlines to report to work or apply for reemployment can be extended up to two years to accommodate a period during which an employee was hospitalized for or convalescing from an injury or illness that occurred or was aggravated during a period of military service.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

From time to time, due to exceptional circumstances, the City Manager may deem it appropriate to grant an employee Administrative Leave. Administrative Leave is time off with pay. Administrative Leave is leave approved by the City Manager and does not accrue based on length of service.

RETIREMENT PLAN

The City has established and maintains a pension retirement plan through GMA. Employees will vest (gain ownership of accrued benefits) after ten (10) full years of service or by meeting the rule of 65 years of age and 5 years of service. The amount of monthly benefit depends upon length of service and annual earnings. A formula is used whereby the top five years of earnings for the retiring employee are averaged and multiplied by an annual benefit factor, then multiplied by the number of years of service. For employees hired on or after July 1, 2008, there is a mandatory 3% contribution to the retirement plan.

The City also has a voluntary, secondary retirement plan that is offered to employees with no contribution from the City.

The City provides employees covered by its plans with Summary Plan Document booklets and other materials regarding these retirement plans, as requested.

LIFE INSURANCE AND ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT (AD&D)

A term life insurance policy, with a benefit amount equal to one (1) times salary is available to full-time employees who have completed at least three (3) months of employment. The City pays 75% of the cost of this plan. Employees may purchase an additional life insurance plan.

GROUP HEALTH BENEFITS

Medical, Dental, and Vision insurances are available to eligible employees. Regular full-time employees are eligible to enroll on the first of the month following 30 calendar days of continuous employment. Insurance premiums and benefits are subject to change, and employees may be responsible for paying future increases.

The City provides health insurance coverage for eligible employees in accordance with the terms of the current health insurance plan. All employees should familiarize themselves with the health plan definitions. Employees may be asked to prove that an individual listed as a dependent actually meets the definition. This may mean providing marriage or birth certificates or other proof.

The City provides covered employees with Summary Plan Descriptions and other materials relating to its plans. In the event of a conflict, the insurance contract or plan documents will prevail over other documents,

including this handbook. Assistance or additional information regarding these programs may be obtained from Human Resources.

If a spouse is eligible for coverage through their own employer, they are not eligible for coverage with the City of Tifton.

SUPPLEMENT PHARMACY REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

The City will provide its health plan participants with a supplemental pharmacy benefit for hypertensive (high blood pressure) medications, diabetic medications and supplies, and cholesterol medications. This benefit takes the form of a reimbursement program. When an employee pays a co-pay for qualifying medications the receipt should be forwarded to Human Resources for processing. Reimbursements will occur once a month. The City may request verification from the treating physician that the medication is for hypertension or diabetes.

SHORT-TERM / LONG-TERM DISABILITY BENEFITS (STD / LTD)

The City provides group short-term and long-term disability benefits for eligible full-time employees. Check with Human Resources for more information regarding qualifying disabilities.

The City provides covered employees with Summary Plan Description booklets and other materials relating to its disability plans. In the event of a conflict, the insurance contract or plan documents will prevail over other documents. Assistance or additional information regarding these programs can be obtained from Human Resources.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA)

The City offers a Flexible Spending Account that allows eligible full-time employees to set up accounts to pay for certain health and dependent care expenses on a pre-tax basis. Employee premium contributions for the City-sponsored plans may be paid on a pre-tax basis under this plan. Assistance or additional information regarding this benefit may be obtained from Human Resources.

All Insurance/Benefit Plans Offered:

The following insurance programs are available to you through payroll deductions:

- Medical Insurance
- Dental
- Vision
- Cancer
- Critical Illness
- Disability (Short Term and Long Term)
- Accidental
- Flexible Spending Account
- Retirement Plan(s)

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT / REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The City does not discriminate against qualified individuals with known mental or physical disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. If an employee or applicant because of a disability needs to request a reasonable accommodation, which will allow him or her to perform the essential functions of the job, follow the procedure set forth in the "Problem-Solving Procedure" or report your needs to Human Resources. The City will make reasonable accommodations, as required by law, unless an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the City.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' Compensation protects you in the event of occupational injury or sickness. You must immediately report any on-the-job accident or injury, no matter how small, to your supervisor or Human Resources. Where medical care is required for on-the-job injuries, employees must go to one of the designated medical facilities as per the City Workers' Compensation Insurance Program, panel of physicians. In the event an on-the-job accident is designated as having occurred in and arisen out of the course and scope of the employee's employment, the employee shall be compensated by the City for the first seven (7) days of lost time due to the work-related injury at the employee's regular rate. Employees will be permitted to use accrued compensatory, vacation, holiday or sick leave while on Workers' Compensation leave, up to 1/3 of the employee's normal wages.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The City of Tifton offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefit for employees and their dependents. The EAP provides confidential assessment, referral and short-term counseling for employees who need or request it. If an EAP referral to a treatment provider outside the EAP is necessary, costs may be covered by the employee's medical insurance, but the cost of such outside services are the employee's responsibility. No information regarding the nature of the personal problem will be made available to supervisors, nor will it be included in any part of the employee's personnel file that is subject to public disclosure. Participation in the EAP will not affect an employee's career advancement or employment, nor will it protect an employee from disciplinary action in the event of substandard job performance or for any other appropriate reason. The EAP may be used in conjunction with discipline but is not a substitute for discipline. The EAP can be accessed by an employee through contacting the Human Resources Department for an authorization through Legacy Behavioral Health.

JOB TRAINING

The City provides periodic in-house training programs for qualified employees. In addition, employees may be permitted to attend training programs that will benefit the City or enable them to improve their job proficiency with the City. Financial assistance for such training programs is provided at the discretion of the City and may include tuition, books and supplies.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

In order to encourage City employees to continue their education and improve their job skills, the City may, as City finances permit and at the discretion of the City Manager, reimburse regular, full-time employees for coursework tuition, lab fees or textbooks associated with requested coursework. The education reimbursement policy should be referred to for further details.

REFERRAL BONUS

The City is always looking for good candidates to fill job openings. The Referral Bonus Program is designed for employees to refer and recruit highly qualified, well rounded candidates. For positions that are hard to fill there may be a referral bonus offered to employees for recruiting candidates. If the referred candidate is hired by the City of Tifton and the position qualifies as "hard to fill," the employee could be eligible for a lump sum payment. The amount of payment will be split in to two portions, the first half will be distributed when the employee is hired and the second distribution will be paid after a successful probation period. Referral Bonus amounts will be at the discretion of the City Manager. Hard to fill positions will be identified by the Human Resources Department and approved by the City Manager. Department Heads are exempt from participating in the program.

SAFETY

The health and well-being of all employees are foremost among our concerns. You must follow common-sense safety practices. All employees must cooperate with the City in maintaining safe working conditions. Please ask your Department Head for additional safety information.

All employees are required to adhere completely to all City safety requirements, as well as applicable state and federal laws and insurance company requirements. Failure to comply with safety requirements will result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

Basic rules include:

1. Promptly correct, when it is safe to do so, and report to your supervisor all unsafe conditions, defective or malfunctioning tools, and unsafe practices.
2. Wear a seat belt at all times in a running vehicle.
3. Follow all safety rules, and only operate equipment for which you have been trained.
4. Use safe lifting techniques.
5. Immediately report all accidents to your supervisor.
6. Refrain from horseplay and practical jokes.
7. Adhere to applicable state and federal laws, insurance company requirements and other legal requirements.

INSPECTION OF WORK AREA

Offices, cubicles, lockers, desks, cabinets and vehicles provided by the City are City property and are subject to entry and inspection by the City at any time with or without prior notice. Employees have no expectation of privacy with respect to City property. The City may conduct reasonable searches to the extent allowed by applicable law. Searches will be conducted by supervisory staff and/or the City of Tifton Police Department. An employee's refusal to cooperate with search efforts may result in immediate termination.

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTALITIES

Except as otherwise stated in this handbook, and to the extent permitted by law, ammunition, explosives, unauthorized weapons and dangerous instrumentalities of any kind are prohibited in City buildings and in City vehicles at any time. Likewise, no employee should possess any ammunition, explosive, other unauthorized weapon or dangerous instrumentalities at any time while performing any work for the City. Although the City retains the right to determine the scope of this paragraph on other weapons and the terms contained in it, "possess" as used in this policy generally means to have on your person, or in any vehicle assigned to you, or in other property in your presence or under your control while in a City building.

Any violation of this policy may subject an employee to discipline, up to and including immediate termination. Employees who have any questions concerning the application of this policy should consult their supervisors immediately.

REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS AND HAZARDS

All accidents, including those that do not involve serious injury and those involving the public, must be reported immediately to your supervisor. Likewise, immediately report to your supervisor any unsafe conditions, defective tools or equipment, or other hazards. If it is not unsafe to do so, you should attempt to correct any such unsafe conditions, defective tools or equipment, or other hazards. If you believe correcting the condition would be unsafe to you, your coworkers, or the public, you should take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the safety of you, your coworkers, and the public such as notifying others of the hazard. Each employee is expected to assist the City in maintaining safe conditions.

SEVERE WEATHER

Under extreme weather conditions, you may not be able to report to work or the City may close an operation. Public Safety and emergency response crews operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, regardless of the weather and regardless of whether the City is "closed."

In the event of severe weather, non-essential employees should listen to local newscasts and check with their supervisor for delayed opening or closing information. Non-essential employees should make every effort to report to work when the City is open unless their personal safety or the safety of their family is at risk. If you are not able to report to work, you must follow the normal "call-in" procedures to report your absence. If you make every effort to safely report to work and notify your supervisor of your absence according to the normal "call-in" procedures, your absence will be excused. Employees may use vacation time or a floating holiday to be paid for an excused absence. Failure to properly report an absence will result in an unexcused absence and may result in disciplinary action.

In the event that the City is "closed" due to severe weather, employees will be paid at the normal hourly rates according to their regular work schedules for the time that the City is "closed." In the event of extraordinary circumstances requiring a prolonged closure of the City, the City reserves the right to suspend this policy.

VEHICLE AND DRIVING REQUIREMENTS

Only authorized employees may use City vehicles. Employees should get prior approval from their Department Head. If a City vehicle incurs any damage while under the charge of a particular employee, that employee must report the damage immediately and may be responsible for paying for some or all of the repair costs, to be determined in the City's sole discretion.

Likewise, if an employee receives a citation for any violation while operating a City vehicle or a personal vehicle while on City business, the employee is responsible for paying any fine or penalty incurred and may be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination. All such citations must be reported to your supervisor immediately. Failure to immediately report a citation may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

Drinking alcoholic beverages is prohibited in a City-owned vehicle or in a personal vehicle while on City business, and employees are prohibited from driving after consuming alcohol or taking any controlled substance that could impair his or her ability to operate the vehicle.

Please refer to the City's Safety Manual for more detailed information concerning city vehicles, safe driving, and accident (preventable and non-preventable) violations.

Seatbelts:

All employees must wear a seatbelt while driving or riding in any vehicle while performing City business. Furthermore, the City encourages all of its employees to wear seatbelts at all times, as required by state law.

Use of Cellular Telephones and Communication/Mobile Devices While Driving:

Employees must refrain from using any communication device while driving any vehicle for City business, including the use of a wireless device to write, send or read any text-based communication, including but not limited to a text message, instant message, email or Internet data. If communication is necessary, employees are required to drive safely out of the flow of traffic and stop the vehicle before using the communication device. Exceptions to this policy may apply when stopping the vehicle would not serve the best interest of public safety and would prohibit an employee from performing his or her duties. While certain City vehicles may be approved for hands-free communication devices, no personal calls may be answered while operating a City vehicle or City equipment or while driving on City business.

Employees should never use personal communication devices or accept personal telephone calls while responding to or working on an emergency scene except as necessary to make work-related calls regarding the emergency.

Motor Vehicle Record Checks:

For employees who drive City vehicles in the course of their duties, the City may check motor vehicle records ("MVR") of applicants prior to making them offers of employment and of all current employees. Employees may be subject to ongoing MVR checks throughout the duration of employment. For employees who drive vehicles in the course of their duties, an accident, a citation for DUI, DWI, or any other serious driving violation or citation (even those occurring off duty) may create an unacceptable MVR. An unacceptable MVR may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

Reporting of Traffic Incidents:

Employees who drive either personal or City vehicles in the course of their duties must report in writing to their supervisor any citation, DUI, DWI, violation or accident ("incidents") that occur at any time (on or off duty) after beginning employment with the City. Failure to report such incidents within 24 hours of occurrence (i.e., accident or receipt of citation, not conviction on the charges) may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

Driver's License:

All employees who drive as part of their job duties must have a valid driver's license for the state in which the employee resides. Any employee whose driver's license is suspended or revoked must report the suspension or revocation to their supervisor within 24 hours of notice from the State.

Communication Information

BULLETIN BOARDS

The City maintains bulletin boards at various locations as an important information source. These bulletin boards are to be used solely to post information approved by the City regarding City policies, governmental regulations, and other matters of concern to all employees that are related to the employees' employment by the City. An employee must have approval from his or her Department Head before posting information on any bulletin board. Departments Heads must have approval from the City Manager before posting information on any bulletin board. The City Manager's decisions concerning bulletin board postings shall be final.

BUSINESS RECORDS

The City and its employees maintain various types of written and electronic records related to the City's business. All such records maintained on the City's premises and in the City's systems are considered to be City property and, thus, are subject to review or inspection by the City, its employees or its agents at any time without further advance notice. For these and other reasons, please do not use our computer systems or other business systems for personal matters or matters that are not related to the City's business since you should have no reasonable expectation of privacy when using City computers or other business systems. Furthermore, employees must remember that almost all City records are available to the public and others pursuant to open record laws.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Employees may, by virtue of their employment with the City, obtain access to sensitive, confidential, restricted and proprietary information about the City, its employees, vendors, contractors and other stakeholders that is not generally known or made available to the public and that the City has made reasonable efforts to keep confidential, including but not limited to financial records, vendor records and files, referral or mailing lists, medical records, credit card numbers and similar information, whether stored electronically or in paper format.

Such confidential information shall be used solely by employees in the performance of their job duties for the City and shall not be used in any other manner whatsoever during their employment. Employees shall not, without the prior written consent of the City, use, disclose, divulge or publish to others any such confidential information acquired in the course of their employment. This prohibition expressly includes such information in electronic form. Such confidential information is the exclusive property of the City, and under no circumstances whatsoever shall employees have any rights to use, disclose or publish to others such confidential information subsequent to the termination of their employment.

Unauthorized use or disclosure of confidential information may result in discipline, up to and including immediate discharge, prosecution or other available action.

Upon termination of employment, employees must deliver to the City immediately any and all confidential information, whether stored electronically or in paper format, including but not limited to all copies of such documents prepared or produced in connection with their employment with the City that pertain to the City's business or the employee's services for the City, whether made or compiled by the employee or furnished to the employee in connection with such services to the City. In addition, at termination, employees must return to the City any and all City non-confidential property, documents or electronic information.

As required by law, the City may be required to release information under the Open Records Act or pursuant to subpoena or other legal process.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Communication devices include mobile telephones, tablets, personal digital assistants and similar devices. These devices may be issued to employees by the City or may be the personal property of the employee.

Employees in possession of City-issued communication devices must protect the devices from loss, theft and damage. If an employee chooses to bring a personal communication device to work, the City will not be responsible for the loss of or damage to the personal communication device. If an employee chooses to use a personal cellular device for work related emails, the city is not responsible for lost or wiped files. Using a personal cell phone for City email could cause the employee to be included in any Open Records Request under Georgia Open Records Act. For more information regarding communication devices, please refer to the Information Technology Standard Operating Procedures.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

This policy contains guidelines for Electronic Communications created, sent, received, used, transmitted or stored using City communication systems or equipment and/or user-provided systems or equipment used in the workplace, during working time or to accomplish work tasks. "Electronic Communications" include, among other things, messages, images, data or any other information used in e-mail, instant messages, voice mail, fax machines, computers, personal digital assistants (including smartphones, tablets, or similar text messaging devices), telephones, mobile phones including those with cameras, intranet, Internet, backup storage, information on a memory or flash key or card, jump or zip drive, any other type of internal or external removable storage drives or any other technology tool. In the remainder of this policy, all of these communication devices are collectively referred to as "System" or "Systems."

Consent:

By using the City Systems, employees are consenting to the terms of this and all other City policies as well as consenting to the City accessing, monitoring, reviewing, printing and distributing any communication contained in the Systems.

City Control of Systems and Electronic Communications:

All Electronic Communications contained in City Systems are City records and/or property. Although an employee or system user may have an individual password to access our Systems, the Systems and Electronic Communications belong to the City. The Systems and Electronic Communications are accessible to the City at all times including periodic unannounced inspections. Our Systems and Electronic Communications are subject to use, access, monitoring, review, recording and disclosure without further notice. Our Systems and Electronic Communications are not confidential or private. Furthermore, written communications transmitted, received, maintained, or otherwise contained on the City's Systems may be subject to the Georgia Open Records Act. The City's right to use, access, monitor, record and disclose Electronic Communications created by any employee or system user without further notice applies equally to user-provided systems or equipment used in the workplace, during working time, or to accomplish work tasks.

Social Media:

Social media is content created by the use of accessible, expandable and upgradable publishing technologies. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Tumblr, Snapchat, Google+, Pinterest, Flickr, and blogs. Given the multitude of concerns (legal, political, and ethical) raised by social networking the City has established prudent and acceptable practice regarding usage of social network by employees. While the City of Tifton encourages its personnel to enjoy and make good use of their off-duty time, certain activities on the part of its personnel may become a problem if they have the effect of: impairing the work of any official or employee; harassing, demeaning, or creating a hostile working environment; disrupting the smooth and orderly flow of work; or harming the goodwill and reputation of the City among its citizens or in the community. For these reasons, the City reminds its personnel that the following guidelines apply in their use of social media, both on and off duty. To report violations of this provision, please refer to the City's harassment policy which shall govern all harassing communications.

1. While on duty, the use of City equipment or internet service by personnel must be limited to work-related tasks. Social media activities should never interfere with work commitments. Social Media views, posting and activity should be conduct off-duty.
2. Personnel who choose to maintain or participate in social media or social networking platforms while off-duty shall conduct themselves with professionalism and in such a manner that will not reflect negatively upon the City. If you identify yourself as a City of Tifton employee for which your City of Tifton association is known to the general public, ensure your online profile and related content (even if it is of a personal and not an official nature) is consistent with how you wish to present

yourself as a City of Tifton professional, appropriate with the public trust associated with your position.

3. Personnel are not allowed to create City of Tifton websites or Social Media Accounts without approval of the City Manager or his or her designee and the Information Technology Department.
4. Your best judgement should be used when using personal social media sites. Remember that what you write is public, may be public for a long time, and has the propensity to spread to large audiences. The City expects its employees to be truthful, courteous, and respectful toward supervisors, co-workers, citizens, customer, and other persons associated with the City. Personnel shall not engage in name-calling or personal attacks or other such demeaning behavior.
5. Personnel may use social media on their own time and using their own equipment, and may use social media to express their thoughts or ideas as long as they do not negatively impact the City of Tifton's policies or business. The list below provides guidelines on prohibited conduct on an employee's personal social media site. The list is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all prohibited conduct for personal social media use, but rather a guideline on forms of speech that are not protected under the First Amendment or allowed by the City of Tifton:
 - Hate speech or libelous speech as such is defined by local, state or federal law;
 - Sexually harassing speech as such is defined by local, state or federal law;
 - Statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to, offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law;
 - Obscenity prohibited by local, state or federal law;
 - Fighting words, extortion, and other threats prohibited by local, state or federal law;
 - Disclosure of private health or financial information protected by local, state or federal law;
 - Disclosure of other confidential information protected by local, state or federal law;
 - Disclosure of confidential information gained during the course and scope of employment that compromises the safety of others;
 - Disclosure of information obtained from emergency dispatches—such as, personal health information, financial information, or private family information received in a dispatch;
 - On-duty or off-duty speech that compromises City investigations and the applicable department's mission; and
 - All other speech prohibited by local, state or federal law not mentioned in this list.
6. Personnel agree to avoid persistent and unwelcome posts, pictures, audio, video or any other communication that harasses another co-worker, vendor or other third party. There is zero tolerance for any harassing communications to a co-worker, vendor or other third party based on race, sex, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or other protected classification by state or federal law.
7. In no situation shall personnel insinuate that the City of Tifton endorses or authorizes the employee's personal website, blog or private social network account. Additionally, no one is to directly or indirectly suggest that the City of Tifton endorses a commercial service or product.
8. Personal or business venture social media account names shall not be tied to the City. For example, CityofTiftonEmployee would not be an appropriate personal account name or "handle" for a social media account.
9. Personnel, City contract employees, and City volunteers shall not use their City email account or password in conjunction with a personal social networking site.
10. To others online, there is no clear distinction between your work life and your personal life. Always be honest and respectful in both capacities.

Any violations of this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Personal Use of Our Systems:

Although incidental and occasional personal use of our Systems that does not interfere or conflict with productivity or the City's business or violate City policy is permitted, personal communications in our Systems are treated the same as all other Electronic Communications and will be used, accessed, recorded, monitored and disclosed by the City at any time without further notice. Since all Electronic Communications and Systems can be accessed without advance notice, employees and system users should not use our Systems for communication or information that they would not want revealed to third parties. Employees, therefore, shall not have any expectation of privacy regarding the use of our Systems.

Prohibited Uses of Our Systems:

Employees and system users may not use our Systems in a manner that violates our policies including, but not limited to, Equal Employment Opportunity and No Harassment, Confidential Information, Business Records, and Solicitation or Distribution. Employees and system users may not use our Systems in any way that may be seen as fraudulent, harassing, obscene, offensive, profane, intimidating or defamatory. Examples of prohibited uses include, among other things, sexually-explicit messages, images, cartoons, or jokes; propositions or love letters; ethnic or racial slurs; or any other message or image that may be in violation of City policies.

In addition, employees and system users may **not** use our Systems:

- To download, save, send or access any defamatory, discriminatory or obscene material;
- To send chain letters of any type;
- To download, save, send or access any non-business related music, audio, video or game file;
- To download shareware or free software without the advance written permission of the Information Technology Manager;
- To download, save, send or access any site or content that the City might deem "adult entertainment" or that contains graphic or explicit sexual content;
- To access any "blog," discussion board or website to post a personal opinion;
- To solicit employees or others for a non-work related matter or venture;
- For commercial purposes or to advertise personal business;
- To gamble;
- To gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to computers, equipment, networks or systems of the City or any other employee or entity;
- In connection with any infringement of intellectual property rights, including but not limited to copyrights; and,
- In connection with the violation or attempted violation of any law.

Exceptions are limited to police investigations into criminal activities and Human Resources and/or legal investigations, which may require the use of the Internet for information and intelligence gathering by authorized and appropriate personnel.

Devices and Software:

Employees and system users may not:

- Attach privately owned devices to the City computer networks or to any City-owned systems. This includes privately owned printers, scanners, mobile devices (such as iPhones, Androids, and other "smartphones"), removable storage devices (such as thumb drives and external hard drives) and any other device that can be connected via cable (such as USB, Serial, or HDMI), wirelessly (such as Bluetooth), or via any other type of connection.
- Use of City software storage should not be used for personal pictures, music, or personal files. Any files being stored on the City's server that is not considered work-related could be permanently deleted by the Information Technology Department, without notice.
- Use privately owned laptops, notebooks, or other personal computers within any City building or leased space. Additionally, employees and system users may not use any such personal computers to gain access to City networks or systems.

Any employee or system user who believes he or she has extenuating reasons for connecting a privately owned device to a City network or system and/or for using a personal computer must obtain prior approval from the Information Technology Department.

All thumb drives, external hard drives, and other removable storage devices used with City networks or systems must be purchased and issued by the Information Technology Department and should be regularly scanned for viruses and malicious data. If an employee or system user suspects that a virus or malicious data has been introduced into the City's network or system, the employee or system user must immediately disconnect his or her computer from the network or system and contact the Information Technology Department. Employees and system users utilizing removable storage devices containing City data must remain mindful that such devices may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Open Records Act or through discovery or subpoena in a lawsuit or other court proceeding, depending on content.

The Information Technology Department maintains a list of approved software that may be installed on City-owned networks, systems and devices. Employees and system users may only download and install software that is on this list or software that has been pre-approved by the Information Technology Department. All employees and system users are hereby placed on notice that the Information Technology Department will uninstall any personal software found on City-owned networks, systems, or devices if the software is deemed inappropriate, a security risk, is not on the list of approved software, or was not pre-approved by the Information Technology Department prior to installation. Any employee or system user installing (or retaining any previously-installed) unapproved personal software on City-owned networks, systems, or devices shall be deemed to have knowingly and willfully consented to and accepted the risk of any loss, damage, or other harm caused by the removal of the software pursuant to this policy and to have agreed to indemnify and hold harmless the City and any City official or employee against any claims asserted against them by third parties alleging any such loss, damage, or harm.

Without prior written authorization from the Information Technology Department, employees and system users may **not** do any of the following:

- Copy software for use on their personal computers or to any other non-City owned computers;
- Provide copies of software to any independent contractors of the City or to any third person;
- Install software on any of the City's workstations or servers;
- Download any software from the Internet or other online service to any of the City's workstations or servers;
- Modify, revise, transform, recast or adapt any software; or,
- Reverse-engineer, disassemble or decompile any software.

Employees or system users who become aware of any misuse of software or any violation of copyright law should immediately report the incident to the Information Technology Department.

Electronic Forgery:

An employee or system user may not misrepresent, disguise, or conceal his or her identity or another's identity in any way while using Electronic Communications; make changes to Electronic Communications without clearly indicating such changes; or use another employee's or system user's account, mail box, or password without prior written approval of the employee or system user and without identifying the actual author.

Intellectual Property Rights:

Employees and system users must always respect intellectual property rights, such as copyrights and trademarks. Employees and system users must not copy, use or transfer proprietary materials or confidential information of the City or others without appropriate authorization.

System Integrity, Security, and Encryption:

All Systems passwords and encryption keys must be available and known to the City. Employees and system users may not install password or encryption programs without the written permission of the Information Technology Manager. Employees and system users may not use the passwords and encryption keys belonging to others.

Each employee will be responsible for all computer transactions that are made with his or her User ID and password. Passwords should not be recorded where they may be easily obtained. Passwords must be changed immediately if it is suspected that they may have become known to others.

Employees may be asked to provide work related logins and passwords related to their assigned City computers and all of the software on those computers to the City's Information Technology Department. Employees are prohibited from disclosing these passwords to anyone else without authorization from their Department Head and the Information Technology Department.

The City enforces strict firewall policies to prevent unauthorized access to the City network. Requests for remote access for authorized personnel and vendors should be directed to the Information Technology Department. For more information, please review the Standard Operating Procedures Manual in the Information Technology Department.

Physical Security:

It is the City's policy to protect computer hardware, software, data and documentation from misuse, theft, unauthorized access and environmental hazards. All portable storage devices and media, including but not limited to CDs, DVDs and diskettes, issued to employees should be stored out of sight when not in use. If they contain highly sensitive or confidential data, they must be stored in a secure location. All portable storage devices and media should be kept away from environmental hazards such as heat, direct sunlight and magnetic fields. Critical computer equipment, such as laptops and desktops, must be protected by an uninterruptible power supply (UPS). Other computer equipment should be protected by a surge suppressor. Environmental hazards to hardware such as food, smoke, liquids, high or low humidity, and extreme heat or cold should be avoided.

The Information Technology Department staff is responsible for all equipment installations, disconnections, modifications and relocations, and employees are not to perform these activities. This does not apply to temporary moves of portable computers for which an initial connection has been set up by the Information Technology Department. Employees shall not take shared portable equipment such as laptop computers out of the City facilities without the informed consent of their department manager. Informed consent means that the manager knows what equipment is leaving, what data is on it, and for what purpose it will be used. Employees should exercise care to safeguard the valuable electronic equipment assigned to them. Employees who neglect this duty may be accountable for any loss or damage that may result. Misuse of City equipment or negligence in the course of use of City equipment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees shall not download any software to their work laptops, desktops or mobile devices unless it has been approved by the City's Information Technology Director.

Employee Transfers and Terminations:

The Human Resources Department will notify the Information Technology Department of transfers and terminations when they take place.

Applicable Laws:

Numerous state and federal laws apply to Electronic Communications. The City will comply with applicable laws. Employees and system users also must comply with applicable laws and should recognize that an employee or system user could be personally liable and/or subject to fine and imprisonment for violation of applicable laws.

Consequences of Policy Violations:

Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of an employee's employment or removal of a system user from the City systems, as well as possible civil liabilities or criminal prosecution. Where appropriate, the City may advise legal officials or appropriate third parties of policy violations and cooperate with official investigations. The City will not retaliate against anyone who reports possible policy violations or assists with investigations.

Questions:

If you have questions about the acceptable use of our Systems or the content of Electronic Communications, ask your supervisor for clarification in advance of using our Systems.

SUMMARY

This handbook highlights your opportunities and responsibilities as an employee of the City. By always keeping the contents of the handbook in mind, you should be successful and happy in your work at the City of Tifton. We look forward to working with you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the City of Tifton ("City") Employee Handbook that covers many important City policies, including:

	<u>Initials</u>
Substance Abuse Policy	_____
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and No Harassment Policy	_____
Problem-Solving Procedure (Grievances)	_____
Electronic Communications Policy	_____

I will familiarize myself with the handbook and all of its contents.

I understand that this handbook does not create an "employment contract" or other enforceable entitlements or expectations with regard to my employment or continued employment, including constitutionally protected property interests. The City reserves the right at any time to redefine eligibility for benefits and/or amend, curtail, terminate, or to otherwise revise the benefits, policies or regulations outlined in this handbook.

I understand that my employment is at-will, which means that I have the right to terminate my employment at any time, for any reason with or without advance notice, and that the City has a similar right.

Signature

Job Title

Printed Name

Date

Employee Copy – Please keep in handbook for reference.

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_____	_____
Signature	Job Title
_____	_____
Printed Name	Date

Employer Copy – Please sign and return to Human Resources