

TOWN OF HORSEHEADS

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Adopted By Resolution of the Town Board on January 9, 2013

Up-to-date with changes approved by the Town Board through November 8, 2017



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Town of Horseheads Employee Handbook

Table Of Contents

100 INTRODUCTION

101	Welcome Message _____	100-1
102	A Message to Our Union Members _____	100-1
103	Definitions _____	100-2
104	The Purpose of this Employee Handbook _____	100-3

200 EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

201	Full-Time Employees _____	200-1
202	Part-Time Employees _____	200-1
203	Temporary Employees _____	200-1
204	Seasonal Employees _____	200-1
205	FLSA Exempt Employees _____	200-1
206	FLSA Non-Exempt Employees _____	200-1

300 THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

301	The Unclassified and Classified Services _____	300-1
302	Civil Service Appointments _____	300-1
303	Examinations and Promotions _____	300-2
304	Veterans Credits _____	300-2

400 EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

401	Oath of Office _____	400-1
402	Procedure for Filling Vacancies _____	400-1
403	Probationary Period _____	400-2
404	Performance Review _____	400-3
405	Corrective Action and Discipline _____	400-4
406	Civil Service Law Section 75 _____	400-7
407	Code of Ethics _____	400-9
408	Personnel Records _____	400-11
409	Separation from Employment _____	400-12
410	Employment of Relatives _____	400-12

500 OPERATIONAL POLICIES

501	Departmental Hours _____	500-1
502	Emergency Situations _____	500-2
503	Meal and Rest Breaks and Breaks for Nursing Mothers _____	500-3
504	Time Records _____	500-4
505	Bonding _____	500-5
506	Expense Reimbursement _____	500-5
507	Vehicle Usage _____	500-6
508	Driver's License / Insurance Requirements _____	500-7
509	Supplies, Tools and Equipment, and Fuel Usage _____	500-7
510	Telephone / Cell Phone Usage _____	500-8
511	Use of Communication Systems and Equipment _____	500-9
512	Social Media _____	500-12
513	Personal Appearance _____	500-14
514	Solicitations/Distributions _____	500-14
515	Disclosure of Information _____	500-15
516	Visitors _____	500-15
517	Purchasing _____	500-15
518	Maintenance of Work Area _____	500-16
519	Personal Property _____	500-17
520	Town Property _____	500-17
521	Unauthorized Work _____	500-17
522	Outside Employment _____	500-18

600 ABSENCE POLICIES

601	Attendance _____	600-1
602	Jury Duty Leave _____	600-2
603	Bereavement Leave _____	600-3
604	Military Leave and Military Leave of Absence _____	600-3
605	Leave for Cancer Screening _____	600-4
606	Leave for Blood Donations _____	600-4
607	Family and Medical Leave Policy _____	600-6

700 COMPENSATION

701	Wage and Salary _____	700-1
702	Overtime / Compensatory Time _____	700-1
703	Out-of-Title Pay _____	700-2

704	Pay Period and Check Distribution_____	700-2
705	Payroll Deductions_____	700-3
706	Deferred Compensation Plan _____	700-3

800 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

801	Holidays_____	800-1
802	Vacation Leave _____	800-2
803	Sick Leave_____	800-4
804	Personal Leave_____	800-5
805	Disclosure of Insurance Benefits _____	800-6
806	Medical Insurance _____	800-7
807	Medical Insurance Buy-out _____	800-8
808	Medical Insurance for Retirees _____	800-9
809	Dental Plan _____	800-11
810	Continuation of Health Insurance Benefits (COBRA/NYS Continuation Coverage) _____	800-11
811	Section 125 Plan_____	800-13
812	Short-Term Disability Benefits _____	800-13
813	Workers' Compensation Benefits_____	800-14
814	Unemployment Benefits _____	800-14
815	Social Security _____	800-15
816	The New York State Employees' Retirement System _____	800-15

900 COMPLIANCE POLICIES

901	Equal Employment Opportunity _____	900-1
902	The Americans with Disabilities Act _____	900-2
903	Non-Discrimination and Harassment (Including Sexual Harassment) in the Workplace _____	900-3
904	Violence in the Workplace _____	900-7
905	Drug-Free Workplace / Drug Free Awareness Program _____	900-10
906	Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing _____	900-12
907	Smoking _____	900-12

1000 SAFETY

1001	Workplace Safety _____	1000-1
1002	Hazard Communication Program _____	1000-2

1100 COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

1101	Organizational Communications _____	1100-1
1102	Adverse Communications _____	1100-1

1103	Suggestions _____	1100-1
1104	Public Relations _____	1100-1
1105	Reporting of Improper Activities _____	1100-2

1200 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

1201	Dispute Resolution Procedure _____	1200-1
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1300 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Form

Appendix B: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) – Position Classifications

100 INTRODUCTION

101 *Welcome Message*

We would like to welcome you and congratulate you on your appointment to a position with the Town of Horseheads. You take on an extremely important role of serving the members of our community. Together, our mission is to provide cost-effective services that conform to the highest standards of quality.

This Employee Handbook is designed to familiarize you with your employment and to help ensure government compliance, foster positive employee relationships, and contribute to the overall success of the Town in delivering services to the public effectively and efficiently.

Please keep in mind that this is only an overview of the Town's policies and procedures, employee benefits, and the Civil Service System. Specific questions concerning employment matters should be addressed to your Department Head.

We trust that you will find service with the Town of Horseheads rewarding both personally and professionally.

102 *A Message to Our Union Members*

This Employee Handbook has been developed by the Town of Horseheads to assist you in getting acquainted with your employment with the Town. A cooperative labor-management relationship not only leads to a positive work environment but also helps ensure fair treatment in the workplace.

It is important that all employees understand the personnel policies and procedures and work rules outlined in this Employee Handbook. For union members, the collective bargaining agreement governs the terms and conditions of employment. You are encouraged to obtain a copy of your collective bargaining agreement from your union representative. Anywhere that the Agreement and this Handbook conflict, the Agreement will control. However, in certain instances where the Handbook covers an issue that is not the subject of bargaining, this Handbook will control. We have made every effort to acknowledge these situations. If you have any questions, you should contact your Department Head or union representative.

We hope that your career with the Town of Horseheads will be an enjoyable experience.

103 Definitions

Town of Horseheads – For purposes of this Employee Handbook, the Town of Horseheads may be referred to as the “Town”.

Town Board – For purposes of this Employee Handbook, “Town Board” will mean the Town Board of the Town of Horseheads.

Elected Official – For the purposes of this Employee Handbook, “Elected Official” will mean and refer to any of the following elected officials of the Town of Horseheads:

- Town Supervisor
- Town Board Members
- Town Justices

Town Supervisor – For purposes of this Employee Handbook, “Town Supervisor” will mean the Town Supervisor of the Town of Horseheads.

Department Head – For purposes of this Employee Handbook, “Department Head” will mean the person in charge of any department, agency, bureau, unit, or subdivision of the Town of Horseheads. This definition will be applicable in the event such person is serving in an acting, temporary, or provisional status in the position of Department Head. This term shall also include the Town Supervisor, where an individual otherwise designated as Department Head or any other individual must report directly to the Town Supervisor.

Supervisor – For purposes of this Employee Handbook, “supervisor” will mean the individual so designated by the Department Head to direct and inspect the performance of employees.

Employee – For the purposes of this Employee Handbook, “employee” will mean a person employed by the Town, including, but not limited to, an appointed official, an appointed member of a board or commission, Department Head, managerial employee, confidential employee, supervisory employee, provisional employee, probationary employee, temporary employee, seasonal employee, trainee, or student intern, but not an independent contractor.

Civil Service Law – For purposes of this Employee Handbook, “Civil Service Law” shall mean the New York State Civil Service Law and shall include the *Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira*.

104 ***The Purpose of this Employee Handbook***

Statement of Purpose – The purpose of this Employee Handbook is to communicate the Town’s personnel policies and practices to all employees and Elected Officials. It is extremely important that each employee understand the policies that relate to rules, regulations, procedures, practices, work standards, employment classifications, compensation, and benefits. **This Employee Handbook is not a contract of employment, express or implied, and should not be construed as such.** That is, employment can be terminated at any time at the will of either the employer or the employee, subject only to such procedural requirements as may be specified pursuant to New York State Civil Service Law, Town Law, collective bargaining agreement, or any other applicable law, rule, or regulation. The provisions and policies contained in this Employee Handbook are intended to supersede any and all prior manuals, guidelines or related policies issued by the Town of Horseheads.

Unless otherwise required by law, the provisions of this Employee Handbook are for Town use only and do not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. The Employee Handbook provisions shall not be construed as a creation of higher legal standard of safety or care. Notwithstanding the above, a violation of a Handbook provision may form the basis for administrative action by the Town and any subsequent judicial or administrative proceeding.

Changes or Modifications – The Town Board reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, or eliminate any provision contained in this Employee Handbook. In addition, this Employee Handbook is subject to alteration by actions of the Town Board, changes in Town and/or departmental rules, or changes in federal, state or local statutes, rules, or regulations.

Statutes, Laws and Ordinances – In the event a federal or state statute or a Town Law or ordinance should conflict with any provision contained in this Employee Handbook, then such statute, law or ordinance will prevail.

Collective Bargaining Agreements – In the event an expressed and explicit provision set forth in a collective bargaining agreement between the Town of Horseheads and an employee organization as defined by the Public Employees’ Fair Employment Act (Taylor Law) should conflict with an employee benefit, personnel policy, personnel procedure, or other provision set forth in this Employee Handbook, the expressed and explicit provision of the collective bargaining agreement will control. Otherwise, unless expressly excluded herein, this Employee Handbook will be applicable to all employees.

Questions – Any questions regarding any topic covered in this Employee Handbook should be directed to the appropriate Department Head.

200 EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

For purposes of this Employee Handbook, the following terms shall be defined as indicated. The definition provided for each of these terms applies only within the context of this Employee Handbook. The meaning and use of these terms or similar terms may be different in the context of Civil Service Rules or a collective bargaining agreement.

201 *Full-Time Employees*

For purposes of this Employee Handbook, the term “full-time employee” will mean an employee who is regularly scheduled to work a minimum of thirty-five hours per week or such full-time workweek as maybe established by collective bargaining agreement or resolution of the Town Board.

202 *Part-Time Employees*

For purposes of this Employee Handbook, the term “part-time employee” will mean an employee who is regularly scheduled to work on an annual basis for less than thirty-five hours per week.

203 *Temporary Employees*

For purposes of this Employee Handbook, the term “temporary employee” will mean an employee who is employed on an interim or sporadic basis, or who is employed to work on a special, emergency, or on-call basis for a specified period, consistent with the Civil Service Law as applicable.

204 *Seasonal Employees*

For purposes of this Employee Handbook, the term “seasonal employee” will mean an employee who is employed to work for a given season.

205 *FLSA Exempt Employees*

For purposes of this Employee Handbook, “FLSA exempt employee” will mean a covered employee who qualifies for an exemption from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), or an employee who is not covered under the FLSA.

206 *FLSA Non-Exempt Employees*

For purposes of this Employee Handbook, the term “FLSA non-exempt employee” will mean a covered employee who is subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

300 THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

The following is intended as a guide. The Civil Service Law and the *Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira* shall govern regarding the jurisdictional classification of positions and the appointment and promotion of personnel.

301 *The Unclassified and Classified Services*

Unclassified Service – In accordance with Civil Service Law and for purposes of this Employee Handbook, the term “Unclassified Service” will include all individuals who are Elected Officials and/or members of boards or commissions.

Classified Service – In accordance with Civil Service Law and for purposes of this Employee Handbook, the term “Classified Service” as defined by the Civil Service Law and the *Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira* will include all Town employees who are subject to the *Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira*. The Classified Service is divided into four jurisdictional classes:

- **Exempt** – those positions, other than unskilled labor positions, for which competitive or non-competitive examinations or other qualification requirements are not practicable (Civil Service Law, Section 41);
- **Competitive** – those positions for which it is practicable to determine merit and fitness by competitive examination;
- **Non-Competitive** – those positions not in the exempt class or the labor class for which it is not practicable to determine merit and fitness by competitive examination, but rather by a review of training and experience; and,
- **Labor** – unskilled labor positions, except those positions which can be examined for competitively.

302 *Civil Service Appointments*

Competitive Class – In accordance with Civil Service Law, the following types of appointments may be made to positions in the Competitive Class:

- **Permanent** – an appointment to a vacant position in the Competitive Class from an eligible list established as a result of examination, following successful completion of a probationary term;
- **Provisional** – an appointment to a vacant position in the Competitive Class when there is not an appropriate eligible list. A provisional appointee must take an examination whenever it is scheduled. Thereafter, a permanent appointment will be made on the basis of the eligible list resulting from the examination; or

- **Temporary** – an appointment to a position in the Competitive Class for reasons including, but not limited to: emergency work projects; planned termination of the position after a limited time; to replace an employee who is on a leave of absence; to fill a position funded through a temporary grant; or to fill a position vacated by the promotion of another employee until the employee who has been promoted receives permanent status.

303 Examinations and Promotions

Examinations – In accordance with Civil Service Law, in the event there is a vacancy in a new or existing position in the Competitive Class which the Town intends to maintain, the Town will fill the vacancy by selection from the eligible list certified by the Chemung County/City of Elmira Regional Civil Service Commission of persons who have taken the appropriate Civil Service examination. The Chemung County/City of Elmira Regional Civil Service Commission will test and rank each candidate according to the individual's performance on the examination. In accordance with Civil Service Law Section 61, the Town will select one of the top three eligible candidates on the list willing to fill the position.

Promotions – The Town will offer opportunities for advancement for those employees who qualify. In the event the position is in the Competitive Class, a qualified employee must normally take a promotional examination and the above “one of three” rule will apply. An employee who wants to be promoted should become knowledgeable about the employee's present position and be aware of higher level positions for which the employee may be qualified.

304 Veterans Credits

Summary – An employee who is a veteran as defined by the Civil Service Law may be eligible to apply for veterans credits on a Civil Service examination. An employee who is a veteran should contact the Chemung County/City of Elmira Regional Civil Service Commission for details concerning these credits.

400 EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

401 *Oath of Office*

Requirement – Each Town Officer as defined in the Town Law and as defined in the Public Officers Law must take the Oath of Office in accordance with Town Law Section 25 and Public Officers Law Section 10, which must be administered prior to commencing the duties of the office. Each official who is re-elected or re-appointed to a subsequent term must take the Oath of Office for each term.

Upon original appointment or upon a new appointment following an interruption of continuous service, each employee (other than an employee in the labor class) must take an oath or alternate affirmation as set forth in Civil Service Law Section 62.

Filing of Oath – The Oath of Office must be filed with the Town Clerk within thirty calendar days of the Public Officer's commencement of the term of office, or upon an employee's appointment.

402 *Procedure for Filling Vacancies*

Statement of Compliance – The Town of Horseheads is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Town complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules, and regulations throughout the employee selection process, including, but not limited to, Public Officers Law, Town Law, Civil Service Law, Title VII, Human Rights Law, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Notification of Vacancies – In the event there is a vacancy in a new or existing position which the Town intends to maintain, the vacancy will be advertised and/or posted and qualified individuals interviewed. The Town reserves the right to fill a position either internally or with an external candidate.

Residency Preference – In the event there is a vacancy in a new or existing position which the Town intends to maintain, the Town will give preference to qualified applicants who are residents of the Town.

Employment Applications – The Town relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the Town's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or disqualification if the conduct is discovered after employment commences.

Employment Reference Checks – To ensure that individuals who join the Town are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of the Town to check the employment references of all applicants.

403 **Probationary Period**

Except as otherwise provided in a collective bargaining agreement, the *Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira* provide for the following, which is applicable to employees appointed, promoted or transferred pursuant to the Civil Service laws. Additional provisions may also apply in accordance with those rules.

Purpose of Probationary Period – The purpose of the probationary period is for an employee to become familiar with the specific duties and responsibilities of the employee's new position. The probationary period also provides the Department Head with an opportunity to evaluate the employee's job performance and potential for development in the position.

Length of Probationary Period (Competitive Class) – Except as otherwise provided in the *Rules for the Classified Service of Chemung County/City of Elmira Regional Civil Service Commission*, an employee appointed from an open-competitive list must serve a probationary period of not less than eight weeks nor more than fifty-two weeks.

Length of Probationary Period (Other Classes) – Except as otherwise provided in the *Rules and Regulations of the Classified Service of Chemung County/City of Elmira Regional Civil Service Commission*, an employee's original appointment to a position in the exempt, non-competitive, or labor class shall be for a probationary period of not less than eight nor more than fifty-two weeks.

Successful Completion of Probationary Period – An employee's appointment will become permanent upon written notice that the probationary period has been successfully completed following the minimum period of service required, or the employee's appointment will become permanent upon the retention of the employee after completion of the maximum period of service required. **Except as otherwise provided by law or a collective bargaining agreement, completion of the probationary period does not necessarily confer rights or privileges in the position.**

Failure to Successfully Complete Probationary Period – In the event the employee's performance or conduct is not satisfactory, the Town may dismiss the employee from employment at any time after the completion of the minimum probationary period and before completion of the maximum probationary period. If the performance or conduct of an employee serving a probationary period who has been promoted or transferred from a permanent appointment (as defined by civil service regulations) is not satisfactory, the employee shall be returned to the employee's former permanent position prior to the end of the probationary period.

404 Performance Review

Statement of Purpose – The purpose of a performance review is to promote communications between Department Heads and employees, encourage more effective job performance, and address concerns of either party. The review will address factors that reflect the employee’s performance, such as the employee’s work quality, job knowledge, initiative, attendance, teamwork, conduct, and communication skills.

Frequency – An employee will be formally evaluated prior to completion of a probationary period. Thereafter, reviews will take place on an as needed basis to provide the employee with positive feedback or recommendations for improvement or both, depending upon circumstances.

Written Report – When appropriate, the performance review may include a written report to ensure proper understanding of the issues addressed. Should deficiencies be recorded in the performance of the employee, the employee will receive written recommendations for improvement. The employee will be given the opportunity to include written comments on the report, which will become part of the employee’s personnel file.

405 **Corrective Action and Discipline**

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town of Horseheads that certain rules and regulations regarding employee behavior are necessary for the benefit and safety of all employees, the efficient operation of the Town, and the delivery of services to residents of the Town. Any conduct that interferes with operations or that discredits the Town will not be tolerated. Each employee must conduct oneself in a positive manner so as to promote the best interests of the Town. Corrective action is necessary when an employee has demonstrated performance deficiencies, or has violated a policy, rule, regulation, or procedure. Corrective action may include counseling or initiating formal disciplinary action against an employee.

Communication – Open and candid communications with all employees is an important aspect of the Town of Horseheads' on-going employee relations. When a rule, policy, or procedure is violated, the employee's Department Head, or other designated supervisor, will review the specific nature of the violation with the employee. The employee's input is extremely important to ensure that all of the facts have been considered.

Counseling – Counseling employees, as opposed to initiating formal disciplinary action, may be the appropriate first step in addressing performance deficiencies or misconduct. The purpose of counseling is to inform the employee of such deficiencies or misconduct, discourage its recurrence, and inform the employee of the consequences if the behavior is repeated. When performance deficiencies are the issue, the performance standards of the job should be reviewed, along with specific examples of how the employee is not meeting those standards. Where appropriate, goals for improvement may be established, along with a time frame for achieving them. The counseling will be documented in writing and the employee will be required to acknowledge receipt by signing the memorandum. The employee will be given the opportunity to provide a written response, which the Town will also acknowledge in writing. Any employee who fails to follow a supervisor's directive to sign the counseling memorandum to acknowledge receipt will be subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline – The purpose of disciplinary action is to impose penalties for performance deficiencies or misconduct. In **normal circumstances**, the Town endorses a policy of progressive discipline which includes, but may not be limited to, documented verbal reprimand, letters of reprimand, suspension without pay, or termination of employment, depending on the circumstances. The Town retains the right to discipline employees without engaging in progressive discipline or prior counseling if the situation so warrants and retains the right to discipline employees in any manner it sees fit.

Investigations – Where appropriate, an investigation will be conducted by the proper supervisor or other designated individual(s) in order to gather all pertinent information and to ensure that all the facts are considered. The investigation may include, among other things, interviews with the employee and any witnesses or other involved parties, and review of documents and materials. Employees who are participants in an investigation are not allowed to disclose the content or particulars of the investigation unless otherwise authorized. All employees who are called upon to participate in an investigation are required to fully cooperate in the process and respond truthfully to all questions posed. Failure to do so will subject the employee to appropriate corrective action. The Town reserves the right to suspend an employee while an investigation is conducted.

During the investigation process, a union employee who appears to be a potential subject of disciplinary action may undergo questioning. Such employee will have the right to representation by the employee's certified or recognized employee organization under Civil Service Law Article 14, and will be given advanced notice of such right. In the event the employee requests representation, the employee will be allowed a reasonable period of time to obtain such representation. In the event the employee is unable to obtain such representation within a reasonable period of time, the employer will have the right to then question the employee.

Procedures – Employees covered by **Civil Service Law Section 75** shall be disciplined in accordance with the procedures contained therein. (Refer to Section 407 of this Employee Handbook). An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit should refer to the collective bargaining agreement on the subject of the disciplinary procedure.

Prohibited Conduct – Any employee who, after investigation, is found to have committed any of the actions listed below will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. **THIS LIST IS ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY AND DOES NOT LIMIT THE TOWN'S RIGHT TO IMPOSE DISCIPLINE IN OTHER APPROPRIATE CASES.**

- Willful violation of Town's rules, policies, and procedures.
- Harassing (including sexual harassment), intimidating, coercing, threatening, assaulting, or creating a hostile environment against another employee, Elected Official, resident of the Town, supplier, visitor, or any other person, whether on or off Town premises.
- Engaging in any action that is in violation of the Town's Workplace Violence Prevention Policy.
- Possession of any weapon or dangerous instrument (including knives with over a three inch blade, firearms, and explosives) on Town property or in Town vehicles, except for those employees who are required as a condition of employment to bear a weapon.
- Possession, use, distribution/sale, or being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances during hours of work or while on Town property or in Town vehicles.
- Willful or deliberate abuse, destruction, defacement, or misuse of Town property or the property of another employee, Elected Official, resident of the Town, supplier, visitor, or any other person.
- Theft or unauthorized use, possession, or removal of Town property or the property of another employee, Elected Official, resident of the Town, supplier, visitor, or any other person.
- Falsification or alteration of any records or reports including but not limited to employment applications, time records, work records, medical reports, absence reports, work-related injury reports, and claims for benefits provided by the Town.
- Preparation or manipulation of another employee's time record.
- Acts of sabotage, including the work of another employee.

- Making false statements about another employee, Elected Official, resident of the Town, supplier, visitor, or any other person. This includes knowingly making false accusations against another individual as to allegations of discrimination, sexual harassment or other harassment which is in violation of Town policy or applicable law.
- Insubordination or willful refusal to comply with the lawful order or instruction of a supervisor or Department Head.
- Improper performance of job duties or repeated failure to perform assigned duties and responsibilities.
- Violation and/or disregard of safety rules or safety practices, including failure to wear assigned safety clothing or equipment, in such a way that jeopardizes the safety of the employee, another employee, Elected Official, resident of the Town, supplier, visitor, or any other person.
- Offensive or unprofessional behavior that is contrary to the Town's best interest, or any conduct that does not warrant public trust.
- Committing any violation of the law either on or off duty or on or off the work site that implicates the employee's fitness or ability to perform assigned job duties.
- Unauthorized expenditure of Town funds.
- Gambling while on duty.
- Willful work slow down, work stoppage, or interfering with or restricting the performance of another employee or in any other way interfering with Town operations.
- Careless or negligent use or operation of equipment, including vehicles and machinery.
- Unauthorized absences or repeated failure to give proper notice.
- Excessive tardiness and/or absences except those absences covered by state and/or federal statutes.
- Leaving work area without permission, as defined by the Department Head.
- Failure to adhere to the personal appearance/dress code policy.
- Sleeping on the job, unless authorized by a Department Head or supervisor.
- Personal activity during paid work time without the express permission of the Department Head.
- Disruptive, loud, or boisterous behavior or horseplay in the workplace.
- Abusive language in the workplace, including racial slurs and epithets.
- Posting, removing, or defacing of notices, signs, or other written material without prior approval.

THIS LIST IS NOT INTENDED TO BE COMPREHENSIVE AND DOES NOT LIMIT THE TOWN'S RIGHT TO IMPOSE DISCIPLINE IN OTHER APPROPRIATE CASES.

406 **Civil Service Law Section 75**

Summary – New York State Civil Service Law Section 75 establishes disciplinary procedures for covered employees. Section 75 affords a covered employee the opportunity for a hearing when charges of incompetence or misconduct have been made against the employee by the Town.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit should refer to the collective bargaining agreement on the subject of the disciplinary procedure.

Covered Employees – In accordance with Civil Service Law, the following employees are generally covered under Section 75:

- A newly hired employee who has not completed the minimum probationary period as determined by civil service rules;
- An employee holding a position by permanent appointment in the **Competitive Class** of the classified Civil Service;
- An employee holding a position in the **Non-Competitive Class** who has been employed for at least five years of continuous uninterrupted service in the non-competitive class, other than a position designated in the Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira as confidential or requiring the performance of functions influencing policy. Even though the employee has completed the required probationary period and has received permanent appointment or employment in the non-competitive class, the employee is not covered under Section 75 until the employee has completed five years of continuous service in the non-competitive class;
- An employee holding a position by permanent appointment or employment in the Exempt, Competitive, Non-Competitive, or Labor Class who is a qualified veteran as defined by the Civil Service Law, or exempt volunteer firefighter, as defined by the General Municipal Law, except when such an employee holds the position of private secretary, cashier, or deputy of any official or department. Specifically, the employee must have been honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from the armed forces of the United States having served therein as such member in time of war as defined in Section 85 of the New York State Civil Service Law, or the employee must be an exempt volunteer firefighter as defined in the General Municipal Law.

Questioning Rights for Union Employees – During the investigation process, a union employee who appears to be a potential subject of disciplinary action may undergo questioning. Such employee will have the right to representation by the employee's certified or recognized employee organization under Civil Service Law Article 14, and will be given advanced notice, in writing, of such right. In the event the employee requests representation, the employee will be allowed a reasonable period of time to obtain such representation. In the event the employee is unable to obtain such representation within a reasonable period of time, the employer will have the right to then question the employee.

Disciplinary Procedure – Except as otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, the following disciplinary procedure shall apply to employees covered by Civil Service Law Section 75:

- **Notice of Discipline** – An employee subject to discipline will be provided with a written Notice of Discipline (NOD) which will contain all charges and specifications.

- **Employee Answer** – The employee will have eight calendar days to respond to the charges. The employee's response must be in writing.
- **Disciplinary Hearing** – Unless there is a stipulation of settlement between the Town and the employee, the employee is afforded the right to a hearing in accordance with provisions established by Civil Service Law Section 75. The hearing upon such charges shall be held by the officer or body having the power to remove the person against whom such charges are preferred, or by a deputy or other person designated by such officer or body in writing for that purpose.

The Appointing Authority will designate a hearing officer in accordance with Civil Service Law Section 75. The designation must be in writing. The hearing officer will set the time and place for the hearing. The hearing officer will make a record of the hearing which will be submitted to the Appointing Authority, with the hearing officer's recommendations, for review and decision.

Right to Representation – The employee may have representation by counsel or by a representative of a recognized or certified employee organization at the hearing and may summon witnesses on the employee's behalf.

Suspension Without Pay Pending Determination of Charges – Pending the hearing and determination of charges, the employee may be suspended without pay for a period not to exceed thirty calendar days.

Penalties – In the event the employee is found to be guilty of the charges, the penalty may consist of one of the following:

- Reprimand;
- Fine not to exceed one-hundred dollars which will be deducted from the employee's pay;
- Suspension without pay not to exceed two months;
- Demotion in grade and title; or
- Termination from Town employment.

Finding of Not-Guilty – In the event the employee is found to be not guilty of all charges and specifications, the employee will be restored to the employee's position with full pay for the period of suspension less the amount of any unemployment insurance benefits that the employee may have received during such period.

Limitations – Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no removal or disciplinary proceeding will be commenced more than eighteen months after the occurrence of the alleged incompetence or misconduct complained of and described in the charges. Such limitation will not apply where the incompetence or misconduct complained of and described in the charges would, if proved in a court of appropriate jurisdiction, constitute a crime.

Filing Requirements – In the event the employee is found to be guilty, a copy of the charges, the employee's written answer, a transcript of the hearing, and the determination will be filed in the office of the department in which the employee is employed. A copy will also be filed with the Chemung County/City of Elmira Regional Civil Service Commission.

407 Code of Ethics

Policy Statement – Pursuant to the provisions of §806 of the General Municipal Law, the Town Board of the Town of Horseheads recognizes that there are rules of ethical conduct for public officers and employees which must be observed if a high degree of moral conduct is to be obtained and if public confidence is to be maintained in our unit of local government. It is the purpose of this chapter to promulgate these rules of ethical conduct for the officers and employees of the Town of Horseheads. These rules shall serve as a guide for official conduct of the officers and employees of the Town of Horseheads. The rules of ethical conduct of this chapter, as adopted, shall not conflict with but shall be in addition to any prohibition of Article 18 of the General Municipal Law or any other general or special law relating to ethical conduct and interest in contracts of municipal officers and employees.

Definitions – As used in this Code, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

- **Municipal Officer or Employee** – Any officer or employee of the Town of Horseheads, whether paid or unpaid, including members of any administrative board, commission or other agency thereof. No person shall be deemed to be a municipal officer or employee solely by reason of being a volunteer fire fighter or civil defense volunteer, except a Fire Chief or Assistant Fire Chief.
- **Interest** – A direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit accruing to a Town employee as the result of a contract with the Town. For the purposes of this Code, a Town employee shall be deemed to have an "interest" in the contract of:
 - A. His or her spouse, minor children and dependents, except a contract of employment with the Town of Horseheads.
 - B. A firm, partnership or association of which such town employee is a member or employee.
 - C. A corporation of which such Town employee is an officer, director or employee.
 - D. A corporation, any stock of which is owned or controlled directly or indirectly by such Town employee.

Standards of Conduct – Every officer or employee of the Town of Horseheads shall be subject to and abide by the following standards of conduct:

- A. *Gifts.* He or she shall not, directly or indirectly, solicit any gift or accept or receive any gift having a value of seventy-five dollars (\$75.) or more, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise or any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him or her or could reasonably be expected to influence him or her in the performance of his or her official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his or her part.
- B. *Confidential information.* He or she shall not disclose confidential information acquired by him or her in the course of his or her official duties or use such information to further his or her personal interest.
- C. *Representation before one's own agency.* He or she shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in

relation to any matter before any municipal agency of which he or she is an officer, member or employee or of any municipal agency over which he or she has jurisdiction or to which he or she has the power to appoint any member, officer or employee.

- D. *Representation before any agency for a contingent fee.* He or she shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before any agency of his or her municipality, whereby his or her compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by such agency with respect to such matter, provided that this subsection shall not prohibit the fixing at any time of fees based upon the reasonable value of the services rendered.
- E. *Disclosure of interest in legislation.* To the extent that he or she knows thereof, a member of the Town Board and any officer or employee of the Town of Horseheads, whether paid or unpaid, who participates in the discussion or gives official opinion to the Town Board on any legislation before the Town Board shall publicly disclose on the official record the nature and extent of any direct or indirect financial or other private interest he or she has in such legislation.
- F. *Investments in conflict with official duties.* He or she shall not invest or hold any investment directly or indirectly in any financial, business, commercial or other private transaction which creates a conflict with his or her official duties.
- G. *Private employment.* He or she shall not engage in, solicit, negotiate for or promise to accept private employment or render services for private interests when such employment or service creates a conflict with or impairs the proper discharge of his or her official duties.
- H. *Future employment.* He or she shall not, after the termination of service or employment with such municipality, appear before any board or agency of the Town of Horseheads in relation to any case, proceeding or application in which he or she personally participated during the period of his or her service or employment or which was under his or her active consideration.

Claims by Officers or Employees – Nothing herein shall be deemed to bar or prevent the timely filing by a present or former municipal officer or employee of any claim, account, demand or suit against the Town of Horseheads or any agency thereof on behalf of himself or herself or any member of his or her family arising out of any personal injury or property damage or for any lawful benefit authorized or permitted by law.

Penalties for Offenses – In addition to any penalty contained in any other provision of law, any person who shall knowingly and intentionally violate any of the provisions of this code may be fined, suspended or removed from office or employment, as the case may be, in the manner provided by law.

408 **Personnel Records**

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town to balance its need to obtain, use, and retain employment information with a concern for each employee’s privacy. To this end, the Town will endeavor to maintain only that personnel information necessary for the conduct of the Town’s business or required by federal, state, or local law. Personnel records will be maintained for current and past employees in order to document employment related decisions and comply with government record keeping and reporting requirements.

Content – The personnel records maintained by the Town include, but are not limited to, Employment Applications, Report of Personnel Change Forms; copies of job-required licenses and certificates, Federal and State Withholding Tax Forms, Retirement Enrollment/Waiver Forms, Health Insurance Enrollment/Waiver Forms, disciplinary and grievance or dispute notices, letters of acclamation, and probationary reports.

Location of Files – All original personnel records for current employees will be kept in the Town Supervisor’s office and will be maintained and controlled by the Bookkeeper to Supervisor.

Immigration (I-9) Forms – All Immigration (I-9) Forms will be kept in a separate file apart from the employee’s personnel file.

Medical Records – All employee medical records will be kept in a separate file apart from the employee’s personnel file in the Town Supervisor’s office and will be maintained and controlled by the Bookkeeper to Supervisor. ***For security purposes, these files will be locked at all times.***

Substance Testing Records – All employee substance testing records will be kept in a separate file apart from the employee’s personnel file in the Highway Superintendent’s office and will be maintained and controlled by the Highway Superintendent. ***For security purposes, these files will be locked at all times.***

Change in Status – An employee must immediately notify the Bookkeeper to Supervisor of a change of name, address, telephone number, marital status, number and age of dependents, beneficiary designations, and individuals to notify in case of emergency.

Employee Access – An employee may inspect and copy the contents of the employee’s own personnel file. Inspections by employees must be requested in writing to the Town Supervisor and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time. An authorized official must be present when the employee inspects the file. The employee may not remove or place any material in the file without the approval of the Town Supervisor. Copies of records contained in an employee’s personnel file may not be released to a third party without the written consent of the employee, unless federal, state or local laws require otherwise.

409 Separation from Employment

Notice of Resignation (Employees) – An employee who intends to resign from employment must submit a written resignation to the employee’s Department Head at least two weeks before the date of resignation is to be effective. All resignations shall be filed in the Town Clerk’s Office.

Completion of Notice Period – When a resignation notice is provided by an employee, the Town reserves the right to waive some or all of the notice period.

Notice of Resignation (Town Officers) – A Town Officer (as defined by Public Officers Law) must resign by delivering a written notice to the Town Clerk. If no effective date is specified, the office becomes vacant immediately upon delivery of the notice to the Town Clerk. If a Town Officer wishes to resign at some future date, the Town Officer may specify a resignation date. However, if the resignation date is more than thirty days after delivery of the notice to the Town Clerk (ninety days for Justices), the resignation will become effective thirty days after such delivery (ninety days for Justices).

Notice of Resignation (Town Clerk) – The Town Clerk who intends to resign must submit a written resignation to the Secretary of State at least thirty calendar days before the date of resignation is to be effective.

Exit Interviews – Exit interviews are normally conducted by the Department Head and/or Town Supervisor. The exit interview provides an opportunity to discuss a number of items including employee benefits, COBRA eligibility, changing of computer passwords, and return of Town property. During the exit interview, employees are encouraged to give suggestions, concerns and constructive recommendations.

Final Paycheck – Employees receive their final paycheck on the next regularly scheduled payday. The final paycheck includes payment for accumulated vacation benefits, if applicable.

410 Employment of Relatives

Policy Statement – A member of an employee’s immediate family may be considered for employment by the Town if the applicant possesses all of the qualifications for employment. An immediate family member may not be hired, however, if the employment would create either a direct or indirect supervisory/subordinate relationship with the family member; or create either an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. These criteria will also be considered when assigning, transferring or promoting an employee.

Definition of Immediate Family – For purposes of this policy, “immediate family” includes the employee’s spouse, brother, sister, parents, children, step-children, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, and any other member of the employee’s household.

Elected Officials – This policy is not intended to supersede the appointing authority of Elected Officials and does not apply to such appointments.

Marriage – Employees who marry or become members of the same household may continue employment as long as there is not a direct or indirect supervisor/subordinate relationship between the employees, or an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Should one of the above situations occur, the Town will attempt to find a suitable position with the Town to which one of the affected employees may be appointed. Such appointment must be in accordance with applicable state and local statutes, including Civil Service Law and related rules and regulations. If accommodations of this nature are not feasible, the employees will be permitted to determine which one of them will resign.

Competitive Class Positions – This policy is not intended to supersede civil service regulations pertaining to appointments made to competitive class positions. Therefore, this policy cannot be used as a basis for denying the appointment of an individual to a competitive class position even if such appointment would constitute the employment of a relative as defined by this policy.

500 OPERATIONAL POLICIES

501 *Departmental Hours*

Normal Hours of Operation – The normal hours of operation are established by the Town Board at the annual organizational meeting. An employee's Department Head will establish the employee's work schedule, which may differ from the normal hours of operation depending upon the particular needs and requirements of the department. The Town Board reserves the right to approve all employee work schedules, except where otherwise prohibited by applicable State or Town Law.

Compressed Workweek – With the approval of the Town Supervisor, except as otherwise provided by collective bargaining agreement or state law, a Department Head may schedule a full-time employee to work four ten-hour days. The employee's "compressed workweek" will normally be either Monday through Thursday or Tuesday through Friday.

Flex-Time – An employee may begin and/or end a given workday at a time requested by the employee and approved by the Department Head. Such "flex-time" must normally be during the time the department is open and available to the public. The employee's use of "flex-time" will be governed by the mutual needs and consent of the Department Head and the employee. The Town Supervisor and the Town Board reserve the right to approve all "flex-time" schedules.

Department Head Absences – Department Heads have duties that may require them to be absent from their offices at certain times during the day. In the event that a Department Head is absent from the office, basic departmental forms should be readily available for distribution and/or collection. It is the Department Head's responsibility to determine what services are to be provided and to schedule coverage of these basic services during scheduled business hours.

Overtime – A Department Head may require an employee to work additional hours beyond the employee's normal workday and workweek. An employee must receive prior approval from the employee's Department Head before working additional hours.

Refusal to Work Additional Hours – An employee who, after investigation, is found to have refused to work additional hours as directed will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Union Employees – The work schedules of employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement shall be governed by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

502 **Emergency Situations**

Closing Procedures – In the event that extraordinary weather conditions or other emergencies develop prior to the beginning of the workday, the Town Supervisor may authorize the closing of non-emergency operations, or, if extraordinary weather conditions or other emergencies develop during a workday, the Town Supervisor may direct that certain employees who perform non-essential services leave work.

Payment of Wages – Pay for FLSA exempt employees will not be affected by an emergency closing. Pay for FLSA non-exempt employees will be in accordance with the provisions below:

- **During Work** – A full-time employee who is directed by the Town Supervisor to leave work due to an emergency closing will be paid for the remainder of the employee's normal workday at the employee's regular rate of pay. Such time will not be included as time worked for the purpose of computing overtime. A part-time employee who is directed to leave work due to an emergency closing will not be paid for the remainder of the employee's normal workday. Such employee may choose to make up the time at a later date agreed to by the Department Head.
- **Prior to Reporting to Work** – If a determination is made to close operations prior to the start of a workday, the Town Supervisor will initiate notification to all affected employees. A full-time employee who is directed not to report to work due to an emergency closing will be paid for the employee's normal workday at the employee's regular rate of pay. Such time will not be included as time worked for the purpose of computing overtime. A part-time employee who is directed not to report to work will not be paid for the workday. Such employee may choose to make-up the time at a later date agreed to by the Department Head.
- **Non-Exempt Employees Not Released** – Due to the nature of services we provide, the Town recognizes that some worksites cannot close. In these cases, non-exempt employees will be paid at time and one-half their regular rate of pay, for the period of time that was worked as determined by the Town Supervisor.

Inclement Weather – Employees are expected to report to work and remain at work during inclement weather conditions unless otherwise notified by the Town. Employees should use their own discretion in determining whether they can commute safely to work due to inclement weather. When the Town Supervisor has not officially shut down operations, an employee who does not report to work or requests to arrive at work late or leave work early due to inclement weather must obtain authorization from his or her Department Head prior to doing so. The employee must use paid vacation or personal leave, if available, or take the time off without pay. If an FLSA exempt employee has no paid leave benefits available, the employee will only be docked if a full workday is taken.

503 Meal and Rest Breaks and Breaks for Nursing Mothers

Meal Breaks – An employee who works more than six hours in a given day will receive an unpaid, duty-free meal break not to exceed sixty minutes.

Scheduling of Meal Breaks – Scheduling of meal breaks must be approved by the Department Head in accordance with the needs and requirements of the department. Meal breaks must normally be taken in the middle of the employee's workday. Unless otherwise directed by the Department Head, an employee may leave the work-site during the meal break.

Observance of Meal Breaks – In accordance with New York State regulations, an employee who works more than six hours in a given day is required to take the scheduled meal break. An employee is not allowed to work through the meal break to make up lost work time or to leave work early. In addition, the meal break may not be taken at the end of an employee's workday in order to leave work before the normal quitting time.

Approval of Rest Breaks – Rest breaks must be approved by the employee's Department Head in accordance with the needs and requirements of the department. Unless otherwise specified by departmental rules, all rest breaks must be taken at the work-site and may not exceed the time allowed.

Breaks for Nursing Mothers to Express Breast Milk – Employees who are nursing mothers shall be allowed to use a reasonable break (generally between twenty to thirty minutes) in addition to the employee's meal and rest breaks to express milk for a nursing child. The Town will provide this break at least once every three hours if requested by the employee. This provision applies to nursing mothers for up to three years following childbirth. The Town will make a reasonable effort to provide a room or location other than the restroom or toilet stall, within walking distance to the employee's work space, or other location in close proximity to work so that nursing mothers can express in private. An employee wishing to avail herself of this break is required to give the Town advance notice, preferably prior to the employee's return to work following the birth of her child, to allow the Town an opportunity to establish a location and to schedule leave time for multiple employees, if needed.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Meal and Rest Breaks provisions set forth above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

504 **Time Records**

Policy Statement – All **FLSA non-exempt employees** are required to complete an individual time record showing the daily hours worked. Employees in the Highway Department must punch a time card. An **FLSA exempt employee** is not required to record daily attendance but must account for authorized paid leave taken by completing a time record indicating such.

Procedures – An employee required to complete a time record or punch a time **card** must comply with the following procedures:

- Time records must be completed by the close of each workday;
- All time worked, including the beginning and ending time, must be recorded;
- All paid and unpaid leaves of absence must be recorded;
- Employees must complete their own time record or **punch their own time card**;
- The time record must be submitted to the Department Head at the time specified;
- The time record must be verified and signed by the Department Head;

Correction of Errors – An employee must immediately bring errors in time records to the attention of the employee's Department Head who will investigate the matter and make and initial the correction once the error has been verified.

Arriving at Work Before or Leaving After Scheduled Work Hours – Arriving at work before the scheduled starting time or leaving work after the scheduled ending time for an employee's own convenience is permitted but is not to be included in working time. No work may be performed for the Town outside of the employee's regular work schedule unless prior approval has been obtained from the Department Head (i.e. unauthorized overtime is prohibited). Violations of this policy will result in appropriate corrective action.

Falsification of Time Records – An employee who, after investigation, is found to have falsified or altered a time record, or the time record of another employee, or completed a time record for another employee, will be subject to disciplinary action. In extenuating circumstances where an employee is not able to complete the employee's own time record, the Department Head may complete the time record on behalf of the employee (at the request of the employee).

505 Bonding

Insurance – The Town will provide bonding insurance for an eligible employee who is required to act in a fiduciary capacity.

506 Expense Reimbursement

Policy Statement – Upon proper authorization of the Town Board, an employee or Elected Official will be reimbursed for expenses associated with carrying out Town business, including, but not limited to, meals, lodging, mileage, parking, highway tolls, and training and membership fees. All required documentation and corresponding receipts must be submitted to the Town Clerk in order for the reimbursement to be processed.

Mileage – An employee who is directed by the appropriate Department Head or supervisor to use the employee's own vehicle to conduct Town business will be reimbursed at the mileage rate established by the Town Board at the annual organizational meeting.

Education and Training – Upon proper authorization of the Town Board, an employee will be reimbursed for training courses that are directly related to the employee's present job. Employees must first seek approval from their Department Head before the request is presented to the Town Board.

Required Membership Fees – Upon proper authorization of the Town Board, an employee required to hold membership in a professional organization as part of the employee's job will be reimbursed for any required dues and/or fees.

Association of Towns Meeting – Upon proper authorization of the Town Board, an employee or Elected Official who attends the annual meeting conducted by the Association of Towns will be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses. Delegates to this meeting will be selected by the Town Board.

507 *Vehicle Usage*

Policy Statement – All vehicles and related equipment of the Town of Horseheads are owned and maintained for the purpose of conducting official business of the Town. Said vehicles and equipment may not be used for the personal use or private gain of any official or employee, nor for any other purpose which is not in the general public interest.

Standards – For the purpose of compliance with this policy, the following standards must be met at all times:

- Town vehicles and related equipment must remain under the general administrative jurisdiction and direction of the Department Head to which it is assigned;
- Town vehicles must be assigned to specific Town officials and employees for specific purposes and tasks. Said vehicles may not be used for any unauthorized purpose nor to conduct personal, private, or non-Town related business;
- Town vehicles must always be operated in a safe and responsible manner, and in compliance with all applicable traffic laws in effect. In the event of an accident, regardless of severity, an accident report must be filed with the Town Supervisor's Office, by the applicable Department Head within twenty-four hours;
- Town vehicles may not be used to transport persons who are not officials or employees of the Town of Horseheads, nor material not related to the conduct of official Town business; without direct authorization by the appropriate Department Head or the Town Board;
- Town vehicles must always be maintained in a safe and secure condition when not in use, including being locked and/or under direct observation; and all keys maintained under controlled and authorized jurisdiction of the appropriate Department Head;
- In the event a Town vehicle must travel outside the limits of the Town of Horseheads, the Department Head or supervisor must receive prior approval from the Town Board; either on a case by case basis or as a comprehensive approval for specified purposes;
- No advertisements, signs, bumper stickers or other markings of a political or commercial nature may be displayed on Town vehicles at any time, except those of a limited community service nature which have been authorized by the Town Board.

508 *Driver's License / Insurance Requirements*

Requirement – An employee who is required to drive either a Town-owned vehicle or the employee's own personal vehicle to conduct business on behalf of the Town, must possess at the time of appointment, and must maintain throughout employment, a valid New York State driver's license. Proof of such license must be on file with the Town. If a personal vehicle is used to conduct business on behalf of the Town, the employee is responsible for ensuring liability insurance coverage meeting NYS requirements is appropriately maintained.

Commercial Drivers – An employee who operates a vehicle which requires a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), must maintain such license throughout employment. Proof of such license must be on file with the Town. In accordance with the federal Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986, a commercial driver must notify the Town within thirty days of a conviction of any traffic violation (except parking), no matter where or what type of vehicle the employee was driving.

Loss of Driver's License – An employee who is required to possess a driver's license or CDL license in order to perform certain job duties and responsibilities must immediately notify the appropriate Department Head in the event the license is suspended or revoked. The loss or suspension of the driver's license or CDL license may affect the employee's employment with the Town. The Town will utilize the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles' "License Event Notification Service" (LENS) to monitor activity that may negatively impact an employee's ability to maintain a required license.

509 *Supplies, Tools and Equipment, and Fuel Usage*

Supplies – All Town owned supplies must be used efficiently and not wasted. An employee may not use any Town supplies including, but not limited to, postage, paper, or office supplies for personal use.

Tools and Equipment – The employee must repair or replace any Town-owned tool or piece of equipment lost or damaged by the employee as a result of negligence or intentional misuse. An employee may not use any Town-owned tool or piece of equipment, including, but not limited to, fax machines, copiers and computer equipment for personal use. An employee may not use Town facilities, Town-owned tools or equipment to work on vehicles or trailers not owned by the Town.

Fuel – An employee may not use gasoline, fuel oil, or motor oil purchased by the Town for personal use.

510 Telephone / Cell Phone Usage

Guidelines – Telephone and cell phone usage must adhere to the following guidelines:

- An employee must answer promptly and speak in a clear, friendly and courteous tone.
- An employee must give the name of the department or office and one's own name. If the call is not for the employee who answers, the employee must transfer the caller to the correct party or take a message recording all pertinent information.
- If the call must be placed on hold, the employee who answered the call must return to the line frequently to confirm that the call is being transferred.
- During office hours, each employee is responsible for there being at least one employee in the department or office to answer telephones. If the department or office has a limited staff, arrangements must be made with another department or office for telephone coverage or an answering device must be in operation.
- Collect calls may not be accepted without the approval of the Department Head or supervisor.
- An employee may not make personal calls while on work time, except in an emergency (an emergency is regarded as an illness or a severe injury to a family member, changed plans regarding an employee's transportation home from work, extreme weather conditions, or similar situations.)
- An employee may not make or receive personal calls on a Town provided telephone or cell phone that will result in additional charges to the Town, except in an emergency and/or with prior approval from the Department Head. The employee must reimburse the Town for the cost of the call.
- The use of Town issued cell phones is monitored to ensure no excessive or inappropriate use occurs.
- The use of a cell phone while driving on Town business must be in compliance with all applicable laws.

Personal Cell Phone / Electronic Device Usage – Employees are permitted to carry personal cell phones during working hours but must adhere to the guidelines shown below. These guidelines do not apply to Town-owned cell phones that are issued for the specific use of an employee's job duties. Where the term cell phone is used in these guidelines, it shall be considered to include all types of portable electronic devices (e.g. iPads, Kindles, MP3 players, netbooks, etc.)

- With the exception of an emergency situation, cell phones may not be used for personal purposes (including text messaging) during work hours unless the employee is on an authorized break or has permission from a supervisor.
- No web browsing, music, movies, or all other uses of cell phones will be allowed during working hours.
- Personal cell phones that are broken, damaged or lost during working hours will not be replaced or paid for by the Town.

511 Use of Communication Systems and Equipment

Policy Statement – The purpose of this policy is to provide the following requirements for the use of Town-owned communication systems and equipment. Communication systems and equipment include but are not limited to computer systems, internet services, hardware, software, laptops, smart phones, cell phones, land-line phones, printers, facsimile machines, copiers, and scanning devices.

Property – All communication systems, equipment and files are the property of the Town. This includes the messages created, transmitted, and stored on such systems and equipment.

Usage – All communication systems and equipment are provided to an employee for the purpose of aiding that employee in the performance of the employee's job functions. All hardware and software used is to be supplied by the Town. No unauthorized or unlicensed hardware or software may be used or installed on any Town-owned computer. Any hardware or software necessary to perform job duties should be requested of the employee's Department Head.

Town's Right to Monitor Communication Systems and Equipment – There is no guarantee of privacy when using Town-owned communication systems and equipment. The Town reserves the right to enter, search, and monitor employee communication systems, equipment, and files, with or without advance notice, at any time in the normal course of business. Department Heads have the authority to inspect the contents of any Town communication systems, equipment, data/files, or electronic messages of their subordinates in the normal course of their supervisory responsibilities. In addition, the data/files of Department Heads and supervisors may be inspected by the Town Supervisor in the normal course of duty. This applies to all information, messages, and files that are created, transmitted, downloaded, received, stored, or deleted on such systems, including items that are password protected. Additionally, the Town has the authority to monitor and record each web site, chat room, and newsgroup visited on the Internet, and every electronic message and file transfer into and out of the Town's network or communication service. The Town may also monitor each employee's Internet activity and usage patterns to ensure that the Town's resources are being utilized for appropriate business purposes. Any employee who is required to have a password must submit that password to the employee's Department Head.

Personal Use – Employees are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding the reasonableness of personal use. Any non-business use should be incidental and occasional and must conform to all standards set forth in this policy. Any personal use that interferes with the performance of an employee's work or burdens or compromises the effectiveness of the Town's network and equipment is strictly prohibited.

Prohibited Uses – In addition to the requirements set forth above, the following uses of Town-owned communication systems and equipment are prohibited. This list is meant to be illustrative, and not exhaustive.

- Any illegal activity;
- Threats or harassment;
- Slander or defamation;

- Transferring, viewing, or storage of obscene or suggestive messages or graphic images;
- Any unauthorized commercial activity;
- Accessing or attempting to access the data/files of another person, unless otherwise authorized as necessary in the course of performing Town business;
- Using or aiding in the unauthorized use of another person's password;
- Harming or destroying data/files (other than editing or deleting information in the normal course of one's job duties);
- Use of non-business software;
- Gambling;
- Use of entertainment software, such as games and puzzles;
- Installation or use of any hardware or software, not authorized by the Town;
- Installation or use of Town-owned hardware or software for any use that is not Town related business;
- Installation or use of any unauthorized or unlicensed hardware or software; and
- Installation of any software containing viruses.

Internet / Electronic Messaging Requirements

Eligibility – Internet / electronic messaging service may be provided to employees who can demonstrate a work-related reason to have access. Electronic messages (e-messages) include but are not limited to e-mails, text messages, blogs, instant messages and posting to social networking or other sites. Approval must be given by the employee's Department Head or supervisor, subject to further approval of the Town Supervisor.

Proper Usage – In addition to the prohibitions set forth in the above paragraphs, any activities prohibited for any other general computer user are also prohibited with respect to Internet / e-messaging service usage. Employees are expected to communicate in a manner that will reflect positively on both themselves and the Town. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the employee to adhere to the following requirements:

- E-messaging must be used in a professional manner;
- Messages must not be threatening, insulting, obscene, abusive, or derogatory;
- Messages must not include content that constitutes workplace harassment including sexual harassment;
- E-messaging may not be used to transmit chain letters;
- Employees are responsible for saving any e-messages that they want to keep permanently;
- E-messages must not involve personal sales or solicitation or be associated with any for-profit outside business activity;
- E-messages must not involve personal not-for-profit solicitations;
- E-messages must not potentially embarrass the Town;
- Passwords should not be given to anyone other than the employee's Department Head or supervisor;
- Internet must not be used for the propagation of computer viruses;
- Internet must not be used for personal recreational activities (e.g. online games);
- Participation in non-business Internet chat groups, blogging or instant messaging is prohibited;
- As a security precaution, a workstation must not be left signed onto E-mail or the Internet while unattended for a long period of time (or overnight). Each employee must log off the network when not in use and power down at the end of the day;

- Employee Internet usage and e-messaging may be subject to filtering and may be monitored;
- Employees should be aware that deletion of any E-message or file does not truly eliminate that message or file from the system. All E-mail messages are stored on a central back-up system in the normal course of data management;
- Employees should ensure that no personal correspondence appears to be an official communication of the Town; and
- Employees may not use the Town's address for transmitting or receiving personal mail or use the Town's e-mail address for transmitting or receiving personal e-messages.

Disclosure of Information - Employees must bear in mind that e-messages are not private and its source is clearly identifiable. E-messages may remain part of the Town's business records long after they are deleted. Electronic records, including e-messages, are public records subject to state Freedom of Information Law and will be disclosed upon request unless an exemption to disclose is found to apply. In general, e-messages are subject to discovery in civil lawsuits.

Reliability – Users should be aware that because the internet is a collection of computer networks with no single central authority over information consistency, data is subject to inaccuracies. The Town is not responsible for loss or damage to a user's data or for the reliability of information that is obtained via the Internet service. Also, this information must be used in accordance with applicable copyright laws.

Reporting of Violations – Anyone with information as to a violation of this policy is to report said information to the employee's Department Head. Once the employee's Department Head is informed of the violation, a formal process, consistent with this Employee Handbook and/or applicable law, will begin.

Disciplinary Action – Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

512 Social Media

Policy Statement – The purpose of the policy is to provide the framework for employee usage of Social Media, both inside and outside of the workplace. Social Media in general refers to internet based applications that allow for the creation and exchange of user generated content. Examples of Social Media include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Flickr, Imgur, YouTube, web blogs, and web based wikis whereby users can add, modify, or delete its content via a web browser.

Usage During Working Hours – Unless the use of Social Media is pertinent to Town business or authorized by a Department Head, employees are prohibited from using Social Media during working hours. This applies regardless of whether or not such usage occurs on Town-owned computers or communication equipment or a device personally owned by the employee.

Usage During Meal and Rest Breaks – Employees are responsible for exercising good judgment when using Town-owned computers or communication equipment to access Social Media sites while on a meal and rest break. The Town's right to monitor communication systems and equipment also applies to the use of Social Media if employees are using Town computers or communications systems.

Posting Content on Social Media (regardless of point of access) – The following uses of Social Media are prohibited. These terms pertain to content posted from computers or communication systems that are not Town owned, as well as those that are Town property.

This list is meant to be illustrative, and not exhaustive.

- Disclosing confidential or proprietary information pertaining to matters of the Town that is not otherwise deemed accessible to the general public under the Freedom of Information Law (Public Officers Law Article 6, §§84-90).
- Matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed.
- Promoting or endorsing any illegal activities.
- Threatening, promoting, or endorsing violence.
- Directing comments, or sharing images that are discriminatory or insensitive to any individual or group based on race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Knowingly making false or misleading statements about the Town, or its employees, services, or elected officials.
- Posting, uploading, or sharing images that have been taken while performing duties as an agent of the Town, or while wearing Town uniforms – the only exception to this rule is when it is directly pertinent to Town business and such posting, uploading, or sharing of images is authorized in advance by the appropriate Department Head.
- Representing that an opinion or statement is the policy or view of the Town, or of any individual acting in their capacity as a Town employee or official, or otherwise on behalf of the Town, when that is not the case.
- Posting anything in the name of the Town or in a manner that could reasonably be attributed to the Town without prior written authorization from the applicable Department Head.
- Using the name of the Town or a Town e-mail address in conjunction with a personal blog or Social Media account.

An employee's Social Media usage must comply with Town policies pertaining to but not limited to Non-Discrimination and Harassment, Confidentiality, Violence in the Workplace, and Substance Abuse. Any harassment, bullying, discrimination, or retaliation that would not be permissible in the workplace is not permissible between co-workers online, even if it is done after hours, outside of the workplace, using computers or communication systems that are not Town-owned.

Notwithstanding the above, nothing in this policy is meant to imply any restriction or diminishment of an employee's right to appropriately engage in protected concerted activity under law.

Reporting of Violations – Anyone with information as to a violation of this policy is to report said information to the appropriate Department Head. Once the Department Head is informed of the violation, a formal process, consistent with this Employee Handbook and/or applicable law, will begin.

Disciplinary Action – An employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

513 Personal Appearance

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town that each employee’s dress, grooming and personal hygiene should be appropriate to the work situation.

Standards – An employee must maintain a personal appearance in a manner that reflects a good image to the public. Acceptable personal appearance is an ongoing requirement of employment with the Town. Radical departures from conventional dress or personal grooming and hygiene standards are not permitted. Employees should not wear suggestive attire, athletic clothing, novelty buttons, and similar items of casual attire since this clothing does not present a businesslike appearance.

Tattoos – If you have a tattoo it must be covered during working hours.

Piercings – Employees and volunteers may wear earrings, however only studs or small hoops are permitted for safety reasons. Other visible forms of body piercings are not permitted.

Safety Clothing and Equipment – An employee may be required to wear safety clothing and equipment as directed by the Department Head. If such is the case, the employee must comply with all safety requirements.

Uniforms – An employee may be required to wear a uniform as directed by the Department Head and/or as provided in a collective bargaining agreement. If such is the case, the employee must comply with all requirements.

Employees of the Highway Department and Dog Control are required to wear uniforms, which are provided by the Town. The Town will also provide a cleaning allowance for these uniforms.

514 Solicitations/Distributions

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town to prohibit solicitation and distribution on its premises by non-employees and to permit solicitation and distribution by employees only as outlined below.

During Working Hours – An employee may not distribute literature or solicit other employees during working hours without approval from the appropriate Department Head.

During Meal and Rest Breaks – With permission from the Department Head, an employee may distribute literature and solicit other employees during meal and rest breaks provided it does not interfere with the normal operations of the department, reduce employee efficiency, annoy fellow employees, or pose a threat to the Town’s security.

515 Disclosure of Information

Policy Statement – The Town of Horseheads promotes open government and complies with all requirements regarding public access to information. However, the Town recognizes that certain documents, records, and other information pertaining to Town operations and activities contain sensitive and confidential information about Town residents and others who do business with or on behalf of the Town and/or its residents. Such information cannot be photocopied, duplicated, discussed, or otherwise disclosed to any outside party except in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law or any other applicable laws and regulations. An employee is also prohibited from sharing or otherwise disclosing such information with other Town employees, family members or friends who do not have a Town business reason to have such information. This includes posting of such information in any public forum (computer or otherwise) or on computer social networking sites (Facebook, etc.)

Responsibility for Security of Confidential Information – Elected Officials, Department Heads and employees are responsible for maintaining the security of documents, records and other information that fall within their department operations. Any request from outside parties for disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Law or any other applicable laws or regulations must be submitted to the Town Clerk.

Employee Personal Information – An employee should never provide a caller or visitor with confidential information regarding employees, including home addresses and personal telephone numbers. An employee should take the person's name and telephone number and inform the caller/visitor that a message will be forwarded to the employee.

516 Visitors

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town not to allow personal visitors during working hours, except for emergency situations. Visitors are allowed for brief visits during an employee's meal break as long as such visit does not interfere with Town operations or interrupt other employees who are still working.

517 Purchasing

Policy Statement – The Town has established an official procurement policy that must be followed without exception. No employee shall make purchases for the Town, or use the Town's name to make purchases, unless so authorized by the Town Board and in adherence to the procedures set forth in the procurement policy.

518 Maintenance of Work Area

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town that work areas must be kept safe, clean and orderly at all times.

Employee Responsibility – Employees are responsible for maintaining their work area in a safe and orderly fashion. As such, each employee should, at a minimum, do the following:

- Place coats, boots, umbrellas and other items of clothing in designated areas so that work areas are not unnecessarily cluttered;
- Consume food or beverages only in designated areas so that work areas are kept free of food and related litter;
- Report any existing or potential workplace hazards and safety violations to the Department Head;
- Abide by the smoking policy as specified in this Employee Handbook;
- Clean and store all tools and equipment and properly store any items, papers or confidential information in a manner prescribed by the Department Head.

Supervisory Responsibility – Supervisors are responsible for having their employees maintain their work areas according to the requirements of this policy. Each supervisor should:

- Make sure that aisles, floors and walls are free from debris and other unnecessary items;
- Monitor the facilities and equipment and issue maintenance requests where appropriate;
- Arrange for the removal of any items from the workplace that are not needed for the flow of business or the enhancement of employee comfort;
- Abide by and enforce the Town's smoking policy;
- Ensure the proper disposal of all trash and waste.

519 Personal Property

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town to ask each employee to refrain from bringing unnecessary or inappropriate personal property to work. The Town recognizes that an employee may need to bring certain items to work. However, employees should take care to ensure that personal property brought to the workplace does not disrupt work or pose a safety risk to other employees.

Personal Liability – An employee is expected to exercise reasonable care to safeguard personal items brought to work. Except as otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, the Town will not repair, replace, or reimburse an employee for the damage or loss of the employee's personal property. An employee bringing personal property to the workplace does so at one's own risk.

Security Inspections – Desks, lockers and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees but remain the sole property of the Town. Accordingly, such storage devices, as well as any articles found within them, can be inspected by any agent or representative of the Town at any time, with or without notice. The inspection may be made in the presence of the employee. The Town is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property placed in such storage devices.

520 Town Property

Employee Responsibility – An employee will be responsible for any item issued by the Town which is in the employee's possession and/or control, such as, but not limited to the following:

- Equipment, including Protective Equipment
- Identification Badges
- Keys
- Uniforms
- Communication Devices
- Laptop computers and peripherals
- Books or other Reference Materials, including this Employee Handbook

Return of Property – Except as otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, all Town property must be returned to the Town before the employee's last day of work.

521 Unauthorized Work

Policy Statement – An employee may not perform work for any entity other than the Town (or a participant in an authorized shared services agreement) during the employee's authorized work hours, or claim that Town work was done when such is not the case. Employees must devote their full scheduled shift to Town business, as assigned, including authorized work under any shared services agreement.

522 **Outside Employment**

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town that an employee may engage in outside work as long as such outside work does not interfere with the employee's performance standards, pose an actual or potential conflict of interest, or compromise the interests of the Town.

Guidelines – The following guidelines have been established for an employee who engages in outside work.

- An employee will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to the Town's scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.
- If the Town determines that an employee's outside work interferes with the performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the Town as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be required to terminate the outside employment if the employee wishes to remain employed by the Town.
- No Town equipment, supplies, or other material may be used by an employee on other than Town work.
- Outside employment that does or may constitute a conflict of interest is prohibited. An employee may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside of the Town for materials produced or services rendered while performing the employee's Town job.
- An employee may not work on outside employment during any period which the employee is regularly scheduled to work for and is paid by the Town.
- A Town employee who engages in outside work must notify the person for whom the work is being performed that such work is being done on the employee's own time and that the employee is not representing the Town while performing such work.

Employee Responsibility – A Town employee who wishes to engage in outside work is responsible for ensuring that the above guidelines are maintained. Questions should be directed to the Department Head.

Union Employees – In addition to the above guidelines, an employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit may be subject to rules and/or guidelines regarding outside employment as set forth in the collective bargaining agreement or rules of the department to which the employee is assigned.

600 ABSENCE POLICIES

601 Attendance

Except as otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, the following procedures shall apply regarding absence from work:

Tardiness – An employee must be ready and able to work at the time the employee is scheduled to begin work. In the event an employee is unable to report to work at the scheduled time, the employee must notify the employee's Department Head with as much advance notice as possible, but within fifteen minutes of the employee's scheduled starting time. The reason for tardiness and the expected time of arrival must be indicated to the Department Head.

Daily Notification – In the event an employee is unable to report to work, the employee must notify the employee's Department Head each day of the absence and state the reason for the absence. In the event the absence was pre-authorized, this requirement will be waived.

Scheduled Absences – Requests for scheduled time off, such as the use of vacation leave and personal leave, must be approved by the Department Head in advance. All requests for time off are subject to approval by the employee's Department Head on a case-by-case basis. Refer to Section 802, Vacation Leave, and Section 804, Personal Leave, for further details.

Unscheduled Absences – An employee who is unable to report to work must notify the employee's Department Head with as much advance notice as possible, but within fifteen minutes of the employee's scheduled starting time. Asking another person to call in on the employee's behalf is not permitted. Notification requirements may be waived in cases of emergency.

Unexcused Absences – Notification of an absence to an employee's Department Head does not automatically mean the absence is authorized. Any time off from work that is without approval of an employee's Department Head is considered an unexcused absence. An unexcused absence is without pay and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Early Departure – In the event an employee must leave work during the workday, the employee must receive permission from the employee's Department Head prior to leaving.

Leaving the Premises – An employee must obtain prior approval from the employee's Department Head to leave an assigned worksite during working hours due to a non-work related reason. An employee who leaves an assigned worksite during the workday due to business reasons must notify the employee's supervisor in accordance with department policy.

Documentation of Absences – An employee may be required to provide appropriate documentation in justification of any absence. Documentation may include medical verification.

602 **Jury Duty Leave**

Except as otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, the following procedure shall apply regarding jury duty:

Jury Leave - In the event a full-time or part-time employee is required to perform jury duty on a day the employee is scheduled to work, the employee will receive paid jury duty leave. Such leave will not be subtracted from any of the employee's leave credits. An employee is obligated to notify the Commissioner of Jurors that the Town is paying the employee's full pay during jury duty. If the employee receives a jury stipend from the courts, such amount must be reimbursed to the Town. An employee can collect and keep any mileage or parking expense reimbursement that may be issued by the court system for performing jury duty.

The Town shall pay a temporary or seasonal employee up to \$40 of the employee's wages for the first three days the employee serves jury duty if on those days the employee is scheduled to work for the Town. After the first three days, the employee may be eligible for a stipend issued by the court system if the employee continues to serve on jury duty.

Notification of Jury Duty – When an employee receives notice to report for jury duty, the employee must immediately submit a copy of the notice to the employee's Department Head.

Return to Duty – In the event the employee is released from jury duty on a given day and there are two or more hours remaining in the employee's scheduled workday, the employee must report to work. The employee will be allotted time to return home and prepare for work.

Accrual of Benefits – The Town will continue to provide health insurance benefits for an eligible employee during the jury leave. Vacation leave, sick leave and holiday benefits will continue to accrue during jury duty leave.

603 **Bereavement Leave**

Eligibility – In the event of a death of a full-time or part-time employee’s immediate family member, the employee may take a paid leave for up to three consecutive days from the employee’s regularly scheduled work. Such leave will not be subtracted from any of the employee’s leave credits. A temporary or seasonal employee is not eligible for paid bereavement leave but may be allowed to take time-off without pay provided the employee has prior approval from the Department Head.

Definition of Immediate Family – For purpose of bereavement leave, “immediate family member” will mean the following:

- Spouse
- Parent / [Step-parent]
- Mother-in-law
- Daughter-in-law
- Grandparent
- Significant Other residing in employee’s immediate household
- The employee’s same-sex committed partner* or the child, parent or other relative (categorized above) of the committed partner
- Child / [Step-child]
- Sibling
- Father-in-law
- Son-in-law
- Grandchild

**Defined under NYS Human Rights Law §79-n, same-sex committed partners are those who are financially and emotionally interdependent in a manner commonly presumed of spouses*

[Revised by Town Board Resolution #93 of 2016 (June 8, 2016)]

Extended Bereavement Leave – With authorization from the employee’s Department Head, an employee may use vacation leave credits and/or personal leave credits to extend a bereavement leave. The Department Head will have total discretion in the approval of an employee’s extended bereavement leave, based upon the needs of the department.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Bereavement Leave provisions set forth above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

604 **Military Leave and Military Leave of Absence**

Military Leave (New York State Law) – This section refers only to a paid leave for military service under New York State Law and does not affect an employee’s entitlement to leave needed for military service under federal statute. The Town of Horseheads recognizes the importance of the Military Reserve and National Guard, and will permit any employee the use of military leave to perform ordered military duty or required training. The Town will grant such leave with pay for up to twenty-two workdays or thirty calendar days in a calendar year, whichever is greater. Such military leave beyond the twenty-two workdays or thirty calendar days in a calendar year will be unpaid, however accumulated vacation leave may, at the employee’s option, be used at any time during the leave. In accordance with applicable New York State law, the employee may keep all pay received for military service.

Military Leave of Absence (Federal Law) – An unpaid leave of absence for a period of up to the federal statutory limits will be granted to an employee to serve in any of the Armed Forces of the United States. The employee’s accumulated vacation leave may, at the employee’s option, be used at any time during such leave of absence.

Leave For Military Spouses (New York State Law) – In accordance with NYS Labor Law §202-i, the Town will grant an unpaid leave of absence of up to ten days to an employee (who works an average of twenty hours per week) whose spouse is a member of the armed forces of the United States, National Guard, or reserves who has been deployed during a period of military conflict, to a combat theater or combat zone of operations. This leave shall only be used when the employee's spouse is on leave from such deployment. This does not preclude the employee's option to use available paid leave upon approval of the employee's Department Head.

605 Leave for Cancer Screening

Policy – The Town of Horseheads complies with New York State Civil Service Law which entitles all Town employees to paid leave to undertake screening for breast cancer (under §159-b) and prostate cancer (under §159-c). This leave will not be charged against any available sick, vacation, personal, compensatory or other leave accruals. This does not preclude an employee's option to use other available paid leave for this same purpose.

Allowance – An employee will be allowed four hours of paid leave per year for the purpose of undergoing a screening procedure for breast cancer, and four hours of paid leave per year for the purpose of undergoing a screening procedure for prostate cancer (male employees only). Such paid leave will be accrued as of January 1 each year. If the employee does not exercise his/her rights to the leave, those hours are not carried forward to the next year. The allowed leave time may include the travel time to and from the appointment and any subsequent follow up consultation visits. In addition, the allowed leave may be staggered throughout the year until the maximum allowance has been reached.

Scheduling – An employee must receive prior approval from the employee's Department Head to take leave for this purpose. The request for leave should be submitted to the Department Head in writing a minimum of two days in advance. The Department Head will have total discretion in the approval of this leave, but will not unreasonably deny such request.

Documentation Requirements – If an employee applies for paid leave for a cancer screening procedure under this policy, documentation must be provided to the Department Head from the health care provider verifying that the absence from the workplace was for cancer screening. If an employee uses any other available leave for a cancer screening procedure, the provisions of the applicable leave policy (e.g. sick, personal, vacation, compensatory) will apply; there is no requirement in such a case to provide specific documentation regarding cancer screening.

606 Leave for Blood Donations

Policy – The Town of Horseheads complies with New York State Labor Law Section §202-j which entitles Town employees who work an average of twenty hours or more per week to a leave of absence for the purpose of making a blood donation. This leave of absence will not be charged against any available sick, vacation, personal, compensatory or other leave accruals. The leave allowed under this policy is unpaid, however, this does not preclude an employee's option to use available paid leave for this same purpose.

Allowance – An eligible employee will be allowed a leave of absence of up to three hours per year under this policy. Such leave will be accrued as of January 1 each year. If the employee does not exercise his/her rights to this leave, those hours are not carried forward to the next year. The allowed leave may include the travel time to and from the appointment.

Scheduling – An employee must receive prior approval from the employee's Department Head to take leave for this purpose. The request for leave should be submitted to the Department Head in writing a minimum of two days in advance. The Department Head will have total discretion in the approval of this leave, but will not unreasonably deny such request.

607 **Family and Medical Leave Policy**

[Revised by Town Board Resolution #93 of 2016 (June 8, 2016)]

Statement of Compliance – The Town of Horseheads complies with the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Civil Service Law when administering leaves under this policy.

Summary – FMLA entitles an eligible employee to a maximum of twelve workweeks (defined by the employee's normal workweek) of job-protected, unpaid leave in any twelve month period for certain family and medical reasons. The twelve-month period is calculated as the twelve month period measured forward from the date of the employee's first FMLA leave usage. The FMLA also provides an eligible employee with up to twenty-six weeks of *Military Caregiver Leave* to care for a covered service member (limited to a single twelve-month period). At the conclusion of a leave of absence under the FMLA, the employee will be restored to the position the employee held when the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment, provided the employee returns to work immediately following such leave.

Eligibility – To be eligible for an unpaid leave under FMLA, an employee must meet the following requirements:

- The employee must have worked for the Town for at least twelve months as of the first date of requested leave (these need not be consecutive);
- The employee must have worked for the Town for at least 1,250 hours during the previous twelve months prior to the date the leave commences; and
- The employee must work at or report to a worksite which has fifty or more employees or is within seventy-five miles of worksites that taken together have a total of fifty or more employees.
- Spouses who both work for the Town are allowed a combined maximum of twelve workweeks of leave for the birth or care of a newborn child, adoption or foster care of a child and to care for such newly placed child, or the serious health condition of a parent, during any twelve month period.

Types of FMLA Leave - Eligible employees will be afforded up to twelve workweeks of unpaid leave under **FMLA** under the following circumstances:

- Upon the birth of the employee's child and to care for the newborn child;
- Upon the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent who has a serious health condition;
- Because of the employee's own serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of his or her job; and
- Because of any qualifying exigency (refer to Qualifying Exigency Leave below) arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.

Military Caregiver Leave - Eligible employees will be afforded up to twenty-six weeks of leave to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or nearest blood relative who is a recovering service member. A recovering service member is defined as a member of the Armed Forces who suffered an injury or illness while on active-duty that may render the person unable to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating. This leave shall only be available during a single twelve-month period. During this single twelve-month period, the employee shall be entitled to a combined total of twenty-six workweeks of caregiver leave described in this section and the **Types of FMLA Leave** section described above. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to limit the availability of FMLA leave provided under the **Types of FMLA Leave** section above. For the purposes of this type of leave, "nearest blood relative" shall include the following in order of priority: a relative who has been granted legal custody of the covered service member, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles and first cousins, or a specific blood relative who has been designated as a service member's caregiver. When no such designation is made, and there are multiple family members with the same level of relationship to the covered service member, all such family members are considered to be next of kin and may take FMLA leave to provide care to the covered service member, either consecutively or simultaneously.

Qualifying Exigency Leave – Eligible employees who work for the Town may take up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for a "qualifying exigency" arising out of the foreign deployment of the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent. FMLA leave for this purpose is called qualifying exigency leave. Qualifying exigencies may arise when the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who is a member of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard and Reserves) and who is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty. (Covered active duty is further defined in Department of Labor regulations.) For purposes of qualifying exigency leave, an employee's son or daughter on covered active duty refers to a child of any age.

The Department of Labor has identified nine broad categories of qualifying exigencies. If the military member is on covered active duty, the employee may take FMLA leave for the following qualifying exigencies:

- Issues arising from the military member's short notice deployment (i.e., deployment within seven or less days of notice). For a period of up to seven days from the day the military member receives notice of deployment, an employee may take qualifying exigency leave to address any issue that arises from the short-notice deployment.
- Attending military events and related activities, such as official ceremonies, programs, events and informational briefings, or family support or assistance programs sponsored by the military, military service organizations, or the American Red Cross that are related to the member's deployment.
- Certain childcare and related activities arising from the military member's covered active duty, including arranging for alternative childcare, providing childcare on a non-routine, urgent, immediate need basis, enrolling in or transferring a child to a new school or day care facility. Note: The employee taking FMLA qualifying exigency leave does not need to be related to the military member's child. However, (1) the military member must be the parent, spouse, son or daughter of the employee taking FMLA leave, and (2) the child must be the child of the military member (including a child to whom the military member stands in loco parentis).

- Certain activities arising from the military member's covered active duty related to care of the military member's parent who is incapable of self-care, such as arranging for alternative care, providing care on a non-routine, urgent, immediate need basis, admitting or transferring a parent to a new care facility, and attending certain meetings with staff at a care facility, such as meetings with hospice or social service providers. Note: The employee taking FMLA qualifying exigency leave does not need to be related to the military member's parent. However, (1) the military member must be the parent, spouse, son or daughter of the employee taking FMLA leave, and (2) the parent must be the parent of the military member (including an individual who stood in loco parentis to the military member when the member was a child).
- Making or updating financial and legal arrangements to address a military member's absence while on covered active duty, including preparing and executing financial and healthcare powers of attorney, enrolling in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), or obtaining military identification cards.
- Attending counseling for the employee, the military member, or the child of the military member when the need for that counseling arises from the covered active duty of the military member and is provided by someone other than a health care provider.
- Taking up to 15 calendar days of leave to spend time with a military member who is on short-term, temporary Rest and Recuperation leave during deployment. The employee's leave for this reason must be taken while the military member is on Rest and Recuperation leave.
- Certain post-deployment activities within 90 days of the end of the military member's covered active duty, including attending arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings and events, and other official ceremonies or programs sponsored by the military, and addressing issues arising from the death of a military member, including attending the funeral.
- Any other event that the employee and employer agree is a qualifying exigency.

Definitions – The following terms are fully defined in the Federal Regulations on the Family and Medical Leave Act, 29 CFR Part 825. For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

- **Serious Health Condition** will mean an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility including any period of incapacity (as contained in the Federal Regulations), or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care; or continuing treatment by a health care provider, including, but not limited to:
 - * A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity that also involves continuing treatment by a health care provider;
 - * A period of incapacity due to pregnancy or prenatal care;

- * A period of incapacity or treatment for such incapacity due to a chronic serious health condition. A “chronic serious health condition” requires periodic visits to a health care provider for treatment. The term “periodic visit” constitutes 2 or more appointments with a health care provider over the course of one year;
 - * A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective; or
 - * A period of absence to receive multiple treatments, including any period of recovery, by a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services under orders of or on referral by a health care provider, for restorative surgery after an accident or other injury or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment.
- **Health Care Provider** will mean and refer to a doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery by the State in which the doctor practices; or any other person defined in the FMLA regulations capable of providing health care services.
 - **Family Member** will mean and refer to:
 - * **Spouse** – means husband or wife. For purposes of this definition, husband or wife refers to the other person with whom an individual entered into marriage as defined or recognized under state law for purposes of marriage in the State in which the marriage was entered into or, in the case of a marriage entered into outside of any State, if the marriage is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one State. This definition includes an individual in a same-sex or common law marriage that either: (1) was entered into in a State that recognizes such marriages; or (2) if entered into outside of any State, is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one State.
 - * **Parent** – biological parent or an individual who stands or stood in *loco parentis* to an employee when the employee was a child as defined in directly below. This term does not include an employee’s parents "in law".
 - * **Child** – biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in *loco parentis*, who is either under age eighteen, or age eighteen or older and "incapable of self-care (as defined in the Federal Regulations) because of a mental or physical disability". Persons who are "*in loco parentis*" include those with day-to-day responsibilities to care for and financially support a child or, in the case of an employee, who had such responsibility for the employee when the employee was a child. A biological or legal relationship is not necessary.

Notification Requirements – If the need for leave is foreseeable, the employee must give notice, in writing, to the Department Head at least thirty calendar days prior to the commencement date of the unpaid leave. The employee must complete the Family And Medical Leave Act Request Form and forward the completed form to the Town Supervisor for review. The failure of an employee to give thirty days’ notice of foreseeable leave with no reasonable excuse for the delay may result in the delay of the employee taking the FMLA leave until thirty days from the date of notice. When the need for leave is unforeseeable, verbal notice to the employer will be sufficient.

Extension of Original Leave Request – In the event the employee needs to extend the duration of the leave beyond the time frame originally approved, the employee must submit a new Family and Medical Leave Request Form seeking approval for the extension.

Status Reports – The employee must periodically update the appropriate Department Head as to the employee's status and intent to return to work.

Medical Certification – The employee must produce a medical certification issued by a health care provider which supports the need for a leave under this policy. When required, the employee must provide a copy before the leave begins, or if the leave was unforeseeable, no later than fifteen calendar days from the date the certification was requested. Failure to submit medical certification may jeopardize the employee's eligibility for an unpaid leave of absence and/or the ability to return to work. Medical certification forms are available from the Town Supervisor's Office. The medical certification must include:

- The date the medical condition began;
- The probable duration of the medical condition;
- Pertinent medical facts; and,
- An assertion that the employee is unable to perform the employee's essential job functions or that the employee is needed to care for a family member for a specified period of time.

The Town of Horseheads reserves the right to request a second opinion by another health care provider. The Town will pay for the second opinion. In the event a conflict occurs between the first and second opinion, the Town may, again at its own expense, obtain a third opinion from a health care provider approved jointly by the Town and the employee. This third opinion will be final and binding.

Leave for the Birth, Adoption or Foster Care Placement of a Child – Leave for the birth of a child or the placement of a child for adoption or foster care must conclude within twelve months from the date of the birth or placement.

Certification for Adoption/Foster Care – An employee must produce proper certification from the appropriate agency for an unpaid leave for the adoption or foster care of a child.

Employment Restrictions During Leave of Absence – While on an approved leave, the employee may not be employed by another employer during the same hours that the employee was normally scheduled to work for the Town of Horseheads.

Benefits During a Leave of Absence – For the purpose of this policy, the following will apply:

- **Use of Accrued Paid Leave Credits** – An employee taking leave for the **birth, adoption or foster placement of a child, to care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition or military caregiver leave** must first use all available vacation leave credits during the authorized FMLA leave. Use of these leave credits does not extend the maximum allowable period specified by FMLA regulations.

For leaves taken due to the **employee's own serious health condition**, the employee must first use all vacation and sick leave credits, which will be included in the maximum twelve-workweek period. However, in the event that the paid leave credits are greater than the maximum twelve-workweek period, an employee may use paid leave credits to **extend** the leave of absence beyond the twelve-workweek period, **up to a maximum of one year**. If, after the completion of the one-year leave of absence, the employee is medically unable to return to work (as determined by a health care provider) and the employee has leave credits remaining, the Town Board may authorize an extension of the employee's leave of absence until such benefits are exhausted. However, job reinstatement beyond the one-year leave of absence is not automatic and will be dependent upon job availability, in accordance with Civil Service Law Sections 71, 72 and 73, as applicable, and the *Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira*.

- **Accrual of Paid Leave Credits** – An employee will continue to accrue vacation and sick leave and receive holiday pay during the portion of the leave that is paid. **Paid leave is defined as leave during which the employee continues to use accumulated paid vacation and sick leave.** After all such paid leave is exhausted, the remaining leave of absence is unpaid. An employee will not earn paid vacation or sick leave or receive holiday pay for any holidays that may occur during an unpaid leave of absence.

- **Medical Insurance** – During the period of authorized FMLA designated leave, an employee's eligibility status for medical insurance coverage will not change. (In the event the employee has accumulated paid leave credits that extend beyond the twelve workweek period, the employee should refer to Sections 812 – Short Term Disability and 813 – Workers Compensation regarding additional medical insurance coverage provisions.) All employee contributions (if any) must be paid on a timely basis in order to maintain the continuous coverage of benefits. Contributions will be at the same level as if the employee was working. Coverage will cease if payments are not made within a thirty-calendar day grace period of the due date. Premium payments or policy coverage are subject to change. In the event the employee fails to return to work after the designated period of FMLA leave has been exhausted, the employee may continue coverage with responsibility for payment of the full premium amount under COBRA (see Section 810) provisions. In addition, the Town may recover the premium that it paid for maintaining the coverage during any period of the unpaid leave except for the following circumstances:
 - * The continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition of the employee or the employee's eligible family member with proper medical certification; or,

 - * Circumstances beyond the employee's control, such as: parent chooses to stay home with a newborn child who has a serious health condition; employee's spouse is unexpectedly transferred to a job location more than 75 miles from the employee's work-site; the employee is laid off while on leave.

Workers' Compensation and Short-Term Disability Benefits – Leaves taken under the Workers' Compensation Law or the Town's Short-Term Disability Policy may invoke the FMLA if the employee meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the eligibility section and the

Town designates such leave as FMLA leave and properly notifies the employee of such designation. In accordance with the FMLA, if an employee has elected to receive workers' compensation benefits or short-term disability benefits, the Town cannot require the employee to substitute paid leave credits during this period of leave, however, the employee may choose to do so to supplement those benefits to equal but not exceed their normal rate of pay. If the workers' compensation leave or short-term disability leave has been properly designated as FMLA leave by the Town, it can be counted against the employee's FMLA leave.

In addition to leave provided under the Family and Medical Leave Act, employees may be eligible for a leave of absence pursuant to Civil Service Law Section 71. Section 71 provides that **covered** employees shall be entitled to a leave of absence for at least one cumulative year (unless found to be permanently disabled) when disabled due to an occupational injury or disease as defined in the Workers' Compensation Law. This leave runs concurrently with the designated Family and Medical Leave. Employees should consult with their Department Head for further details regarding this provision.

Return to Work – The following conditions for returning to work will apply:

- **Job Restoration** – At the conclusion of the leave of absence, (except for leaves beyond a one-year period) the employee, provided that the employee returns to work immediately following such leave, will be restored to the position the employee held when the leave began, or an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay and working conditions. For authorized leave of absences beyond the one-year period, job restoration will be dependent upon job availability, in accordance with Civil Service Law Sections 71, 72 and 73, as applicable, and the *Rules for the Classified Civil Service of Chemung County and City of Elmira*.
- **Medical Statement** – Before resuming employment, an employee must submit a statement from the employee's health care provider indicating that the employee is able to return to work either with or without restrictions. Failure to return to work when required may be considered a voluntary termination.
- **Early Return** – An employee who intends to return to work earlier than anticipated must notify the Department Head at least two business days prior to the date the employee is able to return. The Department Head shall in turn notify the Town Supervisor.

700 COMPENSATION

701 *Wage and Salary*

Rate of Pay – An employee’s rate of pay will be established by the Town Board.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Wage and Salary provisions set forth above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

702 *Overtime / Compensatory Time*

Authorization – A Department Head may require an employee to work additional hours beyond the employee’s normal workday and workweek. An employee must receive prior approval from the employee’s Department Head or supervisor before working additional hours.

FLSA Exempt Employees – In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, FLSA exempt employees will not be paid for overtime nor receive “compensatory time” for any hours worked in excess of the employee’s normal workday or workweek.

FLSA Non-Exempt Employees – In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, an FLSA non-exempt employee will be paid one and one-half times the employee’s regular hourly rate of pay for all authorized time worked over forty hours in a given workweek.

Compensatory Time – If it is determined that a non-exempt employee’s hours for a given workweek will exceed forty hours, then Department Heads may schedule compensatory time to be utilized within the same pay period. This compensatory time will be at straight time rates (one hour of compensatory time for each anticipated hour over forty for the given workweek).

In the event that a Department Head cannot grant compensatory time within the same pay period, with pre-authorization from the Department Head, a non-exempt employee will have the option of receiving “compensatory overtime” in lieu of paid overtime. When a non-exempt employee chooses to receive compensatory overtime, the employee will be credited with the equivalent of one and one-half hours for all authorized time worked over forty hours in a given workweek. An employee may accumulate up to 20 hours in compensatory time credits. In the event an employee accrues more than 20 hours in compensatory time credits, the employee must either use the excess compensatory leave credits within the pay-period in which it is earned or take paid overtime. An employee must use all compensatory leave credits within the calendar year in which they are earned or receive cash payment at the end of the calendar year at the employee’s then current rate of pay.

Credit for Paid Leave – Vacation leave and holidays will be included as time worked for the purpose of computing overtime. Sick leave, personal leave, bereavement leave, jury duty leave, and all military leave will not be included as time worked for the purpose of computing overtime.

Termination from Employment – An employee whose employment with the Town is terminated will receive cash payment for unused compensatory credits to which the employee is properly entitled at the employee's then current rate of pay.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit shall receive overtime compensation in accordance with the provisions of the FLSA and is also subject to the overtime provision of the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

703 *Out-of-Title Pay*

Authorization – A Department Head may require an employee to work out-of-title. An employee must receive prior approval from the employee's Department Head or supervisor before working in a higher graded title.

Compensation – In the event an employee is assigned to work in a higher graded title for at least a full eight-hour shift (in the event of a compressed workweek a full ten-hour shift), the employee will receive the rate of pay at the step in that pay grade just above the employee's current rate of pay.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Out-of-Title Pay provisions set forth above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

704 *Pay Period and Check Distribution*

Payroll Period – Normally, employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis. An employee's paycheck will be based on the amount earned during the preceding payroll period. Certain employees may be paid on a different schedule as established by the Town Board.

Payday – Under normal circumstances, paychecks will be issued on a Thursday. In the event the payday is a designated holiday, paychecks will be distributed on the previous workday.

Distribution – The Bookkeeper will deliver paychecks to the Department Heads for further distribution to employees.

Direct Deposit – The Town provides a direct deposit option for employees. If elected, the paycheck will be deposited directly into the employee's account at the designated financial institution. The employee must submit a signed, written authorization for direct deposit to the Bookkeeper.

Authorized Check Release – The Department Head will not release a paycheck to anyone other than the employee unless the employee has submitted a signed, written authorization with the Bookkeeper.

705 Payroll Deductions

Statutory Deductions – The required portion of an employee's pay for federal and state taxes, and any other deduction required by law, will be deducted from the employee's paycheck. Such deductions will be noted on the paycheck.

Voluntary Deductions – Payroll deductions provided through the Town's payroll system will be made from an employee's paycheck when authorized by the employee. Such deductions will be noted on the paycheck.

706 Deferred Compensation Plan

Summary – The Town of Horseheads has established a Deferred Compensation Plan whereby a portion of an employee's salary may be voluntarily withheld and invested. The money saved is paid out to the employee at a later date, generally during retirement years. Neither the deferred amount nor earnings on investments are subject to current Federal and State Income Taxes. Taxes become payable when the deferred income plus earnings are distributed to the employee, presumably at retirement when the tax bracket may be lower. A description of the plan may be obtained from the Deputy Town Clerk (Bookkeeper).

800 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

801 *Holidays*

Designated Holidays – The Town of Horseheads will observe the following holidays:

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

Eligibility – A full-time employee is eligible for holiday pay at the employee's regular rate of pay. A part-time, temporary, or seasonal employee is not eligible for holiday pay.

Holiday Observance – In the event a designated holiday occurs on a Saturday, the holiday will be observed on the preceding Friday. In the event a designated holiday occurs on a Sunday, the holiday will be observed on the following Monday.

Holiday Pay Requirement – Unless otherwise authorized, an FLSA non-exempt employee must work the employee's scheduled workday before and the employee's scheduled workday after a designated holiday in order to receive holiday pay.

Floating Holiday – The Employer and Employee may reschedule Columbus Day for the purpose of completing a four (4) day weekend when Independence Day, Christmas Day or New Year's Day falls on either a Tuesday or Thursday.

Assigned to Work on a Holiday – A full-time FLSA non-exempt employee who is required to work on a designated holiday will receive holiday pay plus wages at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay. A part-time, temporary, or seasonal employee who works on a designated holiday will be paid at the employee's regular rate of pay.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Holidays provisions set forth above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

802 **Vacation Leave**

Eligibility – A full-time employee is eligible for paid vacation leave in accordance with this policy. A part-time, temporary, or seasonal employee is not eligible for paid vacation leave but may be allowed to take time-off without pay provided the employee has prior approval from the Department Head.

Allowance – A full-time employee will be credited with paid vacation leave in accordance with the vacation schedule below. Vacation leave is based on the average number of hours an employee is normally scheduled to work each week. An employee may take vacation leave only after it has been credited. The employee will be credited on their anniversary date for the vacation leave earned during the previous year according to the following schedule:

Completed, Continuous Years of Service:	Vacation Leave
1 Year	5 Days
2 Years	10 Days
5 Years	15 Days
10 Years	20 Days

Seniority Entitlement – Each employee, upon reaching the 15th, 20th, and 25th anniversary of their employment, shall be entitled to an additional one (1) week of vacation. This additional one (1) week vacation must be used during the employee's anniversary year at any time subject to Scheduling. This vacation leave may not be accumulated or accrued if not used during the anniversary year.

Continuous Service – Continuous Service shall mean uninterrupted service. An authorized leave of absence without pay, or a resignation followed by reinstatement within one year following such resignation, shall not constitute an interruption of continuous service. Vacation is earned only for monthly pay periods during which an employee is in full pay status for at least fifteen working days during such monthly pay period.

Scheduling – An employee must receive prior approval from the employee's Department Head to take vacation leave. Vacation leave credits may not be used in increments of less than one-half day. The Department Head will have total discretion in the approval of vacation leave.

Holiday During Scheduled Vacation – In the event a designated holiday occurs on an employee's normal workday and the employee is on paid vacation, the employee will receive holiday pay for the day and the employee's vacation leave credits will not be charged for that day.

Separation of Employment – An employee who resigns, retires or is laid off will receive cash payment for unused vacation leave to which the employee is properly entitled at the employee's then current rate of pay. To be eligible to receive this payment, an employee who is to resign or retire must give written notice at least two weeks in advance of the last day of employment. In the event an employee leaves employment due to disciplinary action, the employee will not receive a settlement for unused vacation leave. In cases of death of an employee, the Town will pay an employee's designated beneficiary for any unused vacation leave.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Vacation Leave provisions set forth immediately above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

803 Sick Leave

Eligibility – A full-time employee is eligible for paid sick leave in accordance with this policy. A part-time, temporary, or seasonal employee is not eligible for paid sick leave.

Allowance – A full-time employee will be credited with one day of paid sick leave each month. An employee may take sick leave only after it has been credited. The employee will be credited on the first day of the month after the sick leave has been earned.

Accrual During Leaves of Absence – An employee will be credited with sick leave credits while on a paid leave of absence, but not while on an unpaid leave of absence.

Proper Use of Sick Leave – Sick leave is provided to protect an employee against financial hardship during an illness or injury. An employee may use sick leave credits for personal illness or injury that inhibits the employee's work. Sick leave credits may not be used in increments of less than one hour.

Accumulation – Unused sick leave credits will accumulate without maximum.

Medical Verification – The Town may require medical verification of an employee's absence if the Town perceives the employee is abusing sick leave, or has used an excess amount of sick leave, or when an employee is absent for more than twenty-one consecutive hours due to an illness or injury. If an employee is on an authorized leave of absence, the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Policy in this Employee Handbook shall apply.

Abuse of Sick Leave – An employee who, after investigation, is found to have abused the use of sick leave or falsifies supporting documentation, will be subject to disciplinary action.

Separation of Employment – An employee whose employment with the Town is terminated for any reason, including retirement, will not receive cash payment for unused sick leave.

Sick Leave Credits Upon Retirement – The Town Board has elected to provide §41(j) of the NYS Retirement and Social Security Law which adds service credit for up to one hundred sixty-five (165) days of accumulated sick leave at the time of retirement. To be eligible, an employee must retire directly from covered employment or within one year of leaving covered employment. The additional service credit is determined by dividing the total unused, unpaid sick leave days (not to exceed 165 days) by 260. For example: 130 unpaid sick leave days ÷ 260 = .50 or 6 months additional service credit.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Sick Leave provisions set forth immediately above, and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

804 **Personal Leave**

Eligibility – A full-time employee is eligible for paid personal leave in accordance with this policy. A part-time, temporary, or seasonal employee is not eligible for paid personal leave.

New Employee – A new employee will be credited with two days of paid personal leave after the completion of one year of continuous service. Thereafter, the employee will be credited with two days of paid personal leave on each subsequent January 1.

Allowance – A full-time employee will be credited with two days of paid personal leave on an annual basis. The employee will be credited on January 1 of each year. An employee may take personal leave only after it has been credited.

Proper Use of Personal Leave – An employee may use personal leave credits to conduct personal business which cannot be conducted outside of normal working hours, non-emergency medical and dental appointments, and for personal emergencies. In no event may personal leave credits be used on the scheduled workday immediately prior to or following a holiday or vacation; in lieu of sick leave or other leaves of absences, except to extend bereavement leave. Personal leave credits may not be used in increments of less than one hour.

Scheduling – An employee must receive prior approval from the employee's Department Head to take personal leave. The Department Head will have total discretion in the approval of personal leave.

Accumulation – An employee may not accumulate personal leave credits. Any personal leave credits remaining unused at close of business on the last day of the calendar year will be added to the employee's unused sick leave credits.

Separation of Employment – An employee whose employment with the Town is terminated for any reason, including retirement, will not receive cash payment for unused personal leave.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Personal Leave provisions set forth immediately above, and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

805 **Disclosure of Insurance Benefits**

Summary – The following is a brief description of the insurance benefits currently offered by the Town to eligible employees. Eligibility for benefits is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employment classification and length of service. The description of the benefits provided is only an overview. The plan documents or specific government regulation provide a full description of the specific benefit.

Plan Administrator – The Bookkeeper serves as the Administrator of the Town's benefits plans. The Administrator is responsible for all communications and disclosures concerning Town benefits and is available to answer questions concerning the benefit plans. A description of each of the plans may be obtained from the Bookkeeper.

Plan Documents – Benefits are administered according to applicable government regulation, benefit plan documents, insurance carrier master policy, or Town policy. Should there be a discrepancy between the information presented in this Employee Handbook and the benefit plan document, the Town Board has the discretionary authority to determine eligibility for benefits and to interpret the plan's terms. The Town Board is responsible for compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. The Town Board may, at its discretion, change carriers and/or offer alternative insurance plans for non-union employees. Changes in carriers and/or plans for union employees shall be in accordance with collective bargaining negotiations and/or procedures.

Changes in Benefits – Any benefit offered by the Town to non-union employees or Elected Officials is subject to change or discontinuance by resolution of the Town Board. Changes in benefits for union employees shall be in accordance with collective bargaining negotiations and/or procedures.

Waiver of Benefits – An employee who is eligible to participate in any of the available insurance plans but who elects not to participate must sign an appropriate waiver of enrollment form.

Enrollment Information – The Bookkeeper will provide the employee with the enrollment forms and assist with the administrative and operational aspects of the various insurance plans. Enrollment in a benefit plan is not automatic. Employees must complete the appropriate enrollment forms and applicable payroll deduction authorizations in order to receive benefits.

Changes in Status – Employees whose status changes from full-time to part-time are notified of the changes to their Town benefits. This notification contains all legally mandated information regarding applicable benefits, including COBRA health insurance continuation. An employee must immediately notify the Bookkeeper in the event that the employee has a change in marital or family status that may affect coverage, such as marriage, divorce, legal separation, death of a spouse or dependent, acquiring or losing a dependent, changes in address.

Beneficiary – Under some of the Town's benefit plans, each employee must designate a beneficiary for the employee's death benefits. This designation must be made in writing and on the form provided by the plan Administrator.

806 **Medical Insurance**

[Revised by Town Board Resolution #146 of 2016 (December 28, 2016)]

Eligibility – The Town currently makes available medical insurance coverage to each full-time or part-time employee, and to each eligible Town Supervisor or Town Board Member or Town Attorney, whose service with the Town began prior to January 1, 2013, and to their eligible family members. A temporary or seasonal employee or Town Justice is not eligible for medical insurance coverage. A Town Supervisor or Town Board Member or Town Attorney, whose service with the Town began after January 1, 2013 is not eligible for medical insurance coverage.

When Coverage Begins – Coverage will begin on the employee's first day of employment, provided all eligibility requirements of the insurance plan are met.

When Coverage Ends – Coverage ends on the last day of the month in which the employee separates from employment. Coverage may continue for such eligible employees in accordance with COBRA regulations. Coverage will continue for eligible retirees in accordance with Town policy and plan documents.

Premium Payment – The Town, as of January 1, 2017, shall pay a flat amount of each premium for individual, two-person, or family medical insurance coverage, as the case may be, for each eligible Elected Official, Town Attorney, or full-time employee, which amount shall be established by resolution of the Town Board from time to time. This flat premium payment amount shall be stated as a specific dollar amount/ per month. Factors such as, but not limited to, date of hire, full or part-time status, and type of coverage (individual, two-person, family) may be considered when determining the required contribution. A part-time employee who chooses either individual or family medical insurance coverage must pay the full cost of the premium, which must be done through payroll deduction.

Changes in Premium Contributions – The amount of the insurance premium an employee shall be required to contribute is subject to change by resolution of the Town Board.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Medical Insurance provisions set forth immediately above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

807 **Medical Insurance Buy-out**

[Revised by Town Board Resolution #146 of 2016 (December 28, 2016)]

Eligibility – Until December 31, 2018*, a full-time employee who is eligible for medical insurance coverage made available through the Town may receive a cash buy-out as shown herein, in lieu of receiving medical insurance benefits. To be eligible for the medical insurance buy-out, the employee must provide documentation of comparable medical insurance coverage in a manner and form to be determined by the Town and sign an appropriate waiver of medical insurance coverage and waiver of liability to the Town. The medical insurance buyout is not applicable in a situation in which two employees are married or in a family relationship that makes both eligible for coverage under the same medical insurance plan.

**This buy-out provision will no longer be effective after this date*

Amount of Buy-out – An employee, who is eligible for the medical insurance buy-out, will receive a sum for the fiscal years 2017 & 2018: individual the sum of \$1,500.00, family or two person coverage the sum of \$3,000.00, Elected Official the sum of \$1,750.00.

Method and Form of Payment – Payment of the buy-out will be made in two payments, on or before June 30 and on or before December 31 of each year. This payment is in addition to the compensation and/or salary to which the employee is otherwise entitled, and will be treated as part of the employee's gross income and will be subject to the appropriate withholding for income and payroll tax purposes. Payments made to an employee under the provisions of this buy-out option are excluded from NYS Retirement System earnings calculations.

Reinstatement – In the event the employee loses coverage under the alternate insurance plan, the employee may resume coverage under a medical insurance plan made available through the Town. Coverage will become effective in accordance with the provisions specified in the plan documents, provided that the employee meets all eligibility requirements of the insurance plan. Upon reinstatement, the employee must refund any portion of the payment received for the period in which the Town will subsequently provide coverage for said employee.

Separation from Employment – In the event the employee leaves employment with the Town, a prorated calculation will be made to determine the amount of the medical insurance buy-out payment which must be repaid to the Town. The Town will withhold the amount of repayment due from the employee's last paycheck. The employee will be responsible for repaying the Town any amount due that exceeds the total of that last paycheck.

Changes – This policy may be changed or eliminated at any time by resolution of the Town Board.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Medical Insurance Buy-out provisions set forth immediately above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

808 **Medical Insurance for Retirees**

[Revised by Town Board Resolution #146 of 2016 (December 28, 2016)]

Coverage – The Town currently makes available medical insurance coverage for each eligible full-time employee, and to each eligible Town Supervisor, Town Board Member or Town Attorney whose service with the Town began prior to January 1, 2013, upon retirement from Town service. Town Justices are not eligible for insurance coverage hereunder.

Coverage is also available for eligible dependents of the above (includes spouse) if they were either:

- (a) covered under the Town's medical insurance plan for a period of three (3) consecutive years immediately prior to the date of the employee's or Elected Official's retirement; **or**
- (b) eligible to have been covered under the Town's medical insurance plan for a period of three (3) consecutive years immediately prior to the date of the employee's or Elected Official's retirement.

In the event the retiree predeceases the dependents, the dependents may continue medical insurance coverage under the same premium payment terms that applied before the retiree's death. Coverage of a dependent at the time of divorce or legal separation is in accordance with plan documents and COBRA requirements.

If a retiree becomes eligible for coverage under a medical insurance plan of a spouse, significant other or any person or party, or undertakes further employment which makes available medical insurance benefits, then regardless of cost of such medical insurance benefits the retiree shall not be allowed to continue coverage under the Town's medical insurance plan.

Eligibility

Employees/Elected Officials Hired/Elected prior to January 1, 2013 – To be eligible for coverage, the retiree must be either:

- (a) age sixty-two or older with at least ten years of continuous service with the Town; **or**
 - (b) age fifty-five or older with at least twenty years of continuous service with the Town
- In addition, the employee must have retired directly from service with the Town and applied for and been granted a bona-fide retirement benefit from the New York State Employees' Retirement System.

Employees Hired on or after January 1, 2013 – To be eligible for coverage, the retiree must be either age fifty-five or older with at least thirty-five (35) years of continuous service with the Town. In addition, the employee must have retired directly from service with the Town and applied for and been granted a bona-fide retirement benefit from the New York State Employees' Retirement System.

Premium Payment

Employees/Elected Officials Hired/Elected prior to January 1, 2013 –

- (a) For eligible individuals who were retired as of December 31, 1993, the Town will pay the full premium cost for individual or family medical insurance coverage, as the case may be.
- (b) For eligible individuals who retire after December 31, 1993, as of January 1, 2017, the Town shall pay a flat amount of each premium for individual, two-person or family medical insurance coverage, as the case may be for each eligible retiree, which amount shall be established by resolution.

Employees Hired on or after January 1, 2013 – An individual who opts for continued medical insurance coverage upon retirement shall pay 50% of the premium cost for individual coverage, and 100% of the premium cost for family coverage.

Retiree contributions toward the premium cost are payable on a monthly or on an annual basis at the written election of the retiree. Failure to make required payments no later than the specified due date will result in the irrevocable cancellation of coverage under the Town's medical insurance plan.

Plan – The Town Board may, at its discretion, change the medical insurance plan at any time, including, but not limited to, type of coverage, retiree contributions, and type of carrier. Coverage under a medical insurance plan made available through the Town will continue until the retiree or eligible spouse, as the case may be, meets the eligibility criteria for Medicare coverage, at which time primary coverage will be provided by Medicare. At that time, the retiree and eligible spouse may be required to change medical insurance plans in order to maintain supplemental coverage.

Changes in Premium Contributions – The amount of the insurance premium a retiree or retiree's spouse is required to contribute is subject to change by resolution of the Town Board. The Town Board will provide a two-month written notice of such change.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Medical Insurance for Retirees provisions set forth immediately above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

809 Dental Plan

Eligibility – The Town currently offers a dental plan to each full-time employee and their eligible family members. A part-time, temporary, seasonal employee or retiree is not eligible for this plan.

When Coverage Begins – Coverage will begin on the first day of the month following the completion of one month of employment, provided the employee meets all eligibility requirements of the dental plan.

Premium Payment for Employees Hired Before January 1, 2013 – The Town currently pays 90% of the premium for dental insurance coverage for each full time-time employee and elected official.

Premium Payment for Employees Hired On or After January 1, 2013 – The amount of the insurance premium an employee is required to contribute is established by resolution of the Town Board. This may be stated as a specific dollar amount or as a percentage of the premium cost. Factors such as (but not limited to) date of hire and type of coverage (individual, family) are considered when determining the required contribution. Full details are available from the Town Supervisor’s Office.

Changes in Premium Contributions – The amount of the insurance premium an employee or Elected Official is required to contribute is subject to change by resolution of the Town Board. The Town Board will provide a two-month written notice of such change.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Dental Plan provisions set forth immediately above and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

810 Continuation of Health Insurance Benefits (COBRA/NYS Continuation Coverage)

Summary – The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) offers “qualified beneficiaries” the right to continue existing health insurance coverage, completely at their own expense, under certain qualifying conditions. **All required premiums and administrative fees must be paid in a timely manner in order for coverage to continue.**

NYS Continuation Coverage – For purposes of this policy, references to COBRA will be considered to incorporate the requirements for “Continuation Coverage” set forth in NYS Insurance Law, which provides enhancements over and above the provisions of COBRA.

Eligibility – An individual is a “qualified beneficiary” if the individual is covered under a group health plan on the day before a qualifying event as either a covered employee or Elected Official, the spouse of a covered employee or Elected Official, or a dependent child of a covered employee or Elected Official. A child who is either born to or who is placed for adoption with the covered employee or Elected Official during a period of COBRA coverage is also a “qualified beneficiary” entitled to COBRA coverage.

Period of Coverage – COBRA coverage is in effect for a period of **up to thirty-six months**, following any qualifying event. The COBRA requirements do not put any limit on the number of times a qualified beneficiary may be entitled to COBRA continuation coverage.

Qualifying Events – If a qualified beneficiary loses coverage under a group health plan as a result of a “qualifying event,” the qualified beneficiary is entitled by COBRA to the continuation of group health insurance coverage at the qualified beneficiary’s own expense. Any of the following circumstances are considered to be qualifying events:

- Termination of the covered employee’s (or Elected Official’s) employment for any reason except gross misconduct, or the covered employee’s loss of eligibility to participate due to reduced work hours.
- When a covered employee is on a leave of absence due to military service obligations.
- Death of a covered employee or Elected Official.
- Divorce or legal separation from a covered employee or Elected Official.
- A covered dependent ceases to be a "dependent child" under the health insurance plan.
- A covered dependent child's loss of eligibility to participate in the insurance plan due to the covered employee or Elected Official becoming covered by Medicare as a result of total disability or choosing Medicare in place of the insurance plan at age sixty-five.

Change in Beneficiary Status – An employee or elected official must notify the Town within sixty calendar days of a legal separation or divorce or when a dependent is no longer eligible for insurance due to the age limitations or educational status requirements established by the insurance plan. The Town will not be responsible for any loss of coverage resulting from failure by the employee or elected official to give notification of such an event.

Enrollment Information – The Deputy Town Clerk (Bookkeeper) will provide the employee or elected official with the enrollment forms and assist with the administrative and operational aspects of COBRA. **Enrollment is not automatic. The employee or elected official must complete the necessary enrollment forms and return all COBRA forms to the Bookkeeper within the time indicated.** If the required forms or premium payments are not received at the time specified, medical insurance coverage will cease.

811 Section 125 Plan

Summary – The Town of Horseheads offers eligible employees the opportunity to participate in a Town-sponsored Section 125 plan. The benefit of participating in the Section 125 plan is that an employee's contributions to the plan are deducted from the employee's paycheck before federal, state, and social security taxes are calculated. This reduces the employee's taxable income and has a positive impact on net take-home pay. The options offered under this plan are shown below.

Eligibility – A full-time employee or Elected Official is eligible to participate in this plan. A part-time, temporary or seasonal employee may not participate in this plan.

Pre-Tax Insurance Premiums – An employee may elect to pay the employee portion of the medical or dental insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars.

Flexible Spending Accounts – An employee may elect to have a pre-determined amount deducted from the employee's paycheck on a pre-tax basis each payroll period to be placed in a medical and/or dependent care flexible spending account (FSA). Money set aside in an employee's medical savings account may be used to cover certain health, dental, and vision care expenses that are not reimbursable through the employee's insurance plan(s). Money set aside in an employee's dependent care savings account may be used to cover eligible day care and nursery school expenses for covered dependents. To receive reimbursement from an employee's FSA account, a claim for reimbursement and proof that the expense was incurred must be submitted to the Town Supervisor's Office. Further details regarding this plan may be obtained from the Town Supervisor's Office.

812 Short-Term Disability Benefits

Eligibility – A full-time employee is provided with short-term disability coverage in accordance with this policy. A part-time, temporary, or seasonal employee is not eligible for paid short-term disability coverage. This benefit is to supplement loss of time from work due to a qualified non-job related illness or injury.

When Coverage Begins – Coverage will begin on the employee's first day of employment, provided the employee meets all eligibility requirements.

Disability Payments – Disability payments will be in accordance with the terms of the policy. The duration of disability benefits is dependent upon a physician's certification and consistent with the terms of the policy. There may be a waiting period before an employee can become eligible for disability payments. Full details regarding the policy currently in effect are available from the Bookkeeper.

Premium Payment – The Town will pay the full premium for disability coverage for each eligible employee.

Reporting of Illness or Injury – The employee must submit a written report of the illness or injury on the proper application form to the employee's Department Head and the Town Supervisor within twenty-four hours of the occurrence. The Bookkeeper will provide the employee with the necessary forms. Proper medical certification will be required and must be submitted with the application form.

Use of Sick Leave Credits – An employee may draw from the employee’s sick leave credits in conjunction with disability payments to equal, but not exceed, the employee’s regular daily rate of pay.

Medical Insurance Coverage – The Town will continue medical insurance coverage for the employee in accordance with the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Policy in this Employee Handbook.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Short-Term Disability Benefits provision set forth immediately above, and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

813 Workers' Compensation Benefits

Coverage – The Town will make available Workers’ Compensation benefits, including payment of medical costs and replacement of lost wages up to the regulated maximum, to each eligible employee who suffers an accidental injury arising out of and in the course of employment, as determined by the Workers’ Compensation Board. Eligibility for coverage is determined by applicable Workers’ Compensation regulations.

When Coverage Begins – Coverage will begin on the employee’s first day of employment, provided the employee meets all eligibility requirements.

Premium Payment – The Town will pay the full premium for Workers’ Compensation coverage for each eligible employee.

Reporting of Injury – The employee must report any accidental injury arising out of and in the course of employment to the Department Head immediately after the occurrence of the injury. The Department Head will notify the Town Supervisor and complete and submit the required C-2 form. The employee must also complete an “Employee Claim Form C-3” and submit it directly to the Workers’ Compensation Board.

Use of Sick Leave Credits – An employee may draw from the employee’s sick leave credits in conjunction with Workers’ Compensation payments to equal, but not exceed, the employee’s regular daily rate of pay.

Medical Insurance Coverage – The Town will continue medical insurance coverage for the employee in accordance with the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Policy in this Employee Handbook.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit is not covered by the Use of Sick Leave Credits provision set forth immediately above, and should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

814 Unemployment Benefits

Coverage – The Town will make available unemployment benefits to each employee ruled eligible for benefits under New York State labor law.

815 Social Security

Summary – Social Security benefits are available for retirement, survivor's benefits, and medical costs under qualifying conditions, as determined by the Federal Social Security Administration Office. Employee contributions to Social Security (FICA) are matched by the Town.

816 The New York State Employees' Retirement System

Summary – The Town will make available the New York State Employees' Retirement System pension plan to each eligible employee. An employee is eligible for service retirement benefits after completion of the required minimum period of creditable public sector service (either five or ten years depending on tier).

Summary – The Town will make available the New York State Employees' Retirement System pension plan to each eligible employee and Elected Official. An employee or Elected Official is eligible for service retirement benefits after completion of the required minimum period of creditable public sector service (either five or ten years depending on tier.)

Mandatory Membership – A full-time employee who began employment with the State of New York or with a participating employer, on or after July 27, 1976, must join the Retirement System. An employee who is appointed to a permanent, full-time position on a probationary basis must join the Retirement System on the effective date of the probationary appointment. Employment is considered full-time unless:

- The employee works less than thirty hours per week, or less than the standard number of hours for full-time employment as established by the employer for this position; or
- The annual compensation for the position is less than the State's minimum wage multiplied by 2,000 hours; or
- Duration of employment is for less than one year or employment is on a less than a 12 month per year basis; or
- The position is either provisional or temporary under Civil Service Law.

Optional Membership – An employee or Elected Official who is not mandated to join may join the Retirement System. Such employee or Elected Official will be informed, in writing, that the employee or Elected Official may join the Retirement System and will acknowledge receipt of such notice by signing a copy thereof and returning it to the Bookkeeper. If the employee or Elected Official elects to join the Retirement System, the employee or Elected Official must complete the application form and return it to the Bookkeeper.

Waiver of Enrollment – An employee who is not mandated to join the Retirement System, and who chooses not to join, must complete a waiver of enrollment form.

900 COMPLIANCE POLICIES

901 *Equal Employment Opportunity*

Policy Statement – The Town of Horseheads is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Town does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, disability, marital status, pregnancy, application to or present membership in the uniformed services, veteran status, arrest or conviction record, genetic information, predisposition or carrier status, sexual orientation, domestic violence victim status, or any other protected class or status. Likewise, the Town prohibits employees, Elected Officials, vendors, suppliers, visitors, customers, and any other non-employee from discriminating against Town employees based on these protected groups. Discrimination based on any of the above is strictly prohibited. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, compensation, promotion, transfer, training, leave of absence, and termination.

Notification of Policy Violations – An employee should immediately report any perceived violation of this policy to the employee's Department Head. In the event the employee is unable to discuss this matter with the Department Head, the complaint should be reported in writing to the Town Supervisor or any member of the Town Board. All complaints of discrimination will be investigated discreetly and promptly. This procedure is not intended to restrict an individual's rights to make a complaint to a federal or state agency. An employee who reports discrimination will not suffer adverse employment consequences as a result of making the complaint.

Prohibition Against Retaliation – Retaliation against any employee who brings a written or verbal complaint of discrimination or who assists or participates in the investigation of such a complaint is strictly prohibited. The Town will not tolerate or permit adverse treatment of employees because they report discrimination or provide information related to such complaints, or who otherwise oppose an unlawful employment practice. Any employee who participates in the procedure may do so without fear of retaliation. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Application of Policy – This policy is for Town use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This policy shall not be construed as a creation of higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidential sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this policy will only form the basis for Town administrative action. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.

902 ***The Americans with Disabilities Act***

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town of Horseheads to comply fully with the provisions and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and ensure equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices, such as recruitment, hiring, promotion, demotion, layoff and return from layoff, compensation, job assignments, job classifications, paid or unpaid leave, fringe benefits, training, employer-sponsored activities, including recreational or social programs, will be conducted so as not to discriminate unlawfully against persons with disabilities. This also extends to prohibit unlawful discrimination based on a person's relationship or association with a disabled individual. Qualified individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal pay and other forms of compensation (or changes in compensation) along with work assignments, classifications, seniority, leave, and all other forms of employment compensation or advantage.

Reasonable Accommodation – Reasonable accommodation is available to all qualified employees and applicants with disabilities, unless it imposes an undue hardship on the Town and/or operations of a program. The Town may require medical documentation or other information necessary to verify the existence of the disability and the need for accommodation. Following receipt of an accommodation request, the Town will meet with the requestor to discuss and identify the precise limitations resulting from the disability and the potential accommodation(s) that the Town might make to help overcome those limitations.

The Town will determine the feasibility of the requested accommodation considering various factors, including, but not limited to the nature and cost of the accommodations(s), and the accommodation's impact on Town operations.

Pre-Employment Inquiries – Pre-employment inquiries are made only regarding an applicant's ability to perform the duties of the position and not any disabling condition. Pre-employment physical exams will only be requested when in compliance with the law. The Town of Horseheads intends to base employment decisions on principles of equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination, as defined by law.

Notification of Policy Violations – An employee should immediately report any perceived violation of this policy to the employee's Department Head. In the event the employee is unable to discuss this matter with the Department Head, the complaint should be reported in writing to the Town Supervisor or any member of the Town Board. All complaints of possible violations will be investigated discreetly and promptly. An employee who reports a possible violation will not suffer adverse employment consequences as a result of making the complaint. This procedure is not intended to restrict an individual's rights to make a complaint to a federal or state agency.

Application of Policy – This policy is for Town use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This policy shall not be construed as a creation of higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidential sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this policy will only form the basis for Town administrative action. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.

903 Non-Discrimination and Harassment (Including Sexual Harassment) in the Workplace

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town of Horseheads to promote a productive work environment and to prohibit conduct by any employee that disrupts or interferes with another’s work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment. In keeping with this goal, the Town of Horseheads is committed to educate employees in the recognition and prevention of workplace discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, and to provide an effective means of eliminating such discrimination and harassment from the workplace. Any conduct that discriminates against, denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards a person on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, pregnancy, age, marital status, veteran status, military status, genetic predisposition, sexual orientation, domestic violence victim status, or any other protected status is strictly prohibited. In short, the Town will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, and will take all steps necessary to prevent and stop the occurrence of such harassment in the workplace. The accompanying complaint procedure is intended to provide an effective mechanism for reporting, and resolving promptly, complaints of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, without any risk of repercussion to an employee who, in good faith, files such complaint.

Applicability of Policy – This policy applies to all Elected Officials, employees, supervisors, and Department Heads, whether employed full or part-time, temporary or seasonal, whether elected or appointed and regardless of compensation level, and all personnel in a contractual relationship with the Town. Depending on the extent of the Town’s exercise of control, this policy may be applied to the conduct of non-Town employees with respect to harassment of Town employees in the workplace.

Supervisory Responsibility – Department Heads and supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. Supervisors must take immediate and appropriate corrective action when instances of discrimination or harassment come to their attention in order to assure compliance with this policy.

Prohibited Activity – No employee shall either explicitly or implicitly ridicule, mock, deride, or belittle any person. Employees shall not make offensive or derogatory comments based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or any other protected status either directly or indirectly to another person. Employees shall not produce offensive or inappropriate written materials or electronic communications (e.g. letters, e-mail or text messages, or graffiti.) These are examples of harassment that are a prohibited form of discrimination under State and Federal employment law and also considered misconduct subject to disciplinary action by the Town; it is not intended to be a comprehensive list and does not limit the Town’s ability to take disciplinary action in other appropriate instances.

Definition of Sexual Harassment – This policy places special attention on the prohibition of sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual advances that are not welcome, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term of condition of an individual's employment; OR
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions, such as promotion, transfer, or termination, affecting such individual; OR
- 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.

Sexual harassment refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally and objectively offensive, that fails to respect the rights of others, that lowers morale and that, therefore, interferes with an employee's work performance and/or effectiveness or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Exposure to such conduct that serves to alter the terms and conditions of employment is prohibited by this policy and state and federal law.

Forms of Sexual Harassment – Specific forms of behavior that the Town of Horseheads considers sexual harassment and which are prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Quid pro quo threats or promises by a supervisor (loss of job or promise of job, promotion, or other employment benefit).
- Verbal harassment of a sexual nature related to an employee's gender, including sexual innuendoes, slurs, sexual slurs, suggestive, derogatory, insulting or lewd comments or sounds, whistling, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions and/or threats.
- Sexually oriented comments about an employee's body that are unwelcome and/or unreasonably interfere with an employee's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- Any sexual advance that is unwelcome or any demand for sexual favors.
- Sexually suggestive written, recorded or electronically transmitted material, showing or displaying pornographic or sexually explicit objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, leering or obscene gestures in the workplace such that it unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- Physical contact of any kind which is not welcome, including touching, grabbing, hugging, fondling, jostling, petting, pinching, coerced sexual intercourse or sexual relations, assault or intentional brushing up against a person's body.

Reporting of Discrimination and Harassment (including Sexual Harassment) – Employees are encouraged to report incidents of harassment (including sexual harassment) to their Department Head and/or Town Supervisor as soon as possible after their occurrence. If the employee's Department Head is believed to be involved in the incident, or if the employee is not comfortable in addressing the matter with the Department Head, the report should be made directly to the Town Supervisor. If the Town Supervisor is the source of the alleged harassment, the employee should report the problem to a Town Board member. Employees who believe they have been discriminated against or harassed and would like to obtain guidance as to how to proceed in filing a complaint, should contact their immediate supervisor, their Department Head, the Town Supervisor, or any member of the Town Board. Employees who work during off-hours are encouraged to contact their supervisor, their Department Head, the Town Supervisor, or any member of the Town Board at home if these individuals do not work during the employee's shift.

Discrimination and Harassment (including Sexual Harassment) Complaint Form – To ensure that all discrimination and harassment complaints are managed appropriately, effectively and in accordance with the Town's policy, discrimination and harassment complaints, including sexual harassment complaints, will be recorded in writing by using the Town sanctioned Complaint Form. These forms can be obtained from the Town Supervisor's Office. If needed, additional guidance can be obtained from the Town Supervisor's Office.

Confidentiality – Complaints of harassment will be handled and investigated promptly and in a manner that is as impartial and confidential as possible. In no event will information concerning a complaint be released by the Town to third parties or to anyone within the Town employment who is not directly involved in the investigation or handling of the complaint unless otherwise required by law.

Investigation of Complaint – The Town Supervisor will convene with the Town Board in executive session to determine the appropriate individual(s) to conduct the investigation. The investigation will normally include conferring with the parties involved and any named or apparent witnesses. The particular facts of the allegation will be examined individually, with a review of the nature of the behavior and the context in which the incident(s) occurred. Any complaints received will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and in as impartial a manner as possible. All employees are required to cooperate in an investigation, if so directed.

Employee or Elected Official Defense – Any employee or Elected Official charged with discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, will be afforded a full and fair opportunity to offer and present information in their defense. Such information will be confidential to the extent possible.

Employee Rights – Nothing in this policy should be construed as in any way limiting employees' rights to use the grievance procedure contained in their collective bargaining agreement or to file a formal complaint with appropriate state or federal agencies responsible for administering anti-discrimination laws.

Disciplinary Action – Any employee or official who is found to have committed an act of workplace discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, as provided by Town operating procedures, including Civil Service Law Section 75, or the disciplinary procedures contained in a collective bargaining agreement. Any Elected Official who

violates this policy will be subject to remedial action as provided for and/or allowed under NYS Public Officers Law, as well as any other applicable statutes. Any vendor, supplier, visitor, customer, or other non-employee who violates this policy will be subject to remedial action, to the extent that the Town is empowered to take such action.

Prohibition Against Retaliation – Retaliation against any employee who brings a written or verbal complaint of discrimination or harassment or who assists or participates in the investigation of such a complaint is strictly prohibited. The Town will not tolerate or permit adverse treatment of employees because they report discrimination or harassment or provide information related to such complaints. Any employee who participates in the procedure may do so without fear of retaliation. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

904 ***Violence in the Workplace***

Policy Statement – The purpose of this policy is to address the issue of potential workplace violence in our Town of Horseheads, prevent workplace violence from occurring to the fullest extent possible, and set forth procedures to follow when such violence has occurred.

The Town of Horseheads prohibits workplace violence. Violence, threats of violence, intimidation, harassment, coercion, abusive, discriminating or other threatening behavior, gestures or acts towards people or property will not be tolerated. Complaints involving workplace violence will not be ignored and will be given serious attention. Individuals, who violate this policy may be removed from the Town of Horseheads property and are subject to disciplinary and/or personnel action up to and including termination, consistent with the Town of Horseheads policies, rules, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution. Complaints of sexual harassment are covered under the Town of Horseheads' policy on Non-Discrimination and Harassment (including Sexual Harassment).

The Town of Horseheads, at the request of an employee or at its own discretion, may prohibit members of the public, including family members, from seeing an employee on Town of Horseheads property unless necessary to transact Town of Horseheads related business. This policy particularly applies in cases where the employee suspects that an act of violence will result from an encounter with said individual(s).

Scope – All employees, members of the public, vendors, contractors, consultants, and others who do business with the Town of Horseheads, whether in Town of Horseheads facilities or at an off-site location where Town of Horseheads business is conducted, are covered by this policy. This policy also applies to other persons not affiliated with Town of Horseheads, such as former employees, and visitors. When employees have complaints about other employees, they should contact their supervisor.

DEFINITIONS

1. Workplace violence is any behavior, including but not limited to any act, gesture or statement interpreted by the employee as violent, threatening violence, coercing, harassing, discriminating or intimidating others, interfering with an individual's legal rights of movement or expression, or disrupting the workplace, the work environment, or the Town of Horseheads' ability to provide services to the public. It also involves the abuse or intentional non-authorized destruction of property. Workplace violence does not include the use of reasonable force in the defense of oneself or others.
2. Disruptive behavior intended to disturb, interfere with or prevent normal work activities (such as, but not limited, to yelling, using profanity, verbally abusing others, or waving arms, hands or fists).
3. Intentional physical contact for the purpose of causing harm (such as, but not limited to, slapping, stabbing, punching, striking, shoving, or other physical attack).
4. Menacing or threatening behavior (such as, but not limited to, throwing objects, pounding on a desk or door, damaging property, stalking or otherwise acting aggressively; or making oral or written statements specifically intended to frighten, coerce, or threaten) where a reasonable person would interpret such behavior as constituting evidence of intent to cause harm to individuals or property.

5. Possessing firearms, imitation firearms, knives or other dangerous weapons, instruments, or materials. No one within Town property shall have in their possession a firearm or other dangerous weapon, instrument, or material that can be used to inflict bodily harm on an individual or damage to the Town of Horseheads property without specific written authorization from the Town Supervisor, regardless of whether the individual possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or weapon.

REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

[Revised by Town Board Resolution on November 8, 2017]

1. General Reporting Responsibilities: Incidents of workplace violence, threats of workplace violence, or observations of workplace violence will not be ignored by any employee of the Town of Horseheads. Workplace violence should be promptly reported to their Department Head, the Town Supervisor, Town Clerk, any Town Board Member, or Town Attorney. Additionally, employees are encouraged to report behavior that they reasonably believe poses a potential for workplace violence. It is important that all employees of the Town of Horseheads take this responsibility seriously to effectively maintain a safe working and learning environment.

2. Imminent or Actual Violence: Any person experiencing or witnessing imminent danger of actual violence involving weapons or personal injury should immediately call 911 and notify their Department Head or the Town Clerk.

3. Acts of Violence Not Involving Weapons or Injuries to Persons: Any person who is the subject of a suspected violation of the policy involving violence without weapons or personal injury, or is a witness to such suspected violation, should report the incident to his or her immediate supervisor, or in lieu thereof, to the Town Supervisor and /or any Town Board member as appropriate.

4. Commission of a Crime: All individuals who believe a crime has been committed against them have the right, and are encouraged, to report the incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

5. False Reports: Employees of the Town of Horseheads who make false and malicious complaints of workplace violence, as opposed to complaints which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith, will be subject to disciplinary action and/or referral to civil authorities as deemed appropriate by Civil Service Law.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Town Supervisor: The Town Supervisor shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy. This responsibility includes dissemination of this policy to all Town of Horseheads employees, ensuring appropriate investigation and follow-up of all alleged incidents of workplace violence, and ensuring that all Department Heads and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities under this policy through internal communications and training.

2. Department Head: Each Department Head or other person with supervisory responsibility (hereinafter "Department Head") is responsible within his/her area of jurisdiction for the implementation of this policy. Department Heads must report to Town Clerk any complaint of workplace violence made to him/her and any other incidents of workplace violence of which he/she becomes aware or reasonably believes to exist. Department Head are expected to inform their immediate supervisor promptly about any complaints, acts, or threats of violence even if the situation has been addressed and resolved. After having reported such complaint or incident, the Department Head should keep it confidential and not disclose it further, except as necessary during an investigation process and/or subsequent proceedings. Supervisors are required to contact the Town Supervisor, Town Clerk and Town Attorney immediately in the event of imminent or actual violence involving weapons or potential physical injuries.

3. **Employees and Staff:** Employees and staff must report workplace violence, as defined above, to their Department Head. Recurring or persistent workplace violence that an employee reasonably believes is not being addressed satisfactorily, or violence that is, or has been, engaged in by the employee's Department Head should be brought to the attention of the Town Clerk and/or Town Supervisor. Employees who have obtained Orders of Protection are expected to notify their Department Head, the Town Clerk, the Town Supervisor, and the Town Attorney of any orders that list Town of Horseheads locations as protected areas. Victims of domestic violence who believe the violence may extend into the workplace, or employees who believe that domestic or other personal matters may result in their being subject to violence extending into the workplace, are encouraged to notify their Department Head, Town Clerk, the Town Supervisor, and the Town Attorney. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. A copy of this policy will be posted throughout the Town of Horseheads' facilities and placed on the Town of Horseheads' website.

4. **Town Clerk:** The Office of the Town Clerk is responsible for providing new employees with a copy of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedures.

Education – The Town Supervisor and Town Board are responsible for dissemination and enforcement of this policy as described herein, as well as for providing opportunities for training in the prevention and awareness of workplace violence.

Confidentiality – The Town of Horseheads shall maintain the confidentiality of investigations of workplace violence to the extent possible. The Town of Horseheads will act on the basis of anonymous complaints where it has a reasonable basis to believe that there has been a violation of the policy and that the safety and well being of employees of the Town of Horseheads would be served by such action.

Retaliation – Retaliation against anyone acting in good faith who has made a complaint of workplace violence, who has reported witnessing workplace violence, or who has been involved in reporting, investigating, or responding to workplace violence is a violation of this policy. Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

905 **Drug-Free Workplace / Drug Free Awareness Program**

Policy Statement – It is the policy of the Town of Horseheads that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of an illegal controlled substance as defined in the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act, is prohibited on the job or at the workplace.

Coverage – The Town of Horseheads' Drug-Free Workplace Policy pertains to all individuals who are employed by the Town of Horseheads.

Compliance with Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act – The Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 is applicable to all recipients of Federal grants. In order to receive federal funds, the Town must certify to the granting Federal agency that it will provide a drug-free workplace in accordance with the legislation. As a recipient of Federal grants, the Town hereby complies with the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act by adopting this policy and drug-free awareness program:

Prohibited Conduct – No employee shall use, sell, distribute, dispense, possess, or manufacture any alcoholic beverage, illegal drugs, or any other intoxicating substance, nor be under the influence of such, while on duty, at any job site or workplace, or in a Town vehicle, a vehicle leased for Town business, or a privately owned vehicle being used for Town business. An employee who, after investigation, is found to have violated this prohibition may be referred for counseling or rehabilitation and satisfactory treatment and will be subject to criminal, civil and disciplinary penalties, up to and including termination of employment. Any work-related accident or injury involving a Town vehicle, equipment, and/or property where it can be demonstrated that the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any other intoxicants may have been a contributing factor will result in disciplinary action which may include penalties up to and including termination of employment.

Use of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs – Prescription drugs must be in the possession of the individual to whom the prescription was written, taken in the dosage prescribed, and maintained in their original containers. Employees in public safety or safety-sensitive positions must inform their supervisors of any prescription or legal, nonprescription (i.e., over-the-counter) drugs they are currently taking that could in any way affect or impair the employee's ability to perform the job safely. The legal use of prescribed and over-the-counter drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the job safely and if it does not affect the safety or well being of other individuals in the workplace.

Non-Discrimination Policy – The Town of Horseheads will not discriminate against an applicant or employee because of past substance abuse provided it can be demonstrated that the applicant/employee has received appropriate treatment and tests negative for controlled substance use. It is the current use of alcohol and controlled substances that will not be tolerated in the workplace.

Employee Assistance – It is the policy of the Town to work with an employee suffering from substance abuse so that the employee will receive assistance necessary to overcome dependency. An employee seeking such assistance is encouraged to contact the employee's Department Head to discuss the situation before problems begin to surface in the workplace. Any disclosures made by an employee will be treated as strictly confidential to the greatest extent practicable. The employee's decision to seek assistance will not be used as the basis for disciplinary action nor used against the employee in any disciplinary proceeding.

Employee Responsibilities – As a condition of the Town receiving Federal grant monies, each employee must abide by this policy and notify the employee's Department Head of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace within five calendar days of the conviction.

Town Responsibilities – The Town will notify the granting federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee of such a conviction or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. In addition, within thirty calendar days of receiving notice of a conviction, the Town will take disciplinary action against the employee and/or require such employee to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program pursuant to Sections 702 and 703 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act.

Drug-Free Awareness Program – It is the policy of the Town of Horseheads to maintain a drug-free workplace. In accordance with that policy, the Town is providing the following drug-free awareness information to raise employee awareness of the dangers associated with drug abuse in the workplace.

Dangers of Drug Abuse in the Workplace

Employees with chemical dependence problems have a major negative impact on productivity, staff moral, and labor/management relations. Their hidden illness is responsible for:

1. Declining Performance

- poor concentration
- confusion in following directions
- noticeable change in the quality of work
- inability to meet deadlines
- errors in judgment affecting the health and safety of others
- customer complaints and injuries

2. Increased Costs

- five times the average sick and accident benefits
- higher job turnover, replacement and training costs
- greater workers' compensation and health insurance payments
- 3 to 5 times more on-the-job accidents
- unemployment claims

3. Absenteeism and Tardiness

- double the normal rate
- repeatedly being late for work and often leaving early
- extended lunch hours
- frequent illness and accidents both on and off the job

4. Damaged Relationships

- emotional outbursts, over-reaction to criticism, mood swings, complaints from co-workers, associates and the public often leading to damaged relations

906 *Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing*

Statement of Compliance – The Town Board has adopted a Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing Policy that is in compliance with the "Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991" (OTETA). The purpose of this policy is to reduce accidents resulting from an employee's use of controlled substances and alcohol, thus reducing fatalities, injuries and property damage.

Covered Employees – The Town's Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing Policy applies to all covered drivers as defined by the federal regulations, which includes all employees who drive commercial motor vehicles (as defined in Sec. 382.107 of the OTETA) requiring a commercial driver's license to operate.

Acknowledgment Form – A covered employee will receive a written copy of the Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing Policy and must sign an Employee Acknowledgment Form. This form will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

907 *Smoking*

Policy Statement – In accordance with the NYS Clean Indoor Air Act, it is the policy of the Town to prohibit smoking in the workplace, which includes all Town buildings and all Town vehicles. [The Town also prohibits the use of e-cigarettes and the use of tobacco products including smokeless tobacco in the workplace.]

[Revised by Town Board Resolution #93 of 2016 (June 8, 2016)]

1000 SAFETY

1001 Workplace Safety

Policy Statement – Prevention of injury and illness in the workplace requires the cooperation of all employees in all safety and health matters. It is the policy of the Town to reduce the number of workplace injuries and illnesses to an absolute minimum. Accidents can be prevented through use of reasonable precautions and the practice of safe working habits.

Employee Responsibility – In an effort to protect all employees and to safeguard equipment and property, before an employee begins a given task, it is the employee's responsibility to understand the correct operation and possible hazards involved, safety procedures, and necessary safety equipment required to perform the job.

Safety Program – The Town's safety program includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Providing mechanical and physical safeguards to the maximum extent possible;
- Conducting inspections to find and eliminate unsafe working conditions and practices, control health hazards, and comply with the safety and health standards for every job;
- Training all employees in safety and health practices;
- Providing necessary personal protective equipment and instructions for its use and care;
- Developing and enforcing safety and health rules and requiring that employees cooperate with these rules as a condition of employment;
- Investigating, promptly and thoroughly, every accident to find the cause and correct the problem to prevent future occurrences;
- Providing First Aid kits and fire extinguishers throughout buildings and facilities.

Accident Plan – In the event of an accident, an employee must immediately stop work and take the following steps:

- Eliminate the immediate cause of the accident;
- Provide aid to the injured person and summon for assistance;
- Call the Department Head immediately;
- If the accident appears serious, call 911; and
- Take steps to prevent additional accidents.

Accident Reporting Procedures – In the event an accident occurs in the workplace or in the course of employment, the following procedures will apply:

- When an accident occurs which results either in the loss of an employee's work time, or in the provision of medical care to an employee, the employee must immediately notify the Department Head who will in turn notify the Town Supervisor. The Department Head must complete an *Employer's Report of Injury Form (C-2)* and submit according to operating procedures.
- When an accident occurs which does not result in the loss of an employee's work time, or in the provision of medical care to the employee, the employee must immediately notify the Department Head who will in turn notify the Town Supervisor. The Town Supervisor's Office will maintain appropriate documentation of the incident.
- The Town Supervisor's Office will keep a log of the injury or illness for five years following the end of the calendar year to which it relates. A copy of this log, which includes totals and information for the year, must be posted in each department or areas where notices to employees are customarily posted.

1002 Hazard Communication Program

Statement of Compliance – The Town of Horseheads is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment and complies with all Federal, State and local laws regarding hazard recognition, accident prevention, and working conditions. The Town considers Hazard Communication and the prevention of workplace injuries and illnesses to be of prime importance.

Guidelines – The following guidelines for the identification of chemical hazards and the preparation and proper use of containers, labels, placards, and other types of warning devices must be adhered to:

- **Chemical Inventory** – The Town must maintain an inventory of all known chemicals in use. An employee may obtain the chemical inventory from the employee's supervisor or Department Head.
- **Container Labels** – All chemicals on a work-site must be stored in the original or approved containers with the proper label attached. The Department Head must ensure that each container is labeled with the identity of the hazardous chemical contained and any appropriate hazard warnings. The Town will rely on manufacturer applied labels whenever possible. A container that is not labeled or on which the manufacturer's label has been removed, must be properly labeled. A container not properly labeled must be given to the Department Head for labeling or proper disposal.
- **Dispensing Chemicals** – An employee may dispense chemicals from original containers only in small quantities intended for immediate use. Any chemical leftover must be returned to the original container or to the Department Head for proper handling. No unmarked containers of any size are to be left in the work area unattended.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) – An employee working with a Hazardous Chemical shall obtain a copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and a standard chemical reference from the employee's Department Head.

Employee Training – An employee must be trained to work safely with hazardous chemicals. This training program must cover the following areas:

- Methods used to detect the release of hazardous chemicals in the workplace;
- Physical and health hazards of chemicals and the measures used to protect employees;
- Safe work practices;
- Emergency responses to the exposure of hazardous chemicals;
- Proper use of personal protective equipment; and
- Hazard Communication Standards, including labeling and warning systems, and an explanation of the use of Material Safety Data Sheets.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Depending on job duties, an employee must routinely wear protective devices, such as gloves and safety glasses, as directed by the supervisor. An employee who is required to wear special safety equipment as directed by the supervisor must comply with the supervisor's request.

Emergency Response – Any incident of overexposure or spill of a hazardous chemical/substance must immediately be reported to the employee's supervisor. The supervisor must insure that proper emergency response actions are taken.

Hazards of Non-Routine Tasks – The Department Head must inform employees of any special tasks that may arise which would involve possible exposure to hazardous chemicals. Review of safe work procedures and use of required PPE must be conducted prior to the start of these tasks. Where necessary, areas will be posted to indicate the nature of the hazard involved.

1100 COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

1101 Organizational Communications

Summary – The Town Board is committed to assuring effective communications between the Board and employees. The success of the organization is dependent upon a set of common interests and goals that are achieved through teamwork, sharing of ideas, and effective communications of our short-term and long-term plans. From time to time, information and updates will be distributed to employees. All employees are encouraged to discuss this information with their Department Head should there be any questions.

Methods of Communication – Information will be communicated to employees in a variety of ways, including general and departmental meetings, e-mail distributions, memos and other written correspondence, notices distributed with paychecks, and posting of information. Employees should check bulletin boards frequently to keep informed on changes in employment matters and other items of interest. Except as otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, all material to be posted on bulletin boards, including memos and announcements, must have the prior approval of the appropriate Department Head.

1102 Adverse Communications

Policy Statement – An employee who receives any communication of a negative nature directed to the Town, or to any of its officers or employees in their official capacity, shall immediately notify and/or forward the communication to the appropriate Department Head. The term “communication” shall refer to both written and verbal communications, and includes, but is not limited to, memoranda, faxes, messages, letters, legal notices, e-mails, summonses and other communications.

1103 Suggestions

Policy Statement – Giving and receiving feedback is encouraged in order to promote a positive, productive, and cooperative atmosphere. Employees should notify their supervisor or Department Head of any suggestions which may be valuable to the Town’s productivity and success. All suggestions will be carefully reviewed and may be implemented if feasible.

1104 Public Relations

Policy Statement – The courteous, professional treatment of members of the public by all employees helps to build confidence among the citizens we serve. We require all employees to make every effort to represent the Town in a polite and professional manner.

Public Appearances - A Town employee may on occasion be asked to speak or appear in an official capacity as a representative of the Town before various groups or organizations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, schools, neighborhood groups, etc.). The employee must obtain prior approval from the Town Supervisor or his/her designee before agreeing to do so.

1105 Reporting of Improper Activities

Policy Statement – Any employee who witnesses or becomes aware of an inappropriate action, improper financial circumstance, inappropriate use of Town funds or property, safety issue, or other matter that appears to be improper, should immediately make his or her Department Head or supervisor, the Town Supervisor, or any Town Board member aware of the issue. Even if you are in doubt about what you witnessed or were made aware of you should report the matter. There shall be no retaliation or adverse action taken against any employee who makes such a report in good faith, even if the matter reported is, after investigation, not found to be improper.

1200 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

1201 *Dispute Resolution Procedure*

Policy Statement – The Town Board has established a set of procedures to provide for the orderly resolution of differences at the earliest possible stage and to promote a harmonious and cooperative relationship between employees, Department Heads and members of the Town Board which will enhance the overall operation of the Town. The Town will attempt to resolve all work-related complaints that are appropriate for handling under this policy.

Definition of Dispute – For the purpose of this Employee Handbook, a “dispute” will mean a claimed violation, misinterpretation or inequitable application of any of the provisions of this Employee Handbook. In addition, the term “dispute” shall not apply to any matter as to which the Town is without authority to act. A few examples of matters that may be considered appropriate disputes under this policy include:

- A belief that Town policies, practices, rules, regulations, or procedures have been applied in a manner detrimental to an employee;
- Treatment considered unfair by an employee, such as coercion, reprisal, harassment, or intimidation;
- Alleged discrimination because of race, color, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, disability; or any other protected class; and
- Improper or unfair administration of employee benefits or conditions of employment such as scheduling, vacations, fringe benefits, promotions, retirement, holidays, salary, or seniority.

Step One – An employee who claims to have a dispute may present the dispute to the employee’s Department Head. The dispute must be submitted, in writing, within seven working days following knowledge of the event(s) which caused the dispute or when the employee should have had knowledge. The dispute will specify the date of submission, the name of the aggrieved employee, the date the dispute arose, the nature of the dispute, the provision of the Employee Handbook that was allegedly violated and a statement of facts, times, dates, and the remedy sought.

Within seven working days after receiving the dispute, the employee’s Department Head will meet with the employee to discuss and attempt to resolve the matter.

Step Two – In the event the informal dispute is not resolved at Step One, or the employee reasonably believes that the employee cannot present the dispute to the employee’s Department Head, the employee may submit the matter to the Town Supervisor. The dispute must be submitted, in writing, within seven working days from receiving the Step One response, or when the response should have been received or if Step One is not utilized for the above reason, within seven working days following knowledge of the event(s) which caused the dispute or when the employee should have had knowledge.

Within seven working days after receiving the dispute, the Town Supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss and attempt to resolve the matter. Within seven working days from the meeting, the Town Supervisor will issue a written response.

Step Three – In the event the employee is not satisfied with the response at Step Two, the employee may submit the matter to the full Town Board by filing a Request for Hearing with the Town Clerk. The Request for Hearing must be submitted, in writing, within seven working days from receiving the Step Two response, or when the response should have been received. The Request for Hearing will include a written statement of the dispute as outlined in Step One of this Procedure.

The Town Board will set the time and place for the hearing. All decisions rendered by the Town Board will be final and binding.

Time Limits – The employee must adhere to the time limits set forth in this dispute procedure. In the event the employee does not advance the dispute to the next step within the established time limit, the dispute will be considered withdrawn and no further appeal will be accepted. The time limits may be extended by mutual agreement provided the extension is in writing, dated and signed by the employee and the person who is to receive the dispute.

Final Decisions – Final decisions on disputes will not be precedent-setting or binding on future disputes unless they are stated as official Town policy.

Proper Use of Dispute Resolution Procedure – Employees will not be penalized for proper use of the dispute resolution procedure. However, it is not considered proper use if an employee raises a dispute in bad faith or solely for the purposes of delay or harassment, or repeatedly raises meritless disputes. Implementation of the dispute procedure by an employee does not limit the right of the Town to proceed with any disciplinary action that is not in retaliation for the use of this procedure.

Refusal to Proceed with Dispute – The Town Board may, at its discretion, refuse to proceed with any dispute it determines is improper or baseless under this policy.

Union Employees – An employee who is a member of a collective bargaining unit should refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement to determine if the employee's dispute (grievance) may be subject to the grievance procedure contained in the employee's collective bargaining agreement.

1300 APPENDICES

A. EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

B. FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA) – Position Classifications

Appendix A: Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Form

To be signed and placed in employee's personnel file.

<p>TOWN OF HORSEHEADS</p> <p>EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT</p>

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the **Town of Horseheads Employee Handbook** outlining the rules, regulations, procedures, practices, work standards, employment classifications, compensation, and benefits of the Town of Horseheads. I further acknowledge that I have read, or will read, the contents of the Employee Handbook and will contact my Department Head or the Town Supervisor if I have any questions.

I understand that the Employee Handbook is not meant to create a contract of employment, nor should it be construed as creating a contract of employment and that the Town Board of the Town of Horseheads reserves the right to interpret, change or modify any section of the Employee Handbook at any time. Except as otherwise provided by law, I understand that I am an employee at will.

I understand that, if I am covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the Town of Horseheads and an employee organization as defined by the Public Employees' Fair Employment Act, in the event an expressed and explicit provision set forth in a collective bargaining agreement should conflict with an employee benefit, personnel policy, personnel procedure, or other provision set forth in the Employee Handbook, the expressed and explicit provision of the collective bargaining agreement will control. Otherwise, unless expressly excluded herein, the Employee Handbook is applicable to all employees.

I agree to abide by the personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations outlined in the Employee Handbook.

I understand that the Employee Handbook and the changes contained herein are intended to supersede all prior manuals and guidelines issued by the Town of Horseheads, and may be changed from time to time, by the Town of Horseheads.

Employee name (please print)

Department Head Name (please print)

Employee Signature

Department Head Signature

Date of Signature

Date of Signature

Appendix B: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) – Position Classifications

The Town of Horseheads has determined that individuals in the following positions qualify as FLSA Exempt employees:

- Assessor
- Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer
- Dog Control Officer
- Recreation Director
- Town Attorney
- Town Highway Superintendent
- Town Clerk
- Youth Bureau Director

The Town of Horseheads has determined that individuals in the following positions qualify as FLSA Non-Exempt employees:

- Bookkeeper to the Supervisor
- Clerk to Town Justice
- Deputy Town Clerk
- Union employees