



Town of Garrett Park

Incorporated 1898

To: Mayor and Town Council
From: Kayla J. Buker, Assistant Town Manager
Subject: Personnel Manual Update
Date: February 13, 2023

Background

On October 10, 2022, the Mayor and Town Council discussed proposed changes to the Town's Personnel Manual and provided direction to staff. In early 2022, Town Manager Barbara Matthews identified the Town's Personnel Manual as needing a thorough review to determine if it fulfilled two requirements – compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws and providing an effective and consistent tool to aid in employee recruitment and retention. To facilitate the eventual updating of the Personnel Manual, the Town Manager requested and received manuals from several neighboring communities. I reviewed the materials as part of my assignment to update the Town's Personnel Manual.

Resolution No. 2023-1 provides for the adoption of a new Personnel Manual and the revocation of any and all prior personnel manuals and employment rules and regulations. A summary of the changes to the Manual is provided below.

The changes fall into three broad categories – Changes to be Compliant, Changes to be Consistent, and Changes to be Competitive. Recommendations in the first category are meant to ensure that the Town of Garrett Park is compliant with applicable local, state, and federal laws. Changes that are recommended in the second category are meant to ensure consistency among employees and ensure equitable treatment. Changes in the third category are being recommended to aid Garrett Park in employee recruitment and retention by ensuring benefits are on par with other municipalities in the region while being cost-effective and fiscally responsible with Town funds.

Recommendations – Changes to be Compliant

1. Sick and Safe Leave (Maryland Healthy Working Families Act of 2018) - Under this Act, employers with less than 14 employees are required to provide unpaid leave that can be used for obtaining preventative care or seeking treatment for illness for an employee or their family member, to seek or to provide mental health care for the employee or their family member, maternity/paternity leave, and for absences necessary to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

The minimum rate of accumulation is 1 hour unpaid for every 30 hours worked for an employer the size of Garrett Park. The law has a provision for employers that have an existing leave policy that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements. Garrett Park's current rate of 1 paid day (8 hours) per month for full-time employees for sick leave and the number of hours allowed to be carried over (unlimited) exceed the minimum stipulations. That accrual is pro-rated for part-time employees based on the number of hours worked, but remains paid.

Because of this provision and to minimize the administrative burden caused by leave tracking, it is recommended that the Personnel Manual language be changed to acknowledge the Act without changing the accrual method and without introducing a category of unpaid leave. Additionally, it is

recommended that Town Manager Matthews send a memo to staff to make sure all employees are aware of eligible uses of their leave under the Act. There is no anticipated budgetary impact from this recommendation.

2. Family Medical Leave Act, Maryland Parental Leave Act, and Maryland Time to Care Act - In consultation with the Human Resources Director for the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) and the LGIT Employment Hotline as well as receiving guidance from the federal Department of Labor, it was determined that Town is not required to be compliant with the federal Family Leave Act, or the Maryland Parental Leave Act due to the small number of Town employees. While not required to do so, it has long been Town practice to offer parental leave; the parameters of the leave policy are outlined on page 14 of the Personnel Manual. The recommendation is to retain the existing language.

In 2022, Maryland passed the Time to Care Act. The provisions of the legislation are being phased in, and detailed guidance on requirements and eligibility will be coming out by June 1, 2023. The Town Manager and I recommend that the Personnel Manual undergo another review in late spring 2023 to capture any changes that may be required by the Time to Care Act.

3. Town Charter – During legal review of the revised Personnel Manual, it was noted that certain provisions of the current Manual were inconsistent with the Town Charter. The revised Manual has been amended to address those inconsistencies and clarifies the role of the Mayor, Town Council, and Town Manager in the hiring, promotion, and disciplinary process.

Recommendations – Changes to be Consistent

1. Town Payment of Insurance Premiums — The current edition of the Personnel Manual states that the Town reserves the right to require employees to pay a portion of the applicable insurance premium for their coverage. By practice, the Town pays 100% of the cost for individual health, dental, and vision coverage and 75% of the cost for those electing dependent coverage.

The Town's cost-sharing arrangement with its employees is consistent with that of neighboring jurisdictions. The proposed Personnel Manual formalizes the current practice, while retaining the language that allows the Town to adjust the percentage it pays towards employee coverage in the Town's discretion.

The proposed Manual also addresses how the Town will address health, dental, and vision coverage for any part-time staff members working at least 20 hours per week on a year-round basis. As proposed, part-time employees who meet this criteria would be eligible for health, dental, and vision coverage, with the Town's contribution pro-rated based on hours worked. In developing this recommendation, staff surveyed the practices of neighboring jurisdictions. The jurisdictions included Bowie, Chevy Chase Village, Gaithersburg, Greenbelt, Kensington, Rockville, Takoma Park, and the Town of Chevy Chase. Four of these jurisdictions did not provide health, dental, and vision coverage to part-time staff members. Three provided coverage to those working at least 20 hours per week; the employer contribution was pro-rated based on hours worked. One provided coverage on the same basis as full-time employees.

2. Accrual and Use of Compensatory Time — In the current version of the Manual, there is no cap on the total number of compensatory time hours that can be accrued by an employee. While there is language in the Manual stating that after 90 days unused comp time is to revert to overtime pay, an informal review indicated that this has not always taken place – at least in part due to the difficulty of tracking when individual hours were accrued.

To address this issue as well as mitigate the potential for a large pay out of leave should an employee separate from the Town, it is recommended that the Personnel Manual be amended to

establish a cap of 40 hours of comp time that an employee may bank. Any hours beyond the 40 would be paid as overtime, and the 40 banked hours would be allowed to carry over indefinitely until used.

3. Floating to Permanent Holidays – The Personnel Manual lists nine designated holidays plus two floating holidays selected by the Town Manager. Historically, the floating holidays have been observed as the Friday after Thanksgiving and a “birthday holiday.” The employee birthday holiday does not have to be taken on the employee’s actual birthday; employees have one year from their birthday to take it. Town provides two floating holidays. The historic practice has been for the Town Manager to select one of the days, traditionally the Friday after Thanksgiving, and announce it prior to January 1 of the calendar year in which it will be in effect. The second floating holiday has been traditionally viewed as the “birthday holiday” and employees have been allowed to use it when they see fit after their birthday.

In lieu of having two floating holidays, the proposed Personnel Manual adds the Friday after Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve to the Town’s list of observed holidays beginning in calendar year 2023. All staff members were supportive of this change. There is no anticipated budgetary change from this recommendation.

In calendar year 2021, the Town began observing Juneteenth as a holiday. The updated Personnel Manual adds Juneteenth to the list of observed holidays, bringing the total number of holidays to 12.

Recommendations – Changes to be Competitive

1. Retirement Contributions and Match – The majority of our neighboring, small municipalities utilize either a 457(b) Deferred Compensation plan or a 401(a) Money Purchase Plan as their employee retirement plan. Garrett Park has a 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan. The Town contributes 2% of an employee’s salary after six months of employment, with an offered match of up to 2.5%.

During the review of other manuals, it was found that the Town’s current base contribution as well as the match contribution were notably lower than those of neighboring, small municipalities. The recommendation is to increase the Town’s base contribution from 2% to 3% and increase the match maximum from 2.5% to 3%. The estimated annual impact of this change would be approximately \$7,000 (based on current employee salaries and employee-directed contributions). There are sufficient funds in the budgeted benefits line item for FY 2023 to accommodate the increase due to employees electing individual rather than family health insurance coverage as was budgeted. This change is not expected to materially impact the Town’s benefit costs for FY 2024 and beyond.

2. Bereavement Policy – The Town’s current bereavement leave policy provides for 2 days of paid leave in the event of the death of a close family member. The review of other manuals indicated that the Town’s definition of family as well as the number of leave days were not comparable to that of other municipalities.

The revised Manual incorporates a new definition of family modeled on text from Takoma Park. The new definition of family includes aunts, uncles, and household members. Additionally, the number of bereavement days has been increased from 2 to 3 days. No budgetary adjustment is needed to accommodate this change.

3. Annual Leave Accrual – Currently, employees accrue annual leave at the following rates:

Years of Full Time Service by July 1st	Amount of vacation/annual leave in days	Accrual Rate per two-week pay period
6 months - 5 years	10 days	3.08 hours
6-10 years	15 days	4.62 hours
10+ years	20 days	6.15 hours

A review of other municipal personnel documents indicates that, in general, the Town's annual leave amounts were on par with that of other municipalities; however, the timelines associated with each level of accrual are not as competitive. It is recommended that the Town's annual leave accrual be amended to the following:

Years of Full Time Service	Amount of vacation/annual leave in days	Accrual Rate per two-week pay period
< 4 years	10 days	3.08 hours
> 4 years, < 7 years	13 days	4 hours
>7 years, < 11 years	16 days	4.92
> 11 years	20 days	6.15

Additionally, Language has been added to the new Manual stating that, while leave hours can be accrued in the first six months of employment, there is no payout of accrued leave if the employee separates from the Town before six months of employment.

The current leave policy measures years of service as of July 1 rather than the employee's employment date, which is the customary practice. The updated Personnel Manual reflects this change.

Legal Review

As noted earlier in this memo, the revised Personnel Manual has been reviewed by the Town Attorney for consistencies with the Town Charter. It was also reviewed by the employment law firm of Karpinski, Cornbrooks & Karp, P.A.

Attachment

- Resolution No. 2023-1, including associated new Town Personnel Manual

cc: Barbara B. Matthews, Town Manager

**TOWN OF GARRETT PARK
RESOLUTION NO. 2023-1**

ADOPTING PERSONNEL MANUAL

WHEREAS, the Town Charter, Section 78-49, provides that the Town may employ such officers and employees as it deems necessary to execute the power and duties provided by the Charter or other State law and to operate the Town government; and,

WHEREAS, the Personnel Manual of the Town of Garrett Park serves as the governing document regarding the terms and conditions of employment with the Town; and,

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that this Resolution is necessary for the good government of the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED this ____ day of _____, 2023 by the Town Council of the Town of Garrett Park that:

1. The attached Personnel Manual is hereby adopted, and any and all prior personnel manuals and employment rules and regulations previously adopted are revoked; and
2. This resolution shall become effective immediately and shall remain in force until rescinded or replaced.

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of a Resolution passed by the Town Council at its meeting on February ____, 2023.

Attest: _____

Barbara B. Matthews
Town Manager/Clerk-Treasurer

TOWN OF

GARRETT PARK, MARYLAND

Personnel Manual

***Adopted by Council Resolution on February 13, 2023
Effective March 1, 2023***

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Section 1. General Provisions

The objective of this Manual is to provide a uniform system of personnel administration for the staff of the Town of Garrett Park ("Town"), based on merit principles, equitable compensation, open competition in hiring and advancement, and equal employment opportunities.

It is the policy of the Town to establish clear rules of employment conduct (i.e., guidelines for management and employees to follow) and to ensure compliance with these rules through a program consistent with the best interests of the Town and its employees. This Manual is not, and shall not be construed as, an explicit or implied contract, and shall not modify any existing at-will status of any Town employee. The Town reserves the right to make changes to the Manual at any time and will provide notice of any changes.

Additionally, it is the policy of the Town to strive for safety in all activities and operations, and to carry out the commitment of compliance with health and safety laws applicable to the Town by enlisting the help of all employees to ensure that public and work areas are free of hazardous conditions.

The Town is committed to providing the best possible working situation for its employees. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response from management. It is the employee's responsibility to bring any problems to management's attention. It is the responsibility of management to attempt to resolve these problems as quickly as possible.

All Town officials and employees are expected to treat each other and Town residents with respect, dignity, and civility.

The Town Manager shall be responsible for maintaining a complete set of current rules and distributing changes to the rules to all employees. The Town Council reserves the right to modify, amend, or rescind these policies in whole or in part without prior notice.

Except as otherwise provided herein and in the Town Charter, the Town Manager is responsible for personnel administration and interpretation of these rules for the Town of Garrett Park, subject to the supervision of the Mayor. Whenever responsibilities fall to the Town Manager under these Policies, he/she or the Mayor may designate another to fulfill the Manager's responsibilities while the Manager is absent or unable to perform such duties.

Section 2. Definitions

- *"At-Will Employees"* – Employees are at-will when they have the right to terminate their employment relationship with the Town at any time and, likewise, the Town has the discretion to discharge employees at any time, for any reason, or no reason, without prior notice.
- *Contractor* – A person who provides services to the Town under a contract, approved by the Mayor, in consultation with the Town Manager. Contractors are not entitled to benefits and may be subject to the provisions of this policy as referenced in their contracts.
- *Effective Date* – The effective date for the policies contained herein is the date the Town

Council adopts them.

- *Employee* – The term includes all categories of employee defined herein, unless otherwise indicated.
- *Exempt Employee* – A salaried employee who performs executive, administrative, or professional duties as defined under the Fair Labor Standards Act and its regulations. Full-time, part-time, and temporary employees may be exempt.
- *Full-time Employee* – An individual hired on either a salaried or hourly wage basis for an established position for an indefinite term who is expected to work a minimum of forty (40) hours per week.
- *Manager* – The Town Manager. The Town Manager is an employee of the Town. The terms of his or her employment contract take precedence over the policies set forth herein. The Town Manager also serves as the Town's Clerk-Treasurer.
- *Non-exempt Employee* – An employee entitled to receive overtime compensation under the Fair Labor Standards Act for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) in a given work week.
- *Part-time Employee* – An individual hired for an established position for an indefinite term who is expected to work an established period of time that is less than forty (40) hours per week, but at least twenty (20) hours per week. Employees meeting these standards are eligible for all the benefits of a full-time employee, on a pro-rated basis based on hours worked, provided that they are eligible to do so under the applicable insurance policy.
- *Temporary Employee* – An individual hired on a time-limited basis, e.g., day, week, period of months or on a project basis. Temporary Employees are classified as non-exempt employees and are not entitled to benefits.
- *Town* – The Town government of the Town of Garrett Park, Maryland.

Section 3. Personnel Management Authority

The Mayor, with the approval of the Town Council according to the Town Charter Section 78-16(b), has the authority to hire and promote Town employees and may delegate that responsibility to the Town Manager, with the Town Council's approval. By adoption of this Manual, the Town Council has approved such delegation. The Town Manager shall be authorized to hire and promote Town employees, with the Town Council's approval, and subject to the supervision of the Mayor. The Town Manager shall be authorized, subject to the supervision of the Mayor, to discharge employees, without Town Council approval. The Mayor shall be authorized to discharge the Town Manager, with the approval of the Town Council. The Town Manager has the responsibility and authorization for administering these policies.

Section 4. At-Will Employment

All Town employees are at-will employees with no specific term of employment. Employees are at-will when they have the right to terminate their employment relationship with the Town at any time and, likewise, the Town has the discretion to discharge employees at any time, for any reason, without prior notice. As stated above, this Manual is not, and shall not be construed as, an explicit

or implied contract. It does not modify any existing at-will status of any Town employee.

Section 5. Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the Town to provide equal opportunity in employment and to administer employment policies without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sex, age, national origin, marital status, genetic information, or refusal to submit to a genetic test, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or citizenship (hereinafter, referred to as "discriminatory criteria"). This policy applies to every aspect of employment practices including, but not limited to recruiting, hiring, and promoting in all jobs except where such a factor can be demonstrated as a bona fide occupational qualification.

All decisions for hiring or promotions shall be based solely upon each individual's qualifications for the position to be filled. Other personnel actions, relating to areas, such as compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, training, or assignments, shall be administered without regard for discriminatory criteria.

Section 6. Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities

The Town provides equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to a qualified employee or applicant with a disability when that employee or applicant requests an accommodation. A qualified employee or applicant is one who can perform the essential functions of the job with or without accommodation. A request for an accommodation will be denied if the accommodation is not shown to be effective, places an undue burden on the Town, or if the employee poses a direct threat to the health and safety of the employee or others.

Section 7. Ethics and Related Policies

A. Conflicts of Interest

Employees have an obligation to perform their duties and provide the services of their employment in an ethical manner. Employees shall not participate in matters in which they have an actual or potential conflict of interest.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee makes a decision or participates on behalf of the Town in a matter that would directly benefit, financially or otherwise, the employee, a member of their immediate family or a business entity with which the employee or their family are affiliated.

For the purposes of this conflict-of-interest policy, the term immediate family shall mean the employee's spouse, parents, children, siblings, or any person living in the same household.

B. No Preferential Treatment

Town employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner, as representatives of the Town. Employees are expected to avoid any action that might result in giving preferential treatment to any organization or person, losing independence or impartiality of action, or adversely affecting the integrity of the Town.

C. Confidential Information

The protection of confidential information maintained by the Town may be necessary in certain jobs or during certain projects of the Town, including jobs performed by some Town volunteers.

For the purposes of this non-disclosure policy, the term confidential information shall include, but is not limited to, personally identifiable information other than that typically available through a simple Internet search, confidential health information as defined by the HIPAA laws, the Town's privileged legal matters, projects and proposals for which contracts have not yet been awarded or decisions made, lease negotiations, or any other item designated by the Town Manager that is not in violation of the State's open government laws (Maryland's Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act). Confidential information may pertain to or involve employees, applicants, residents, other government agencies, suppliers, potential suppliers, or others doing business with the Town.

The Town may not share directory information pertaining to residents unless the residents in question specifically grant consent for the sharing of such information.

It is the responsibility of every employee to safeguard confidential information. This includes storing and securing sensitive documents when they are not in use, ensuring that confidential information is properly packaged prior to transmittal and transmitted in a secure manner; and exercising discretion when providing the information to others. The Town may institute additional procedures for the handling of confidential information, including a requirement that the employees sign a non-disclosure agreement, as a condition of employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose information will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Section 8. Employee Recruitment

A. Position Descriptions and Salary Ranges

The Town Manager shall ensure that there is a position description for each budgeted position. The Town Manager shall, with the approval of the Town Council and subject to the annual budget, establish a salary for each position for hiring purposes.

B. Open Positions

All positions shall be authorized by the Town Council and competed for openly through advertising, web announcements, and internal notification. At a minimum, the Town shall post job announcements on the Town list serve, Town website, and a website that posts similar job openings. The recruitment objective is to obtain well-qualified applicants for all vacancies. Selection shall be based on qualifications, references, personal interview(s), and salary negotiations. The Town Manager may, with the approval of the Town Council, advertise a single position and fill it with multiple employees or establish a pool of temporary employees to fill a temporary position. For all positions other than the Town Manager position, the application process for open positions shall be established by the Town Manager, in consultation with the Mayor, and in compliance with this policy.

C. Reference and Background Checks

It is the Town's policy to contact employment references of the preferred candidate(s) prior to final selection. The Town reserves the right to require a background check, and/or any other tests or investigations authorized or required by law as part of the application process, or as a condition to an offer of employment.

D. Equal Employment

Recruitment under this section must be compliant with Section 5, Equal Employment Opportunity, of this Manual.

E. Immigration Compliance

The Town is committed to employing only United States citizens and non-citizens who are authorized to work in the United States, without discrimination on the basis of citizenship or national origin. As long as required by the Federal government as a condition of employment, each new employee must complete the Federal Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 or its succeeding documents and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the Town within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid. Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the Town Manager.

F. Hiring of Relatives or Partners

It is the policy of the Town not to hire relatives or household members of existing employees for full-time or part-time work. This prohibition does not apply to temporary employees.

G. Probationary Period

All newly hired Town employees shall serve a probationary period of six (6) months, which may be extended at the discretion of the Town Manager. If the probationary period is extended, the Town Manager will provide notice to the employee of the new end date.

Section 9. Policies Upon Hire

A. Hours of Work

The Town Manager shall establish the hours of work for all Town staff employees. The standard scheduled work week consists of forty (40) hours, generally eight consecutive hours each day (which includes a 30-minute paid break), Monday through Friday. This does not preclude the establishment of other specified schedules by the Manager.

The Town Manager may establish or authorize alternative work scheduling, so long as the Town Office is staffed during normal business hours.

If employees are unable to report for work or expect to be late, they must contact the Town Manager as soon as possible, preferably no later than the beginning of their scheduled work period and give the reason for their absence or tardiness. Paid leave may or may not be approved. If employees have difficulty reaching the Town Manager, they should leave a message reporting their absences but continue to attempt to contact the Town Manager. The responsibility to notify the Town Manager about absences or about tardiness always rests with the employee.

Hours of work, schedules, and duty assignments of short duration of employees may be altered pursuant to authorization of the Town Manager, as conditions warrant. Schedules may also be adjusted to meet other requirements.

Staffing needs and operational demands, including emergency responses, may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, shift work, variations in the total hours that may be

scheduled during a workday or work week. All overtime must be approved by the Town Manager or Mayor.

B. Outside Employment

Outside employment that constitutes or creates the appearance of a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may hold outside jobs as long as they meet the performance standards of their position with the Town and the outside position does not affect in any manner the employee's work for the Town, which must always have priority over outside work. Each employee is required to notify and obtain approval from the Town Manager before accepting any type of outside employment, whether full-time, part-time, or temporary. In each circumstance or set of circumstances, the Town Manager shall decide whether such employment could adversely affect the employee's ability to carry out his or her responsibilities or in any way violate the policies set forth herein. Failure to obtain this approval may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Section 10. Retirement and Insurance Benefits

A. Retirement/Deferred Compensation Plan

The Town provides a Section 457 Deferred Compensation plan as the retirement plan for employees. The deferred compensation plan allows both the employee and employer to contribute pre-tax to the employee's account. Upon leaving employment, the employee has numerous options for receiving the proceeds of their account.

After six (6) months of employment, the Town provides the following contributions to the plan on behalf of the employee: an automatic contribution of 3% of the employee's gross annual salary. Additionally, if the employee elects to contribute funds beyond the automatic contribution to the account, the Town shall match up to an additional 3% of total gross annual salary. The Town reserves the right to revise the level of automatic contribution and of the match. Any such changes shall be conveyed in writing to staff and the personnel manual shall be updated to reflect the change.

If an employee experiences a significant alteration in salary due to not working their standard hours or any event that changes the salary they receive, a reconciliation shall be carried out.

B. Health Insurance Benefits

Upon the commencement of employment, the Town provides health insurance coverage, including dental and vision insurance to employees. Employees may instead opt for alternative coverage. In this situation employees may also elect coverage for those persons who otherwise would be eligible for coverage by the insurance plan being used by the Town. If the employee chooses to use an alternative option, the Town will reimburse the employee for the cost of the alternate plan if it does not exceed the cost that would be incurred if the employee were covered under the Town plan. Employees in either the Town plan or an alternate plan are responsible for paying the cost of any deductibles or co-pays related to their health insurance coverage.

Part-time employees who work at least 20 hours per week are eligible to participate in the Town's health insurance benefits. The contribution from the Town towards the premium cost shall be pro-rated in accordance with the number of hours worked per week.

C. Life Insurance

Upon the commencement of employment, the Town provides life insurance coverage for

employees equal to the amount of each employee's annual salary up to a limit of \$50,000. Employees may opt out of such coverage. The Town may require participating employees to pay toward the cost of the various insurance premiums.

D. Long-Term Disability Insurance

After six months of employment, the Town provides long-term disability coverage for full-time employees. The coverage is equal to up to 60% of an employee's monthly salary up to \$5,000 per month.

E. Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D)

At the commencement of employment, the Town provides AD&D insurance coverage for employees. All full-time employees and part-time employees who work in certain eligible jobs as determined by Montgomery County shall be eligible for such coverage. Such coverage pays benefits in the event of death or injury from an accident on the job. The limits of the coverage are equal to the life insurance coverage provided each employee by the Town. Employees may opt out of such coverage. The Town may require participating employees to pay toward the cost of the various insurance premiums.

Section 11. Holiday Leave

The Town shall observe the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	President's Day	Memorial Day
Juneteenth	Independence Day	Labor Day	Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day	Friday after Thanksgiving	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day

Unless determined otherwise by the Town Manager, a holiday falling on a Saturday shall be observed on the preceding Friday and a holiday falling on a Sunday shall be observed on the following Monday.

The Town Manager must establish and post on the Town website the holiday schedule for a particular year by January 1st of that year.

When an employee is required to work on a holiday observed by the Town, overtime or compensatory time off will be given at the rate of 1.5 hours for each hour worked on the holiday.

Section 12. Annual Leave

A. Accrual by Full-Time Employees

After the effective date, full-time employees will accrue paid annual leave for personal purposes at the following rates and shall be used on an hour-for-hour basis. Employees who, at the effective date, accrue leave at a higher rate than listed below, shall continue to accrue leave at the higher rate. If an employee works less than their standard hours or does not use existing leave to make their timesheets whole, their leave accrual shall be prorated.

Table 1- Leave Accrual Rates

Years of Full Time Service	Amount of vacation/annual leave in days	Accrual Rate per two-week pay period
< 4 years	10 days	3.08 hours
> 4 years, < 7 years	13 days	4 hours
> 7 years, < 11 years	16 days	4.92
> 11 years	20 days	6.15

B. Accrual by Part-Time Employees

Part-time employees with a normal work week of less than forty (40) hours but more than twenty (20) are eligible to receive one- half the annual leave amounts set out in in Table 1, based on the above calculation of part-time years of service. Part-time employees with a normal work week of less than twenty (20) hours are not eligible for annual leave; however, if their hours increase over time, their years of part time service shall be taken into account for leave purposes (at the rate of one year of part-time service equaling one half a year of full-time service). If an employee works less than their standard hours or does not use existing leave to make their timesheets whole, their leave accrual shall be prorated.

C. Use-Lose Policy

At the end of the fiscal year, accumulated annual leave in excess of one-hundred sixty (160) hours shall be forfeited, unless otherwise authorized by the Town Manager.

When an employee's employment terminates for any reason, the employee shall be entitled to payment, based on the employee's rate of pay at time of termination, for all accrued but unused annual leave.

D. No Advancement of Leave

At no point shall an employee be advanced annual leave nor shall an employee be permitted to fall into a leave deficit.

Section 13. Sick Leave

A. Maryland Healthy Working Families Act of 2018 (Maryland Sick and Safe Leave)

The Town of Garrett Park acknowledges the passage of the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act of 2018. Under this legislation, the Town of Garrett Park is required to provide, at a minimum, unpaid sick leave accrued at a rate of at least one (1) hour of leave for every thirty (30) hours worked. The Act contains a provision that allows for employers with sick leave programs that meet or exceed the minimum thresholds of the Act to continue with said programs. After reviewing the existing policies, it was determined that Garrett Park's existing paid leave policies exceed the requirements. The Town Manager, or a designated staff member, shall periodically review the Act to ensure that the Town remains compliant with the law in the event of modification or revision. This includes, but is not limited to, alterations to the rate of accrual required, alterations to the list of eligible uses of sick and safe leave, or any other alteration that the Town is legally required to make.

Earned sick and safe leave may be used for the following:

- To care for or treat the employee's mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;

- To obtain preventative medical care for the employee or the employee's family member;
- To care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;
- For maternity or paternity leave; or
- For an absence due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against the employee or the employee's family member under certain circumstances.

B. Sick Leave Accrual Rate

Full-time employees shall accrue sick leave at the rate of eight (8) hours per month, beginning with the first full pay period worked by the employee, for a total of twelve (12) days on an annual basis.

Part-time employees who work fewer than forty (40) hours but more than twenty (20) hours per week shall accrue sick leave at a pro-rated rate based on hours worked.

Sick leave is charged on an hour-for-hour basis for all employees and is not considered an entitlement.

C. No Advancement of Leave

At no point shall an employee be advanced sick leave nor shall an employee be permitted to fall into a leave deficit.

D. Other Provisions

Exceptions to this policy may be considered on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Town Manager.

The Town retains the right to terminate employees who have a pattern of absences that prevent the employee from effectively performing the essential functions of their position.

No limits are placed on the amount of sick leave employees may accrue and use for a proper purpose. However, at termination or resignation, employees are not paid for accrued sick leave balances.

Section 14. Other Leave Provisions

A. Family Medical Leave Act

The Town of Garrett Park is not subject to the Family Medical Leave Act.

B. Parental Leave

Full-time employees and part-time employees who have completed the first six months of employment will be granted up to fifteen (15) days of paid leave each fiscal year that may be used in the event of the birth or adoption of a child. Ordinarily, employees must give thirty (30) days' advance notice of the need for family leave when it is foreseeable. In the event more time than is provided is needed, employees may use available annual leave, compensatory leave, sick leave, or take time off without pay, as outlined below, with approval from the Town Manager.

C. Unpaid Leave of Absence

The Town recognizes that there may be times when personal needs may make it necessary for an employee to request a leave of absence. Employees requiring leave in excess of, or for reasons other than those enumerated in the Town's leave policies, may request a period of unpaid leave. Requests for unpaid leaves of absence will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis according to the circumstances of the request and the business requirements of the Town. The Town will attempt to accommodate reasonable requests; however, the Town cannot guaranty that any such request will be granted, or that an employee taking an approved unpaid leave of absence will be restored to the same position that the employee held when the leave started, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. The Town Manager has discretion to allow employees to continue health and life insurance benefits, provided the employee pays both the Town and employee portion of the premiums.

D. Military Leave and Reinstatement

The rights of employees who enter active military duty, including reinstatement rights, shall be governed by the Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services Act, 38 U.S.C. §§ 4301, etseq., as may be amended.

E. Bereavement Leave

An employee may be granted up to three days of paid bereavement leave upon the loss of any of the following: parents, siblings, spouses or domestic partners, children, step or foster family members, parents-in-law, legal guardians, primary care giver (person who served as parent or guardian without legal status), dependents, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews, or any individual that lived in the same household as an employee at the time of death.

F. Civil Leave

If approved by the Town Manager, an employee may be given time off without charge to leave or loss of pay for (a) performing jury duty, (b) when subpoenaed as a witness to appear before a court, public body, or commission, or (c) for the purpose of voting in a national, state, or local election. The period of such leave shall be only as necessary for the performance of the activity, plus any local travel time.

G. Workers' Compensation Leave

An employee absent from duty because of sickness or disability covered by the State of Maryland Workers Compensation Act may receive Workers Compensation benefits. Upon reinstatement, an employee's salary will be computed based on the last salary earned plus any increment or other salary increase to which the employee would have been entitled during the disability covered by Worker's Compensation. Temporary employees will be placed in a leave without pay status and will receive all benefits for which they are eligible for under the Worker's Compensation Act.

Section 15. Compensation Policies

A. Employee Compensation Defined

Employee compensation consists of wages, various forms of compensated leave, and the Town's payment of employee benefits. The Town will inform its employees in advance of any changes to compensation.

B. Pay Increases

The Town promotes excellence in its workforce. Salary increases within budget constraints may be given. Each employee's performance in a given position will be reviewed at least annually in accordance with the position description and based on satisfactory performance and contributions to the Town, the Town may give pay increases. Pay increases are not automatic or guaranteed.

C. Overtime

Overtime is work by an employee in excess of forty (40) hours per week. Employees who are not exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act will either be paid or given compensatory time off for overtime. The pay or compensatory time off will be given at the rate of time and a half for all hours actually worked in excess of forty (40) hours per work week. Unless authorized by the Town Manager or Mayor, employees should not work over forty (40) hours during a work week.

The Town Manager will determine the type of reimbursement for overtime work; however, absent compelling reasons, employees will be paid for overtime work, not compensated through compensatory time off. Overtime pay must be recorded on the employee's timesheet and will be paid with the next regular payroll.

D. Compensatory Time Accrual and Use

Employees may accrue up to forty (40) hours of compensatory time off. Accrued compensatory time off may be rolled over from year to year. Once an employee accrues the maximum of forty (40) hours of compensatory time, any overtime incurred by the employee shall be paid as overtime pay.

Employees may use accrued compensatory time upon request to use the time. This request must be made to the Town Manager at least one day in advance of when the employee would like to use the compensatory time off. A request to use compensatory time off may be denied by the Town Manager if it would be unduly disruptive to the Town's operations.

E. Bonuses

The Manager, with the authorization of the Town Council, may grant a bonus to an employee to recognize superior service to the Town.

Section 16. Employee Professional Development and Retention

D. Employee Development

It is the policy of the Town to encourage employees to obtain training designed to develop the employee's value to the organization. The Town shall pay the cost of employee training taken at the direction of the Town Manager. In such case, the hours of training count as hours worked. For training requested by an employee and approved by the Town Manager, the employee may receive reimbursement of training costs if the employee shows successful completion of the course.

E. Performance Appraisals

The work of each employee will be evaluated annually by the Town Manager in proximity to the anniversary of the employee's start date. The Town Manager will meet with the employee to discuss the year's performance. A written report of the appraisal will be prepared with a copy

provided to the employee being appraised and a copy for the personnel files. An employee may prepare comments to be attached to the appraisal report.

The Town Manager, working with the employee, shall set the employee's goals and objectives for the upcoming year. Each party will sign off on these goals and objectives. The employee's goals and objectives may be adjusted during the year as circumstances warrant.

Section 17. Harassment and Discrimination

The Town maintains a work environment for all employees that is free from all forms of discrimination or harassment. Such conduct is incompatible with the values and goals of the Town and will not be tolerated.

It violates federal and state law as well as Town policy to discriminate against or harass others based on discriminatory criteria. Such discrimination or harassment will not be tolerated.

The applicable discriminatory criteria are as follows:

Ancestry or National Origin	Race or Color	Religion
Sexual Orientation	Gender Identity	Sex
Genetic Information	Marital Status	Disability

Likewise, retaliation against any person complaining of discrimination or harassment is a violation of federal and state law, as well as Town policy, and will not be tolerated. The Town will investigate promptly all complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Disciplinary action for violations of this policy will be the responsibility of the Town Manager and Mayor, as may be appropriate.

A. Definitions for this Section

Harassment is unwelcome conduct based on discriminatory criteria as listed above. Harassment becomes unlawful where 1) enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, offensive or abusive.

Retaliation is the causing of any interference, coercion, restraint, or reprisal against a person complaining of discrimination or harassment or participating in the resolution of a complaint of discrimination or harassment. Examples of retaliation are demotion, termination, or further harassment. It is unlawful to retaliate when it comes to any aspect of employment including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment.

B. Violations of Policy

Any employee with a concern, grievance or complaint of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should utilize the procedures outlined below.

C. Resolution Procedures for Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Complaints

These procedures are to be used to resolve complaints of discrimination or harassment. These procedures also are to be used to resolve complaints of retaliation.

All employees have the right and are encouraged to immediately report suspected violation of Town policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in the workplace. Employees should report such incidents to the Town Manager and/or the Mayor. Employees should make every effort to report complaints promptly. Delays in reporting may not only hinder a proper investigation but may also unnecessarily subject the victim to continued unlawful conduct.

Any employee or elected official who witnesses, or who is told by a purported victim of, any conduct or situation that may violate this policy should promptly report the conduct or situation to the Town Manager and/or the Mayor, as required by the circumstances of the conduct or the situation

The Town Manager shall immediately report all alleged violations of the Town policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment, or hostile environments in the workplace, whether reported by an employee or observed directly, to the Mayor. If reporting a complaint to any of the persons set forth above presents a conflict of interest, the complaint may be filed directly with the Mayor and/or the Town Council Member assigned to handle personnel matters.

The Town Manager and/or the Mayor will conduct a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation into the alleged harassment or discrimination. The Town Manager and/or the Mayor will decide as to whether the allegation of a violation of the Town policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and hostile environments in the workplace has been substantiated. If a violation has occurred, the Town Manager and/or the Mayor will determine the appropriate corrective measures necessary to immediately remedy the violation. Such measures may involve disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

If a complaint involves both the Town Manager and the Mayor, the Town Council Member designated to handle personnel matters shall be responsible for investigating the complaint and directing appropriate corrective measures, if warranted.

To the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances, confidentiality will be maintained throughout all phases of the intake, investigation, and remediation process. Any breach of confidentiality by any party involved in this procedure may be considered an act of obstruction, and may subject that employee to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Any employee has the right to file a complaint directly with external agencies that investigate discrimination or harassment charges in addition to utilizing this internal procedure. If an employee chooses this option, he or she should contact the specific agency to obtain information as to the time frames and applicable procedures for filing and pursuing a complaint.

Section 18. Health and Safety Policies

A. Worker's Compensation

Worker's Compensation provides benefits for an employee in the event of certain occupational illnesses, injuries, or deaths. **Any job-related accident or workplace injury must be reported to the Town Manager or the Assistant Town Manager as soon as possible, but**

no later than 24 hours after the accident or injury.

The Town maintains insurance for injuries covered by Worker's Compensation. All employees must comply with all lawful requirements or requests from the insurance carrier or the Town relating to any workplace injuries. Not all injuries are covered by Workman's Compensation.

B. Occupational Safety and Health

The Town attempts to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all employees by providing the necessary safety education and training. Employees shall follow all prescribed safety procedures when performing their daily activities, attend all required trainings, and shall further exercise all reasonable and prudent judgment to ensure safety.

The Maintenance Supervisor has the responsibility for ensuring that the various work areas are free from any recognized hazards that might lead to death or injury. Further, it is the responsibility of each employee to perform all work in a safe manner.

Employees are directed to utilize all applicable safety procedures and to use the safety equipment provided by the Town. Employees are responsible for bringing to the Town Manager's attention any potential hazards that might exist within their work area. The Maintenance Supervisor is responsible for developing and maintaining work safety rules and for providing these rules to the staff.

Specifically, employees shall:

- Report all injuries to the Town Manager immediately **but no later than 24 hours after their occurrence**. Medical treatment should be sought immediately;
- Report and, if possible, correct all unsafe conditions or acts;
- Take all standard safety precautions to prevent injury; and
- Follow all safety rules.

C. Use of Equipment

Equipment and vehicles essential to accomplishing job duties are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using Town-owned property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Employees must notify the Maintenance Supervisor if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and injury to employees or others.

Personal use of Town vehicles, or use of such vehicles for any other reason than performance of duties or transport to and from work assignments, is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the Town Manager. Use of personal vehicles to perform Town duties is also prohibited unless authorized by the Town Manager.

Employees shall be responsible for maintaining a current operator's license of proper classification for the vehicle being used. Operation of a Town vehicle without a valid and properly classified operator's license shall be grounds for disciplinary action, including

termination of employment.

Employees charged with parking, driving, or traffic violations while operating a Town-owned vehicle shall be responsible for their own disposition of the citation.

Employees charged with the cause of an accident while operating a Town-owned vehicle may be required to pay for damages if gross negligence is determined. The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, unsafe, or illegal use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as receipt of excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations, is prohibited and can result in disciplinary action.

Employees and passengers must wear safety restraints at all times while operating or riding in Town-owned vehicles.

D. Smoking Policy

Employees may not smoke in Town-owned buildings.

Section 19. Internet and Communications Policies

The Town may provide electronic, digital, and wireless communications equipment primarily for business purposes. Any personal use should be de minimis. Messages received, sent, and stored on this equipment may be subject to monitoring from time to time and in the course of this monitoring may be read for content. Employees should be aware that there are stored records of all communications. The electronic use, transmission, and storage of messages, files, images, and sounds are subject to monitoring by the Town. There should be no expectation of privacy in any communications received, sent, or stored on equipment or service provided by the Town.

Employees may be provided with passwords and e-mail addresses to enable them to carry out Town business. These addressees and passwords are not provided to make employees' usage confidential or private. The usage of the Internet is subject to the same code of conduct that applies to all other actions in the workplace and using the Town's Internet account in a manner that violates any rules or regulations constitutes grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees must not share their passwords with any other individuals, including other employees or outsiders. Nor is it appropriate to attempt to subvert network security either by accessing the Internet without using your password or by creating or seeking to discover others' passwords to gain access. Employees are representatives of the Town when using the Town's Internet account. Accordingly, they are expected to act and to communicate professionally on the Internet, not to engage in any illegal activities, or to use the account for personal business or personal commercial enterprises.

The Town will have access to a log of all usage, including a list of employees who have used the Internet and the sites they visited. The Town will monitor this usage from time to time, and employees found to be abusing usage or using the Internet inappropriately will be subject to disciplinary action.

Section 20. Drug and Alcohol Policies

A. Employee Responsibilities

No employee shall consume alcoholic beverages or use illegal drugs immediately before work, during work hours, or while at work during breaks or lunches. No employee shall be impaired by alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs immediately before work, during work hours, or while at work during breaks or lunches. No employee shall represent the Town in an official capacity while impaired by or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or impaired by medication.

No employee shall engage in safety sensitive activities while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, or medication. If an employee is using prescription or non-prescription medication that may impair performance of duties, the employee shall report that fact to the Town Manager or the Maintenance Supervisor.

No employee shall unlawfully manufacture, dispense, possess, use, or distribute any controlled substance, medication, or alcohol.

Any employee convicted under a federal or state statute regarding controlled substances shall notify his or her supervisor and the Town Manager within five days of conviction or the day prior to reporting to work, which ever takes place first.

Any employee who has lost their driving license or had restrictions placed upon it shall notify the Town Manager within five days of such change.

An employee who has reason to believe that the performance of another employee is impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or medication shall immediately notify the Town Manager.

All Town property and Town equipment is subject to search or inspection without probable cause for alcohol, illegal drugs, or other contraband.

Because of the serious nature of illegal use or abuse of alcohol, controlled substances, and/or non-prescribed use of medication, appropriate employee disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination.

B. Drug and Alcohol Testing

The Town reserves the right to establish a program in which employees may be required to participate in all of the following alcohol and controlled substances testing:

- When there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee is in an impaired state;
- When the employee has been involved in an on-duty serious accident or has endangered others in the workplace;
- As a condition for return to duty after testing positive for controlled substances or alcohol;
- As part of follow-up procedures for the employee's return to duty related to drug or alcohol violations; and/or

- Anytime an employee has been involved in an automobile accident while operating a Town owned vehicle.

Section 21. Disciplinary Actions

The following kinds of disciplinary action may be taken, depending upon the circumstances: oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension, demotion, or dismissal.

A. Actions That May Result in Discipline

Below are examples of misconduct that may result in discipline. The list is not all-inclusive and other misconduct may be subject to disciplinary action:

- Conviction of a felony or of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude and other criminal acts that compromise continued performance of duties;
- Willfully falsifying Town records (including time records, leave records, job applications, or pay or reimbursement vouchers);
- Gross negligence with Town or misuse of Town property;
- Violating any workplace rule;
- Performing official duties in a rude and discourteous manner, threatening co-workers, or using physical violence while on duty;
- Violating any lawful official regulation or order or willfully failing to obey a proper direction of the supervisor or the Town Manager;
- Using or being impaired at work by intoxicants, drugs, or alcohol or being impaired by prescription medications or being impaired by lack of sleep;
- Violating the Town's drug free workplace rules;
- Grossly neglecting duty or continually being unable or unwilling to render satisfactory performance;
- Taking property of the Town for one's personal use, for sale to another or for a gift to another;
- Inducing, or attempting to induce, an officer or employee in the service of the Town to commit an unlawful act or to act in violation of any lawful or official regulation or order;
- Accepting a bribe, gift, token, money, or other thing of value intended as an inducement to perform or refrain from performing any official acts, or engaging in any action of extortion or other means of obtaining money or other things of value through his/ her position in the Town;
- Unsatisfactory attendance, excessive absences, or excessive tardiness;
- Excessive use of the Town's Internet access, computer equipment or telecommunications equipment for personal reasons;
- Use of the Town's Internet access, computer equipment or telecommunications equipment for the generation, dissemination, storage or viewing of messages, files, images and/or sounds considered to be of a harassing or immoral nature;
- Harassing other employees and/or the public.

B. Review Procedure

Employees who believe that a disciplinary action taken against them was improper may request that the Mayor review the disciplinary action. Such review must be requested within five (5) calendar days of the imposition of the disciplinary action.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Town of Garrett Park's Personnel Manual

The Town's Personnel Manual has been prepared to provide you with a general understanding of the Town's personnel policies, work rules, programs, and benefits. All employees are responsible for becoming familiar with our policies and procedures as well as our other foundational documents.

If you have any questions regarding the material in the handbook or those foundational documents, please contact your immediate supervisor for clarification. **I understand that the Manual should not be construed as an employment contract or agreement for employment for any specified period of time.** The Town reserves the right to make changes to these policies at any time. When changes are necessary, we will provide you with amended pages for your handbook.

I acknowledge receipt of the Town of Garrett Park's Personnel Manual.

Employee Name (Please Print) _____

Employee Signature _____

Date _____