

# TOWN OF PALMER



# EMPLOYEE MANUAL

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Handbook describes the policies and benefits currently in effect for employees of the Town of Palmer.

This Handbook is not a contract of employment and in no way implies or guarantees employment for any specified length of time. Employment with the Town is on an at-will basis. Either the Town or the employee may terminate employment at any time, with or without reason and with or without prior notice.

The Town of Palmer retains the right to modify, change, suspend or cancel, at any time and without notice, any or all parts of the Handbook's contents, including benefits, as circumstances require.

The Town Manager may issue rules and regulations to carry out any or all parts of this Handbook. The Town Manager may also issue guidelines regarding the interpretation and application of these policies and procedures.

This Handbook, and the policies and benefits described herein, pertain to all Town employees. In the event of a conflict between any provision of this Handbook and any provision of a valid and effective collective bargaining agreement the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement shall govern. In all other cases, these policies shall govern.

**TOWN OF PALMER  
PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS**

Dear Employee,

I would like to welcome you as a member of our Town community. We hope your career with the Town is rewarding, enjoyable and productive.

The following manual outlines the policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and benefits that will guide your employment with the Town. If you feel that an item is not clear or you have a question about something that is not included in the manual, please contact your department head.

On behalf of the residents of Palmer and your fellow employees, we would like to welcome you to our municipal service team.

Sincerely,

Charles T. Blanchard, Town Manager

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The Town of Palmer is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity in all aspects of employment.

Our employment philosophy stresses the need to employ and promote the most qualified people. The Town is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, as defined by law, national origin, physical or mental disability, genetic information or age, as defined by law, veterans' status, military status or gender identify, in connection with, but not limited to, hiring, placement, upgrading, transfer or demotion, recruiting, advertising or solicitation, compensation, training, reduction in force or termination.

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against qualified applicants and employees who have a disability but who can perform the essential functions of the job for which they are applying or which they hold, with or without reasonable accommodation. Other provisions of the ADA establish requirements for accessible design in construction, transportation and telecommunications.

The Town is committed to the employment of people with disabilities. It is the Town's policy to provide equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Chapter 151B of Massachusetts General Laws. Our commitment includes, but is not limited to the hiring, training, accommodation and promotion of individuals with disabilities.

# **SECTION 1**

## **1.1 WORK SCHEDULES**

It is your responsibility to know when you are scheduled and to report on time for all scheduled shifts. While every effort will be made to honor requests for time off, scheduling is based on business requirements and staffing and no requests are guaranteed. Only supervisors or department heads are authorized to change posted schedules. If you fail to report for your scheduled hours without prior notification and authorization, you will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **1.2 ATTENDANCE**

We rely on employees working together in order for the Town to operate efficiently and successfully. Therefore, you must make every effort to report to work when scheduled. It is your responsibility to know and adhere to your schedule.

If you are faced with an emergency and cannot report to work, you must notify your supervisor in advance of your scheduled starting time. You must speak with your supervisor personally, and not leave messages or rely on others to report your absence, except in cases of extreme emergency.

Tardiness or absenteeism can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. A note from your physician may be required for you to return to work following an absence due to illness or injury.

An absence of three (3) or more days without notification to the Town will be considered voluntary job abandonment and the employee will be removed from the payroll.

## **1.3 SNOW DAY POLICY**

All Town buildings shall open, observe normal business hours, and remain open during any and all snow storms, or inclement weather.

“Non-essential” administrative employees (Town Building, Library and Memorial Hall) shall be allowed to rely on their own discretion in assessing their local road conditions and decide for themselves whether or not to make the drive in to (or drive home from) work.

If due to the weather, an employee decides not to come in (arrives later in the day, or goes home early), they may use a vacation/personal day (or portion thereof) in order to be paid for the lost time.

In rare instances when the Town Manager formally announces that the Town Building(s) will be closed, no administrative employees will be required to use vacation/personal time. All salaried and full-time (hourly) administrative staff will be compensated equivalent to one full paid day. Part-time (hourly) staff will be compensated on a pro rata basis, providing they were scheduled to work on that day.

## **1.4 PAYDAY AND PAYCHECKS**

Town employees shall be paid according to the Town's regular payroll period and in the same manner currently in effect. If you have any questions regarding payroll procedures, please contact the Town Treasurer's Office.

## **1.5 WAGE INCREASE POLICY**

The Town of Palmer has adopted a Compensation and Classification Plan, which is a systematic, formalized, and objective method for developing equitable job groupings and compensation levels for all Town positions. This Plan requires that every position have a Job Description that allows it to be rated using applied standards to place the job within the Town's Classification Plan.

## **1.6 OVERTIME PAY**

In accordance with State and Federal law, non-exempt positions are paid overtime at the rate of time and one-half (1½ times regular hourly rate) for all hours actually worked over 40 per workweek. Overtime applies only to hours actually worked. Hours paid in lieu of work (leaves of absence, paid sick leave, bereavement) will not be considered in computing overtime.

## **1.7 STAND-BY AND CALL-IN PAY**

Some departments require coverage 24 hours a day and seven days a week. In those instances, stand-by pay may be authorized by the Town.

In lieu of stand-by pay, a call list, based on seniority may be administered by the department head. In case of emergency, the department head will "call-in" a number of personnel as required from the call list.

The department head may require that the employee remain on duty for the full 4 hours.

A "call-back" will be paid at time and one-half, subject to Section 1.5.

## **1.8 PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

At least annually, your performance will be evaluated by your supervisor or department head. This evaluation will include a summary of your strengths and weaknesses, the objectives you need to achieve to continue to be successful in your position and what may be required to advance into a higher position. You will be asked to share any comments you may have about the evaluation, as well as to provide input for your goals and objectives.

## **1.9 JOB POSTING**



All available positions will be posted in the Town Hall, outside the Town Clerk's office, on the Town's official website [www.townofpalmer.com](http://www.townofpalmer.com) and advertised in the local newspaper whenever possible. In addition, your department may have its own information board for posting available jobs. Positions, including specific application procedures, will be posted a minimum of 14 days.

### **1.10 PERSONNEL FILE**

Payroll records related to your employment are located in the Town Treasurer's Office. Questions pertaining to your payroll should be directed to the Treasurer.

A central Personnel File is kept in the Town Manager's office in the Town Hall.

If you would like to review your personnel file, you may do so by submitting a written request to your department head. You will have the opportunity to review your file, in the presence of a Town representative, during normal business hours, within five business days of your written request.

You may also request, in writing, copies of documents in your personnel file.

### **1.11 PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

All new employees will have a six (6) month probationary period. During this period, an employee may be disciplined or discharged at the discretion of the Town Manager, or other appropriate administrator, with or without reason and with or without notice.

An employee may not take earned vacation during this period, unless specifically authorized by the Town Manager, but sick time and personal time are allowed, if necessary.

During this probationary period, regular meetings will be held with the employee to discuss performance. The supervisor should maintain an ongoing observation of the new employee's performance throughout the probationary period and allow for feedback.

Upon completion of the probationary period, the supervisor will conduct a documented Progress Review with the employee at which time the employee's performance will be evaluated for continuation of employment.

Completion of the employee's probationary period does not alter his/her status as an at will employee.

### **1.12 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

The Town has various administrative tools and disciplinary procedures to inform you if you are not satisfactorily performing your job or if you are not complying with Town policies and procedures.

The administrative tools include verbal counseling and written counseling. Disciplinary procedures include written warning, suspension or termination.

The Town Manager may terminate your employment for misconduct, or poor performance.

The tools and procedures described above do not limit the right of the Town Manager to suspend or terminate your employment at any time for any incident of misconduct or poor performance.

## **SECTION 2**

### **2.1 ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS**

Except as otherwise noted, all benefits described in this section apply to full time employees who work a minimum of 32.5 hours per week, (the norm being 37.5 hours per week; 40 hours per week being the maximum before overtime can be applied) on a regular and consistent basis.

### **2.2 VACATION**

Vacation is earned on an annual basis, according to the schedule outlined below. For purposes of determining “service” category, the vacation year begins on the anniversary date of the employee’s hire.

#### **A. FULL TIME EMPLOYEE VACATION SCHEDULE**

0 – 5 years service	10 days total.
5 – 9 years service:	15 days total.
10 – 19 years service	20 days total
20 or more years service	25 days total.

Vacation shall be paid at the rate of pay in effect at the time the vacation is taken. “Rate of pay” is defined as your regular base salary or straight-time hourly or weekly wage, excluding overtime.

#### **B. PART TIME EMPLOYEE VACATION SCHEDULE**

Vacation time for employees who are regularly scheduled to work 20 hours or more per week will earn vacation time at a ratio of the regularly scheduled part-time hours divided by 37.5 hours per week.

For example, a full-time employee with 0 to 5 years of service earns vacation time at the rate of 10 days a year.

A part-time employee with a regular work schedule of 25 hours per week would earn vacation time at the rate of  $25/37.5 = 0.666$  multiplied by 10 = 6.66 days per year.

You must be employed by the town on the last business day of the month in order to accrue vacation time for that month. You will be paid for any unused earned vacation time upon termination of employment. In no event will unearned vacation time be paid upon termination.

**C. SCHEDULING AND APPROVAL OF VACATIONS**

Vacations shall be scheduled at a time mutually convenient for you and your department. Vacations may not be approved during peak periods or when business or staffing demands do not allow. Your Department Head will determine whether or not a vacation request is approved. Normally, no more than two (2) weeks of vacation may be taken consecutively. Vacation time should be requested of the Department Head at least one month in advance, unless there is an emergency.

**D. ACCUMULATING VACATION TIME**

An employee may carry over a maximum of seventy-five percent (75%) of the employee's vacation accumulation as of his/her anniversary date (i.e. if an employee received four (4) weeks of vacation on his/her anniversary date, he/she would be allowed to carry over three (3) weeks of vacation time). The vacation time may be carried over for a period of one (1) year.

**E. ILLNESS DURING VACATION**

If you become seriously ill or hospitalized, or if there is a death in your immediate family during your vacation, you may reschedule your vacation time provided you notify your supervisor immediately. You may be required to provide appropriate documentation when requesting to reschedule a vacation.

**F. HOLIDAYS DURING VACATION**

Holidays recognized by the Town that occur during your vacation are counted as paid holidays and not as vacation time.

**2.3 SICK LEAVE**

**A. FULL TIME EMPLOYEES**

Upon completion of ninety (90) days of employment with the Town, an employee shall begin accruing sick leave on the basis of one (1) day for each month worked until January 1 of the first full year of employment. .

On January 1 of the first full year of employment an employee shall be granted fifteen (15) days of sick leave for the calendar year. You may use up to three (3) days of sick leave per year for personal time.

Unused sick leave may be accumulated to a maximum of one hundred fifty (150) days. Sick leave will not be paid in lieu of time off or if your employment is terminated. Hours paid as sick leave do not count toward overtime.

You must follow the established call-off procedures within your department in order to receive sick pay. The Town requires a doctor's note to support an absence that exceeds three consecutive

workdays and reserves the right to request a physician's statement or to otherwise verify an employee's absence prior to paying any employee sick pay.

## 2.4 HOLIDAYS

### A. RECOGNIZED HOLIDAYS

The Town recognizes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day January 1
- Martin Luther King Day Third Monday in January
- President's Day Third Monday in February
- Good Friday (Half Day)
- Patriot's Day Third Monday in April
- Memorial Day Fourth Monday in May
- Independence Day July 4
- Labor Day First Monday in September
- Columbus Day Second Monday in October
- Veteran's Day November 11
- Thanksgiving Day Fourth Thursday in November
- Friday Following Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve One-half day or the full day if Christmas falls on Saturday or Sunday or Monday in which case the Employee does not receive Christmas Eve as a holiday
  
- Christmas Day December 25
- Friday after Christmas (if Christmas falls on Thursday)

#### (a) 5-Day Work Week

If a paid holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. Holidays falling on a Monday will be observed on that Monday.

#### (b) 4-Day Work Week (Town Administration Employees)

If a paid holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. Holidays falling on a Monday will be observed on that Monday.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Town Administration Building will be open from 8:30am to 7:30pm on the Tuesday following a Monday holiday.

If a holiday falls on a Friday, it will be observed on that Friday, and the Town Administration Building will be closed on the preceding Thursday.

Employees are required to account for all hours they are regularly scheduled to work. Employees may elect to work during periods that the Town Administration Building is closed to account for lost time.

There may be days of religious or historical significance that you would like to be included as holidays. Whenever possible, your supervisor will consider special requests on a case-by-case basis. You will not be paid for these additional holidays unless you use vacation or personal leave.

## **B. HOLIDAY PAY**

If you are scheduled to work on a holiday, you will be paid double time, provided you actually work your scheduled shift.

There is no combining or “pyramiding” of the holiday pay provisions outlined above.

## **2.5 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

All Employees shall be granted emergency leave of up to five (5) working days, not chargeable to sick leave, for the death of an immediate family member of the employee, i.e. parent, spouse, child, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law and brother-in-law.

## **2.6 JURY DUTY**

If you are required to serve on a jury in accordance with Chapter 234A of the Massachusetts General Laws when scheduled for work you shall be paid your base rate of pay by the Town for the first three (3) calendar days of jury service. For the fourth and subsequent days of such juror service while scheduled to work, you shall be paid by the Town the difference between the amounts received as juror compensation and your base rate of pay. You must provide documentation from the court showing the day(s) served and the amount of any compensation received in order to receive Jury Duty Pay.

## **2.7 MILITARY LEAVE**

Employees in the military reserves shall be granted, consistent with applicable State and Federal laws, Military Leave for as long as required by their military orders. In addition, these employees shall be paid the difference between their normal pay and any compensation received while on reserve duty for training for a period not to exceed two (2) weeks in any twelve (12) month period.

Employees, who are called up to duty, or otherwise enter Military Service, are covered by the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Act.

## **2.8 FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (“FMLA”), eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks or 26 weeks (for certain military circumstances) of unpaid job-protected leave each year for specified family and medical reasons. A copy of the Town’s FMLA Policy is included as an attachment to this Handbook.

## **2.9 SMALL NECESSITIES LEAVE ACT**

In addition to leave under the FMLA, employees who are eligible for FMLA leave may take up to 24 hours of unpaid leave during the FMLA 12-month window period for three specified reasons. A copy of the Town’s SNLA Policy is included as an attachment to this Handbook.

## **2.10 HEALTH INSURANCE**

Participation in the Town’s Health Insurance Plan is open to all employees working at least 20 or more hours per week on a regularly scheduled basis. Benefits are available to eligible employees and their dependents under a group plan. If you are eligible, you can choose any one of the plans offered, based on your individual and family needs. Covered services generally include hospitalization, maternity, surgical procedures, and emergency treatment. There may be co-payments you are responsible for depending on the nature of the service and the plan you select. Employees may change plan elections during designated open enrollment periods (typically once per year). Please refer to individual Plan Summaries for specific details.

Employees are required to pay a portion of their health insurance premiums. Payments are made through pre-tax payroll deduction.

Should your insurance benefits terminate, coverage may be continued beyond the date it would normally cease under the guidelines of the Continuation of Benefits mandated by the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA). You will receive notice of the termination of insurance benefits and detailed information about your rights under. The Administrator provides notice.

The Town of Palmer has the right to amend or eliminate the number of plans, benefit levels and employee contributions at its discretion. The Plan Administrator provides notice. For more specific information you may request information from the Town Treasurer’s Office.

## **2.11 RETIREMENT PLAN**

The Town participates in the Hampden County Retirement System. Membership in this contributory retirement system is mandatory for nearly all public employees who regularly work at least twenty (20) hours per week (or 1040 hours per year). A plan summary is available in the Town Treasurer’s Office in the Town Hall.

As an employee of the Town, you are required to participate in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Deferred Compensation Plan (“OBRA Plan”) in place of basic Social Security. The OBRA Plan is permitted by the federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. As an OBRA

employee, you must contribute 7.5% of your gross compensation per pay period to the plan. These mandatory contributions must be invested in the income fund. You may also make additional voluntary contributions to the plan.

## **2.12 DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN**

Town employee may choose to participate in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Deferred Compensation Plan. This is a retirement savings program that offers significant tax advantages.

Contributions to this Plan are deducted from your paycheck on a pre-tax basis. This means that you do not pay current state or federal income taxes on this portion of your earnings. In addition, you will not pay current income taxes on the interest or investment earnings associated with your Plan. You pay taxes only when you receive the money in your account, usually in your retirement years when you may be in a lower tax bracket. Employees who leave municipal employment can elect to withdraw the funds they have contributed and be taxed at the time of withdrawal. Please refer to Plan Summary for specific details.

## **2.13 LIFE INSURANCE**

Eligible employees may purchase life insurance and accidental death & dismemberment coverage in the amount of \$10,000. Employee contributions will be deducted from your paycheck. Please refer to the Plan Summary.

## **2.14 DISABILITY INSURANCE**

Disability insurance is available to eligible Town employees. Employees pay 100% of the premium for this plan. Please see plan summary document for specific information.

## **2.15 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Town recognizes that a wide range of personal problems can interfere with an employee's ability to successfully perform their job. The property & casualty insurance carrier, MIIA, provides confidential access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that can help you with a variety of problems such as substance abuse, financial difficulties, stress and anxiety, and family or marital issues. For information on the EAP, please contact the Town Manager's Office.



## **SECTION 3**

### **3.1 SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION**

So as not to impose upon fellow employees, or interfere with their work, solicitation is not permitted on work time or in work areas. This includes the distribution of handouts of any kind. Non-employees may not solicit or distribute materials at any time on Town property, which is not a public area.

Bulletin Board postings must have the written approval of your department head prior to display.

Any violation of the solicitation and distribution policy is cause for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **3.2 WORK OUTSIDE OF TOWN FACILITY**

Employees may be permitted to perform their normal duties from their home base, when it is physically possible to do so and under circumstances where no confidentiality is breached, upon prior approval of their Department Head and the Town Manager. Duties so assigned or allowed, must be specifically job-related, accomplished during normal work hours and appropriately recorded and annotated on employees time sheet.

Compensation will be at normal pay rate. Overtime is not authorized for home-based work.

Allowing employees to work at home or off site should not be a continual practice but only allowed under exceptional circumstances and for specific periods of time, with approval sought prior to taking place. Customer service can be adversely affected when employees are not at their normal workstations.

Employees working from home must notify their department head when they start working, and when they end work. Department Heads may establish other restrictions for such work.

### **3.3 COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE REQUIREMENTS**

The state of Massachusetts imposes specific requirements for obtaining and maintaining a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). If your position requires a CDL, all state guidelines will apply to you.

State law provides for specific guidelines for drug and alcohol testing, including pre-employment, post-accident, return-to-duty and random testing. Testing may also occur if there is reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use.

Please see your department head for detailed information regarding CDL requirements.

### **3.4 USE OF TOWN-OWNED VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT**

All materials and equipment purchased with Town funds or grants are the property of the Town of Palmer and, as such, cannot be used by Town employees or residents for their personal use. This includes items such as tools, vehicles, test equipment, computers, and cell phones. If a special situation occurs that would require such use, prior permission must be obtained from the Town Manager or department head. A disclaimer/waiver will be required to relieve the Town of liability should an unfortunate event occur.

Vehicles may be used for personal use only where a vehicle has been authorized and assigned by the Town Manager.

### **3.5 INTERNET USAGE GUIDELINES**

All Town computer software, including electronic mail, voicemail and the internet, are Town-owned resources. The Town reserves the right to review all electronic records and communications. There is no guarantee of privacy for electronic communication on the Town equipment.

Employees are expected to use Town computers and Internet access for business-related purposes only.

Employees are not permitted to access computers using another individual's password. An exception being in the course of a Police Investigation, in these circumstances, the Police Department will have full access to all passwords. The Town reserves the right to restrict Internet access and usage and to prohibit specific websites. Under no circumstances are "adult" websites or sites pertaining to violence, weapons, or the threat of violence to be accessed or downloaded. The use of e-mail and the Internet to send, receive or download offensive or discriminatory messages (e.g., any messages containing overt sexual language, sexual implications or innuendo, or comments that offensively address someone's age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin or disability) is prohibited.

Also see a copy of the Town's Communications Policy which is included as an attachment to this Handbook.

## **SECTION 4**

### **4.1 SAFE WORK PRACTICES**

Employees are expected to practice safe work habits at all times. While some accidents are caused by unsafe conditions, such as faulty equipment, the overwhelming majority of accidents are caused by unsafe behavior (rushing, not following procedures, taking shortcuts, not using tools correctly, and improper lifting.) Being alert to potential safety hazards can prevent you from being hurt on the job. You may prevent others from being injured, as well. If you notice a safety hazard you should correct it immediately, if it is within your ability to do so (such as mopping up spilled water.) Otherwise, you should report any and all potential safety hazards to your supervisor.

Horseplay frequently results in accidents and is not permitted at work. Employees are expected to know and adhere to all safe work methods outlined by your supervisor, including keeping your work areas clean and free of debris; obeying all no-smoking rules; and using safety devices that are provided for your protection at all times. If you fail to abide by safe work practices, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **4.2 ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES**

If you are injured on the job, it is your responsibility to report the injury to your supervisor immediately. You will be instructed to complete an accident report, including a detailed explanation of the cause of the accident, the names of witnesses, and corrective measures to prevent similar accidents from occurring again.

Failure to report work-related injuries or illnesses in a timely manner may affect your ability to obtain workers compensation benefits.

All Accident Reports and Workers' Compensation claims should be submitted to the Town Manager's Office within 48 hours of the incident. Supervisors shall be responsible for investigating all accident and workers' compensation claims for violations of safe work practices.

### **4.3 WORKERS' COMPENSATION / MODIFIED DUTY**

Workers' Compensation benefits are provided by the Town to protect you if you incur a work-related injury or illness. Under this benefit, medical expenses incurred due to a bona fide work-related illness or injury will be paid. In qualifying cases, compensation for lost wages will also be paid by the insurance provider.

Workers' Compensation benefits are specified by state law and certain waiting periods and restrictions may apply. A physician's release is required in order to return to work.

If you are authorized to return to work in a modified or limited-duty capacity, the Town will make every effort to accommodate your return. In certain cases, accommodating modified duty may not be possible. Please note that modified duty is intended to be a temporary "bridge" that helps employees ease back into their normal duties.

## **4.4 FIRST AID / MEDICAL ATTENTION**

Check with your supervisor for the location of first aid stations in your work area, as well as the names of employees trained in first aid. Caution must be exercised in the administration of any first aid, especially if there is loss of blood or other body fluids. In all cases of serious or significant injury, trained medical personnel should be called immediately, by dialing 9-1-1. For non-serious injuries, the employee should be advised to seek medical assistance from his or her medical provider.

## **4.5 FIRE PREVENTION**

If there is a fire, call the fire department, by dialing 9-1-1 immediately.

Your supervisor will show you the location of fire extinguishers and fire alarm pull stations. In many cases, timely use of a hand fire extinguisher can avert a major fire. Be sure you know how to use a fire extinguisher. If unsure, ask your supervisor. Fire drills may be held periodically and you are required to participate. You are expected to follow designated evacuation procedures during all fire drills.

## **4.6 “RIGHT TO KNOW” / BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS**

The Federal Hazard Communication Standard states that you have a “right to know” what hazards you face when working and how to protect yourself against them. Your supervisor will describe the Hazard Communication Program to you, including how to recognize and understand warning labels; how to safely work with hazardous substances; and where to find information pertaining to potentially hazardous materials (the location of “Material Safety Data Sheets.”)

Your supervisor will also review with you procedures pertaining to Bloodborne Pathogens. Bloodborne Pathogens can be transmitted through contact with contaminated body fluids. Proper protective equipment (such as gloves, goggles, robe, and mask) should always be worn as appropriate if there is a risk of exposure to another person’s body fluids (such as when administering first aid or rescue breathing; cleaning a spill, such as blood or vomit).

## **4.7 SAFE LIFTING PRACTICES**

Always take precautions and follow procedures when lifting heavy objects. First, decide where you are moving the object and make sure the path is clear. Then, check that you can lift the object without assistance. If not, ask for help!

Keep your back as straight as possible when lifting. Bend from the knees, not the waist, and lift the object by pushing with your legs. Avoid twisting as you lift; use your feet to turn. Never lift an object when stretching across a counter, shelf, table or other surface. Slide or pull it toward you, then lift. Always be sure you have a firm grip on the object and wear protective gloves if the object has rough edges that could cut or bruise your hands. When moving an object from above (i.e. on a shelf), be sure that it is not too heavy. Position a ladder or stepstool so that the object may be removed with your arms and legs bearing its weight. Always store lighter objects on upper shelves and heavier objects on lower shelves.

## **SECTION 5**

### **5.1 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Town of Palmer (the “Town”) depends upon a work environment of tolerance and respect for the achievement of its goals. The Town is committed to providing a working environment that is free from all forms of abuse or harassment. The Town recognizes the right of all employees to be treated with respect and dignity and prohibits harassment of any sort.

Sexual harassment is a form of behavior that adversely affects the employment relationship. State and Federal law prohibit such behavior. Sexual harassment of individuals occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which individuals of the Town may find themselves in connection with their employment is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Town. The Town also condemns and prohibits sexual or other harassment by any applicant, client, vendor or visitor.

Because the Town takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and, where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, including discharge.

It is important to note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

#### **A. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment does not refer to purely voluntary social activities. It refers to behavior, which is not welcomed by the other person, which is personally offensive to him or her, and which undermines morale and/or interferes with the employee’s ability to work effectively. While it is not possible to list all of the circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, following is a list of situations that could constitute sexual harassment:

- verbal remarks of a sexual nature, use of sexually suggestive or degrading words, jokes of a sexual nature;
- conversation or gossip with sexual overtones; inquiries into one’s sexual experiences; discussion of one’s sexual activities; verbal comments of a sexual nature about an individual’s appearance or sexual terms used to describe an individual;
- comments, threats or jokes directed at a person because of his/her sexual preference.
- obscene or suggestive gestures or sounds; staring at parts of a person’s body;
- demands or requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats concerning an individual’s employment, pay, appraisal, advancement or any other employment status.

- continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is not welcomed; Unwelcome and repeated invitations (for lunch, dinner, drinks, dates, sexual relations).
- physical contact such as touching, hugging, kissing, stroking, fondling, patting, pinching or repeated brushing against another's body; deliberate bumping, cornering, mauling, grabbing.
- assaults, molestation or coerced sexual acts.
- posting or distributing sexually suggestive pictures, calendars or other materials, or in any other way creating an uncomfortable or hostile work environment
- sexually-oriented letters or notes.
- sending offensive or discriminatory messages or materials through the use of electronic communications (e.g., e-mail, including the internet, voice mail and facsimile); and
- condoning sexual harassment.

Both men and women can be the victims of sexual harassment. Both men and women can be the harasser. Sexual harassment can occur between members of the same sex, as well as members of the opposite sex. Victims of sexual harassment are not always the subjects of the unwelcome behavior. The victim may be someone who is affected by harassing behavior, even when directed toward another person, if that behavior creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive working environment or interferes with that person's ability to effectively perform their work.

## **B. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each employee of the Town is personally responsible for:

- ensuring that his/her conduct does not sexually harass any other employee or person with whom the employee comes in contact on the job, such as an outside vendor;
- cooperating in any investigation of alleged sexual harassment by providing any information he/she possesses concerning the matter being investigated;
- actively participating in efforts to prevent and eliminate sexual harassment and to maintain a working environment free from discrimination; and
- ensuring that an employee who files a sexual harassment claim or who cooperates in an investigation may do so without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

## **C. THE RULE**

It is, therefore, against the policy of the Town for any individual, male or female, to harass another individual sexually, that is, by making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other uninvited verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of employment;
- submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is made the basis for employment decisions
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance;
- a hostile or intimidating work environment is created for any employee;
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance.

It is also against the policy of the Town for an individual to sexually harass any person with whom the employee comes in contact on the job or to engage in any harassment or inappropriate or unprofessional conduct in the workplace.

#### **D. RETALIATION**

Retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is against the law.

#### **E. VIOLATION OF POLICY**

Any individual violating this policy will be subject to appropriate discipline, including possible discharge.

#### **F. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS**

If you believe you have been subject to harassment, you should initiate a complaint by contacting the Harassment Grievance Officer as soon as possible. The current Harassment Grievance Officer is Charles Blanchard, Town Manager. He can be reached at the Town Administration Building, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 and his telephone number is 413-283-2645. If you would prefer, you may contact Linda Leduc, Planning & Economic Development Director, who has been designated as the Alternate Harassment Grievance Officer. She can be reached at 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 and her telephone number is (413) 283-2690. It is your responsibility to report the incident to your supervisor or the Harassment Grievance Officer. You should initiate your complaint as soon as possible following any incident of alleged harassment. An investigation of the alleged harassment will be conducted and, if warranted, appropriate corrective action taken. Corrective action may range from counseling to termination of employment; however no disciplinary action will be taken without a thorough investigation. If you prefer to discuss a possible sexual harassment problem with your supervisor, you may always do so, but you are not required to go through the regular chain of supervision when reporting sexual harassment and may go directly to the Grievance Officer.

#### **G. INVESTIGATION**

The investigation of any harassment complaint may include interviews with the individual making the complaint, the person or persons accused of harassment, all persons having direct knowledge of the events leading to the complaint, and any potential witnesses. All information regarding the investigation, including identities of all involved, will be kept as confidential as possible.

#### **H. DECISION**

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Town will make a final decision. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is factual, appropriate corrective action will be taken to prevent the harassment from occurring again. Corrective action will be appropriate to the offense and the employees involved, and may include discipline up to and including discharge. In any case, particularly in situations where the facts are inconclusive or unclear, the Town will ensure that all parties are reacquainted with its policy prohibiting harassment in the workplace.

The complainant will be notified of the disposition of the investigation.

#### **I. STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES**

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD), One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA, 436 Dwight Street, Springfield, MA and 22 Front Street, 5th Floor, Worcester, MA, is responsible for enforcing the Massachusetts Sexual Harassment law. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), located at JFK Federal Office Building, Government Center, Room 475, Boston, MA, is responsible for enforcing the federal law prohibiting sexual harassment. A complaint to the MCAD must be filed within six months. A complaint under federal law should be filed within 180 days, but under certain circumstances a federal complaint may be filed within 300 days.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a term and condition of my employment with the Town of Palmer, I have read the Sexual Harassment Policy and agree not to engage in any form of harassment described in these policies.

I also confirm that I have received copies of the Sexual Harassment Policy for my personal records and future reference.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

## **5.2 NON-HARASSMENT POLICY: HARASSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS IN PROTECTED CLASSES**

The Town of Palmer (the “Town”) depends upon a work environment of tolerance and respect for the achievement of its goals. The Town is committed to providing a working environment that is free from all forms of abuse or harassment. The Town recognizes the right of all employees to be treated with respect and dignity and prohibits harassment of any sort.

Harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation (hereafter referred to as “protected class harassment”) is a form of behavior that adversely affects the employment relationship. State and Federal laws prohibit such behavior. Protected class harassment of individuals occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which individuals of the Town may find themselves in connection with their employment is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Town. The Town also condemns and prohibits protected class or other harassment by any applicant, client, vendor or visitor.

Because the Town takes allegations of protected class harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints and where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, including discharge.

It is important to note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace that is free of protected class harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of protected class harassment.

### **A. DEFINITION OF PROTECTED CLASS HARASSMENT**

Protected class harassment refers to behavior, which is not welcomed by the other person, which is personally offensive to him or her, and which undermines morale and/or interferes with the employee’s ability to work effectively. While it is not possible to list all of the circumstances that may constitute protected class harassment, following is a list of situations that could constitute protected class harassment:

- verbal abuse on the basis of any protected status; use of words that degrade a protected class or person because of his/her protected class status;
- jokes or language about a protected class; teasing related to the protected class; obscene or suggestive gestures or sounds intended to relate to the protected class;
- verbal comments about an individual’s appearance or terms used to describe an individual that are related to a protected class;
- threats directed at a person because of his/her protected class status;
- posting or distributing objects, pictures, calendars, cartoons or other materials degrading to the protected class or a person because of his/her protected class status;

- letters or notes that degrade the protected class or a person because of his/her protected class status;
- sending offensive or discriminatory messages or materials through the use of electronic communications (e.g., e-mail, including the internet, voice mail and facsimile) which are degrading to the protected class or a person because of his/her protected class status; and
- condoning harassment on the basis of protected class.

Harassment on the basis of protected class status is not limited to behavior by a non- member of the protected class. Protected class harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances. Here are some things to remember:

- The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor;
- A member of the protected class may be victimized by another member of the protected class.
- The victim does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome protected class harassment is directed. The victim may be someone who is affected by the harassing conduct, even when it is directed toward another person, if the conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment for the co-worker or interferes with the co-worker's work performance.

## **B. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each employee of the Town is personally responsible for:

- ensuring that his/her conduct does not harass any other employee or person with whom the employee comes in contact on the job, such as an outside vendor;
- cooperating in any investigation of alleged protected class harassment by providing any information he/she possesses concerning the matter being investigated;
- actively participating in efforts to prevent and eliminate protected class harassment and to maintain a working environment free from discrimination; and
- ensuring that an employee who files a protected class harassment claim or who cooperates in an investigation may do so without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

## **C. THE RULE**

It is, therefore, against the policy of the Town for any employee, whether a member of a protected class or not, to harass another employee on the basis of protected class status by:

- making submission to such conduct either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of employment;

- making submission to, or rejection of, such conduct the basis for employment decisions;
- intending to or having the effect of interfering with an individual's work performance; or
- creating a hostile or intimidating work environment for any employee.

It is also against the policy of the Town for an employee to harass any person with whom the employee comes in contact on the job or to engage in any harassment or inappropriate or unprofessional conduct in the workplace.

#### **D. RETALIATION**

Retaliation against an employee for filing a complaint of protected class harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a protected class harassment complaint is against the law.

#### **E. VIOLATION OF POLICY**

Any employee violating this policy will be subject to appropriate discipline, including possible discharge.

#### **F. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS**

If you believe you have been subject to harassment, you should initiate a complaint by contacting the Harassment Grievance Officer as soon as possible. The current Harassment Grievance Officer is Charles Blanchard, Town Manager. He can be reached at the Town Administration Building, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 and his telephone number is 413-283-2645. If you would prefer, you may Linda Leduc, Planning & Economic Development Director, who has been designated as the Alternate Harassment Grievance Officer. She can be reached at 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 and her telephone number is (413) 283-2690. It is your responsibility to report the incident to your supervisor or the Harassment Grievance Officer. You should initiate your complaint as soon as possible following any incident of alleged harassment. An investigation of the alleged harassment will be conducted and, if warranted, appropriate corrective action taken. Corrective action may range from counseling to termination of employment; however no disciplinary action will be taken without a thorough investigation. If you prefer to discuss a possible protected class harassment problem with your supervisor, you may always do so, but you are not required to go through the regular chain of supervision when reporting protected class harassment and may go directly to the Grievance Officer.

#### **G. INVESTIGATION**

The investigation of any harassment complaint may include interviews with the individual making the complaint, the person or persons accused of harassment, all persons having direct knowledge of the events leading to the complaint, and any potential witnesses. All information regarding the investigation, including identities of all involved, will be kept as confidential as possible.

#### **H. DECISION**

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Town will make a final decision. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is factual, appropriate corrective action will be taken to prevent the harassment from occurring again. Corrective action will be appropriate to the offense and the employees involved, and may include discipline up to and including discharge. In any case, particularly in situations where the facts are inconclusive or unclear, the Town will ensure that all parties are reacquainted with its policy prohibiting harassment in the workplace.

The complainant will be notified of the disposition of the investigation.

#### **I. STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES**

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD), One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA, 436 Dwight Street, Springfield, MA and 22 Front Street, 5th Floor, Worcester, MA, is responsible for enforcing the Massachusetts discrimination and protected class harassment law. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), located at JFK Federal Office Building, Government Center, Room 475, Boston, MA, is responsible for enforcing the federal law prohibiting protected class harassment. A complaint to the MCAD must be filed within six months. A complaint under federal law should be filed within 180 days, but under certain circumstances a federal complaint may be filed within 300 days.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a term and condition of my employment with the Town of Palmer, I have read the Non-Harassment Policy and agree not to engage in any form of harassment described in these policies.

I also confirm that I have received copies of the Non-Harassment Policy for my personal records and future reference.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

### **5.3 VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY**

The Town of Palmer is committed to the goal of a work environment that is safe, secure and free of intimidation, threats, hostility or harassment of any kind. Any such behavior is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such behavior may be considered workplace “violence.” Any violation of this Policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees are advised that certain violations of this Policy may also constitute a violation of State or Federal law.

Violence is defined as any physical or verbal threat, abuse, assault or trauma against an employee, contractor, town resident or any other individual with whom you come in contact on the job, which results in physical or psychological damage and / or which interferes with an employee’s ability to perform his or her job. Violence encompasses a broad range of behaviors. In addition to the most obvious – physically harming another person, threats of assault, suicide or murder – these behaviors may also include, but are not limited to, abusive language, profanity, threats, fighting, pranks, offensive gestures, stalking, physical touching, sabotage and destruction of property. These types of behavior jeopardize an individual’s feelings of security and well-being at work and will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may result.

This policy also encompasses specific prohibited articles. Employees are not permitted to possess illegal drugs, controlled substances (excluding drugs prescribed to you by a physician), firearms, weapons, explosives or other objects that could be used to injure, harass or intimidate an individual, which are not expressly required as part of the job, while on duty or on town property (including desks, lockers and town vehicles) or during any work related business conducted outside of Town property. This prohibition applies even if an employee is licensed to carry a legal weapon. Desks, storage drawers, work areas, and vehicles although assigned to employees are Town property and are subject to unannounced inspections. Personal or private items should not be stored in such property. The Town may exercise its right to search Town property for weapons and any other item not permitted on Town premises.

The Town reserves the right to search the possessions of employees and any employee of vendors, contractors and subcontractors upon entering and leaving Town property at any time without prior announcement. At such times, all handbags, lunch boxes and other articles and containers may be subject to inspection. Employees refusing to submit or interfering with such searches may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If you feel you have been subjected to violence in the workplace, you should immediately contact your supervisor or department head. An investigation will be conducted and, if warranted, appropriate corrective action will be taken. Retaliation against any employee for reporting violence or the threat of violence is strictly prohibited. Please note, however, that an employee who knowingly makes false allegations against another employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a term and condition of my employment with the Town of Palmer, I have read and understand and have received a copy of the Violence in the Workplace Policy. I agree not to engage in any form of behavior that would violate this policy.

In addition, I understand that illegal drugs, controlled substances, firearms, weapons, explosives or other improper materials are prohibited articles. I may not be in the possession of any such article while on Town property, regardless of whether I am licensed to carry the weapon or not, unless expressly required as part of my job. I understand that the Town reserves the right to inspect any desk, locker, package or object that enters onto Town property or that I am removing from Town property.

I understand that any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

I agree to report any concerns I may have regarding workplace safety and security to my supervisor or department head.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_



## **5.4 SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

The ability to provide reliable service is dependent upon our ability to maintain safe and efficient working conditions for all employees. The effects of drug and alcohol abuse pose serious health risks to employees, co-workers and others. It is the purpose of this policy to promote employee health, safety and productivity by providing a work environment free from the effects of drug and alcohol abuse. Employees in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

### **A. POLICY STATEMENTS**

The Town of Palmer does not permit any employee to use, possess or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while at work. If there is belief that drugs or alcohol are present in a Town vehicle, desk, locker or other container, a search may be conducted to confirm that belief.

If there is belief that an employee is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at work, the employee may be required to undergo medical evaluation, which may include a drug test. "Belief" shall be based upon specific personal observations of a supervisor concerning the behavior, appearance, speech or bodily odors of the employee.

A designated healthcare provider shall conduct the medical evaluation to determine whether the employee is impaired. This determination shall be based on symptoms of drug or alcohol use commonly recognized in the medical community. An employee who refuses to cooperate with a medical evaluation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Management will consider the results of medical evaluations, the observations of the supervisor, and the results of any tests performed for the presence of drugs or alcohol in determining appropriate disciplinary action.

The use of certain prescription drugs can also impair job performance and may pose a safety risk to the employee or to others. Employees in safety-sensitive positions who are prescribed these types of drugs should inform their supervisor or manager. Where possible, job duties may be temporarily modified for the course of the prescription, or until a physician determines it is safe for the employee to return to normal duties.

The Town recognizes alcohol and chemical dependencies as treatable illnesses.

Employees who have alcohol or chemical dependencies are encouraged to seek professional treatment. Your job or promotional opportunities will not be jeopardized for seeking treatment, provided no Town rules or policies have been violated. If a Leave of Absence is requested for this purpose, the policy guidelines of the Family and Medical leave Act will apply.

### **B. ACCIDENTS**

An employee who is involved in an accident, including motor vehicle accidents, or in a sequence of events leading up to an accident, may be required to undergo medical evaluation if there is belief that the employee was impaired by alcohol or illegal drugs. "Belief" shall be based upon specific

personal observations of a supervisor concerning the behavior, appearance, speech or bodily odors of the employee. The medical evaluation may include testing for the presence of drugs or alcohol.

### **C. TESTING**

Any substance test that is found to be positive shall be confirmed by another testing method. The physician or medical provider will determine testing methods in accordance with generally accepted medical practice and federal testing guidelines. The medical provider will ensure adequate custody of specimens subject to testing.

Employees who test positive shall be considered unfit to work and shall be relieved immediately from duty for the remainder of their shift. Employees who refuse to test shall be presumed unfit to work and relieved from duty for the remainder of their shift. In addition, employees who refuse to test may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees will not be permitted to return to work until released by a medical provider based on a medical evaluation.

### **D. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

In determining appropriate disciplinary action, the Town will consider the information provided by the physician or medical provider, medical evaluations and test results, observations of supervisors, the response of the employee and any other relevant information pertaining to situation. Disciplinary action may include termination of employment.

### **E. PAY STATUS**

Employees shall not be paid for any period during which they are unfit to work because of alcohol or drug use. Such periods, except the first day tested, may be credited against any disciplinary action resulting from the application of this policy.

## **5.5 COMPENSATORY TIME POLICY FOR EXEMPT EMPLOYEES**

### **A. DEFINITIONS**

Under law, those employees employed in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standard Act. In general, such employees are considered to be exempt from the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Exempt employees are, therefore, not entitled to either overtime pay or compensatory time pursuant to the Act.

### **B. EXEMPT EMPLOYEES COMPENSATORY TIME OFF**

It is recognized, however, that there are occasions or events that cause exempt employees to devote considerable extra time outside normal working hours to the business of the Town. To that end, when exempt employees are required to work well beyond the time it normally takes them to complete their job responsibilities, exempt employees shall be allowed to apply for reasonable compensatory time off subject to this Policy during at such times as their department head reasonably determines will not adversely impact Town operations.

Compensatory time is not an entitlement. It is expected that exempt employees will extend the time to accomplish the usual tasks required of their position in a timely and efficient manner. Exempt employees shall be allowed to accumulate and use Compensatory time on a case-by-case basis as determined by their department head.

### **C. MAXIMUM TIME OFF**

Compensatory time is not guaranteed and will not be granted on an hour-for-hour basis for time worked over 40 hours. The purpose of this Compensatory Time Policy is to allow time to offset the extraordinary time put in during peak and exceptional workload periods. Compensatory time taken will be limited to 40 hours within a calendar year except for unusual circumstances approved by the department head. Compensatory time does not have a cash value and any unused earned compensatory time is lost when the employee is no longer employed by the Town.

### **D. PROCEDURAL RULES**

When an eligible exempt employee works an unusual amount of time within a pay period, he/she shall submit a written summary of these hours to his/her department head for approval to be accrued as earned Compensatory Time, within the same pay period the employee believes this to have been earned. The signature of the employee's department head on the payroll time sheet will show that the earned Compensatory Time has been approved.

At least one week prior to using earned Compensatory Time, the exempt employee must submit a written request for approval from his/her department head to use the earned Compensatory Time on specific dates. The signature of the employee's department head on the payroll time sheet will show that the use of Compensatory Time has been approved.

As stated above, all requests must be submitted in writing by the exempt employee to their respective department head and copies of all compensatory time requests and approvals must be provided to the Town Manager for his information. No verbal requests will be accepted.

The payroll office must track compensatory time and will make every effort to properly record the Compensatory Time hours earned and used based on the payroll sheets submitted, but it is the employee's responsibility to notify the payroll department of discrepancies within 30 days of the receipt of the pay slip in question.

NOTE: The payroll office records are the only valid and legal file.

In the absence of an employee's department head, the Town Manager may approve Compensatory Time requests.

**E. EXAMPLES OF OCCASIONS OR EVENTS WHICH MAY CAUSE EXTRA TIME TO BE EXPENDED**

- Blizzards/Extreme Storms
- Continuous Storms over Several Days
- Exceptional Demands on Town Services: unusual or exceptional load due to major or simultaneous proposed developments (mailings, duplications and notifications within a restricted time)
- Unusual Demand for Special Reports to the State
- Establishment of New Procedures
- Late Tax Billing

## **5.6 COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

It is the policy of the Town of Palmer (the “Town”) to ensure effective business communications among all individuals within the Town and with others outside of the Town, in particular the Town’s citizens. It is important that all forms of communication, whether verbal, written or transmitted via the Town’s electronic communications systems, promote an atmosphere of professionalism, courtesy and respect.

### **A. TOWN COMMUNICATIONS**

All communications regarding Town procedure and administration or which may affect the Town or its personnel as a whole, will either originate from or be approved by the Town prior to distribution. No individual in the Town is to send or distribute any communication to “All Personnel” or “All Users” without prior authorization from the Town. Managers are authorized to send or distribute communications regarding their area’s business.

#### **(a) Bulletin Boards**

The Town maintains a bulletin board, which is designated for the posting of Town notices. Employees are not authorized to post any form of literature, printed or written materials, or notices of any kind the Town’s bulletin board, on the walls, in the copy areas or on the Town’s property.

#### **(b) Solicitations**

Employees are prohibited from soliciting other employees during working time and from distributing materials in work areas. Work time does not include rest periods, breaks or lunch periods. Employees are prohibited from selling or buying merchandise at any time. Persons not employed by the Town are prohibited from soliciting employees on the Town’s premises or distributing materials on the Town’s non-public areas at any time for any purpose.

#### **(c) Electronic Communication Devices**

Electronic communication devices as defined in this policy include, but are not limited to, the Town’s telephone system (including voicemail), facsimiles, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, Internet services, Intranet, cell phone services, pagers, copy machines, Town-owned lap tops and computers provided for home use and computer software (“electronic communication devices” or collectively referred to as “electronic communication systems”). Electronic communication devices are Town-owned resources and are provided as business communication tools. All information or transmissions that are created, sent, received or stored on the Town’s electronic communication systems, including passwords, (“electronic communications”) are the sole property of the Town.

This policy governs all use of Town-owned electronic communication devices, electronic communications and electronic communication systems and also governs electronic communications which occur using electronic communication devices or electronic communication systems not owned by the Town but that occur in connection with the Town’s activities whether on or off the Town’s premises. Electronic messages should be communicated

with the same thought and care devoted to written or verbal communications. Individuals should not transmit any form of electronic communication that they would not be comfortable writing in a letter or memorandum. All individuals of the Town must adhere to the following, while on the Town's premises and off-site, and use good judgment when using the Town's electronic communication devices.

**(d) Privacy**

There can be no guarantee of privacy for electronic communications. The Town reserves the right to review and/or monitor all electronic records and communications, at any time, with or without notice, including individual user folders and other information stored on the Town's electronic communication systems. In accessing the Internet, users should assume that all connections and sites visited will be monitored and recorded. This examination helps to ensure compliance with Town policies, assists when internal investigations must be conducted and supports the management of the Town's information systems. Use of the Town's electronic communication devices constitutes acceptance of such monitoring.

**(e) Security**

The Town's electronic communication systems are to be used only by authorized persons. An electronic mail (e-mail) account is assigned to each user with a username and password. Any communication sent from that account is the responsibility of the user assigned to the account. Except when specifically authorized by the Town, users shall not (i) disclose their passwords to others; (ii) use someone else's password; (iii) provide their e-mail address to any non-business related Internet Web site; or (iv) transmit their user names or passwords through the e-mail. Passwords are designed to provide security of the Town's electronic communication systems from unauthorized users, not to provide privacy to individual users of the Town's electronic communication systems.

**(f) Workplace Environment**

The Town is committed to maintaining a working environment free from all forms of abuse and harassment. Use of the Town's electronic communication systems to send abusive, vulgar, offensive or discriminatory messages is prohibited. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages which contain profanity, overt sexual language, sexual implications or innuendo or comments that offensively address someone's age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin, or disability.<sup>1</sup> Individuals of the Town are responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that they place or send over the Internet and for ensuring that the Internet is used in an effective, ethical and lawful manner. The transmission or downloading of any sexually explicit materials including abusive, profane or offensive language or images is prohibited. The Town reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files as it deems necessary and appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> Sexual harassment and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, age, as defined by law, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, as defined by law, gender identity or expression, genetic information, or military status, are covered by the Company's *Sexual Harassment Policy* and *Protected Class Policy* and should be referenced for those specific requirements.

**(g) Effective Business Communications**

While e-mail and voicemail may be the quickest and easiest way to communicate, it may not always be the most appropriate or effective way to communicate when managing or conducting the Town's business. Individuals of the Town should avoid using e-mail when the message that must be communicated involves extremely important, confidential or sensitive internal Town matters (e.g., discussions regarding an employee's work performance or a candidate's application for employment). Such communications, including dialogues that call for extensive back-and-forth discussion, are best held in person or on the phone.

**(h) Confidential Information**

Users of the Town's electronic communication systems should be careful in creating e-mail messages that contain confidential information or providing such information through access to Internet web sites. Even when a message has been deleted or Internet access terminated, the information may still exist in a printed or electronic version, may be recreated from a back-up system, or may have been forwarded by the recipient to someone else.

**(i) Protected Health Information**

Individuals of the Town authorized to access Protected Health Information ("PHI") must take reasonable steps to ensure that access to electronically transmitted PHI is password protected. Electronically stored PHI, including such information residing in electronic messages, electronic document files, databases, floppy disks, CDs and other computer files must be password-protected and accessible only by individuals of the Town who have a need for access. Reasonable steps must also be taken to ensure that all incoming facsimiles and print jobs containing PHI are viewable and retrievable only by individuals of the Town with a legitimate need for access. PHI that no longer needs to be retained after use should be deleted or shredded, unless subject to record retention policies and procedures.<sup>2</sup>

**(j) Electronic Discussion Groups or Subscription Services**

Participation by any individual of the Town in an electronic discussion group (chat room), such as a list-serv, newsgroup, or an e-mail subscription service, shall be allowed only if such participation relates to the business of the Town. No participation in such groups for personal reasons is allowed whether during, before, or after normal business hours except in limited situations (e.g., CNN Breaking News) and pre-approval has been obtained from the Human Resources Director. Individuals of the Town should be mindful that no confidential information may be shared with other group participants.

**(k) Viruses**

Any files downloaded from e-mail or Internet web sites and any computer disks received from outside sources must be scanned with the Town's virus detection software before installation or use. Downloading programs (including self-installing software and upgrades) is prohibited

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<sup>2</sup> Subject to the Town's *HIPAA Privacy Compliance Program*.

without prior approval. Any viruses detected, tampering or system problems must be reported immediately to the Systems Department.

**(l) Personal Use**

The use of the Town's electronic communication devices is primarily for business purposes. Personal use of electronic communication devices during business hours is prohibited except in limited situations when circumstances warrant communications with family members or co-workers as well as the use of electronic communication devices for community activities, educational or professional development purposes.<sup>3</sup> Individuals may not abuse this privilege for any significant amount of personal use or activity. Any personal use of the Town's electronic communication devices or electronic communication systems is expected to be on the employee's own time and is not to interfere with the employee's job responsibilities or the business operation of the Town. Any communication sent is the responsibility of the user assigned to the account.

**(m) Specific Prohibited Uses**

In addition to requiring compliance with this policy, the Town expressly prohibits the use of the camera feature on personal cell phones while working and while on the Town's premises. The Town also expressly prohibits certain specific types of misuse of the Town's electronic communication devices or systems. Personnel shall not use the Town's or other electronic communication devices or electronic communication systems to:

- engage in any illegal activity including, but not limited to, pornography, terrorism, espionage, theft, drugs, gambling or hacking;
- send, receive, access, create, print or distribute or otherwise transmit any form of offensive, discriminatory, obscene, pornographic, harassing, defamatory, derogatory, disruptive or otherwise inappropriate communication, at any time, to any person or entity;
- send, receive, access, create, print, distribute or otherwise transmit inappropriate language or images that offensively address someone's age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin or disability;
- release any communication that violates the Town's confidentiality requirements including divulging confidential or privileged information;
- use or disclose Protected Health Information ("PHI") unless pursuant to the Town's HIPAA Privacy Compliance Program;
- authorize other individuals to send e-mail from their account or use another account to send e-mail communications for their own purposes;
- engage in extensive personal communications with co-workers, friends or family members;

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<sup>3</sup> This prohibition does not apply to discussions of conditions of employment with other employees.



- send, receive, access, copy, print, distribute or otherwise transmit copyrighted materials, including music, articles and software, movies, trade secrets or proprietary financial information in violation of Town policy or written agreements or without prior authorization;
- install personal software on Town-owned computers or install Town-owned software on computers that are not owned by the Town without the prior written approval of the Systems Department;
- operate a business, solicit outside business ventures, usurp business opportunities, search for outside employment or for solicitation in connection with political, religious or personal causes (except as described in subsection I above); and
- engage in unethical activities or content, or activities or content that could damage the Town's reputation.

All such instances as specified in this subsection J must be reported immediately to a supervisor, Management or Human Resources. It is important to note that while this policy sets forth specific prohibited uses of the Town's electronic communications, electronic communication devices and electronic communication systems as outlined above, the policy is not designated or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for inappropriate use of the Town's electronic communications, electronic communication devices and electronic communication systems which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether it is specified in this policy.

**(n) Deletion of E-Mails and Messages**

The Town reserves the right to delete e-mails or messages, or other communications, at any time without notice.

**(o) Cell Phones**

While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cellular phones as is expected for the use of the Town's phone system. Personal cell phones to place or receive personal calls should be kept to a minimum while on the Town's premises and are expected to be on the employee's own time and not interfere with the employee's job responsibilities or be disruptive to the business operation of the Town. Personal cell phones are to be turned off or placed on silent mode during meetings and in public work areas of the Town. Use of cell phones to discuss Town-related information must be done with extreme caution so as to eliminate the possibility of a breach of confidentiality or the inadvertent disclosure of confidential information. The Town will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought onto the Town's premises. Individuals of the Town who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their cell phones while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

Safety studies have shown that drivers who use a cellular telephone while their vehicle is in motion are at a higher risk of being in an auto accident than non-callers. The Town recommends that personnel not use a cellular phone while driving. However, should a situation arise in which an

individual of the Town needs to use a cell phone while driving, the following safety guidelines shall be followed:

- choose as your first option to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting calls when utilizing your phone in your vehicle;
- do not use your phone while driving to send or review emails or text messages;
- use a hands-free device when available to avoid having to handle the phone while in traffic, read your instruction manual before driving in order to become acquainted with features such as speed dial and redial and do not take notes or look up contact information while driving;
- position your phone within easy reach so that you can access it without taking your eyes off the road;
- use your phone sensibly by assessing the traffic beforehand and place a call while at a red light, stop sign or otherwise stopped and avoid altogether, if possible, using the phone while in traffic;
- keep verbal communications to a minimum, suspend such communications during heavy traffic or hazardous weather conditions and let the person with whom you are communicating know you are driving and may be interrupted;
- avoid stressful or emotional communications while driving by either pulling over or ending the communication; and
- use your phone to call for help by dialing 911 in emergency situations.

**(p) Violation of Policy**

Any individual violating this policy, including failure to report violations, will be subject to appropriate discipline, including possible termination of employment.<sup>4</sup> The Town intends to follow each provision of this policy but reserves the right to change any provision at any time if circumstances warrant or require and also reserves the right to terminate or restrict access to any part of the Town's electronic communication systems on an individual or group basis at any time for any reason. A failure to enforce this policy does not constitute a subsequent waiver of any violation of this policy. This policy should be read and interpreted in conjunction with all other Town policies and procedures.

**(q) Complaints or Problems of Misuse**

Should any individual of the Town receive a harassing, offensive, threatening or intimidating communication from inside or outside of the Town, the individual should initiate a complaint by contacting the Harassment Grievance Officer as soon as possible. The current Harassment Grievance Officer is Charles Blanchard, Town Manager. He can be reached at the Town

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<sup>4</sup> Subject to the Town's at-will employment policy and collective bargaining agreements.

Administration Building, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 and his telephone number is 413-283-2645. If you would prefer, you may Linda Leduc, Planning & Economic Development Director, who has been designated as the Alternate Harassment Grievance Officer. She can be reached at 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 and her telephone number is (413) 283-2690. It is your responsibility to report the incident to your supervisor or the Harassment Grievance Officer.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge receipt of this *Communications Policy* from the Town, and that I have read it. I understand that all electronic communications and all information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of the Town. I also understand that I have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of the Town's electronic communications or with the transmission, receipt or storage of information in these systems. I acknowledge and consent to the Town monitoring my use of its electronic communications at any time, at its discretion. Such monitoring may include reviewing Internet websites visited, printing and reading all e-mail entering, leaving or stored in these systems, reviewing all documents created or downloaded as well as listening to voicemail in the ordinary course of business. I understand that all e-mail messages are subject to the Town's e-mail deletion and retention procedures.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5.7 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (“FMLA”) entitles eligible employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons, as explained below.

### A. EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for FMLA benefits with the Town of Palmer (the “Town”), an employee must:

- Work for the Town;
- Have worked for the Town for a total of at least twelve months in the prior seven years; and
- Have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve months.

### B. LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

#### (a) Section One

The Town will grant an eligible employee up to a total of twelve (12) work weeks of unpaid leave during a rolling 12-month period<sup>5</sup> for one or more of the following reasons:

- For the birth of a son or daughter and to care for the new born son or daughter;
- For the placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care;
- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, son or daughter, or parent) with a serious health condition;
- When the employee is unable to work because of his/her own serious health condition that prevents him/her from performing the functions of his/her job; or
- For a “qualifying exigency” (as defined in 29 CFR § 825.126) when the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent who is a member of any branch of the military, including the National Guard or Reserves, has been deployed or called to active duty, in a foreign country.

Spouses employed by the Town are jointly entitled to a combined total of twelve workweeks of family leave, except when the leave is needed to care for a son, daughter or spouse with a serious health condition; under such circumstances, such employees may each be eligible for up to 12 weeks of family leave.

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<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of calculating the 12-month period referred to above, the Town will measure the 12-month period backward from the date of an employee’s request for FMLA leave. Each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the Town will determine the total amount of FMLA leave used by the employee during the preceding 12 months, and the remaining time available to the employee will be the balance of 12 weeks which has not been used.

Leave for birth or placement for adoption or foster care must conclude within twelve months of the birth or placement.

**(b) Section Two**

The Town will also grant an eligible employee up to a total of twenty-six weeks of unpaid FMLA leave for the following reasons:

- To care for a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (i.e., nearest blood relative), who is a current member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is an outpatient, or is on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces, (or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty in the Armed Forces).
- To care for a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (i.e., nearest blood relative), who is a veteran undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces (or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty) and manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran. The veteran must have been a member of the Armed Forces (which includes the National Guard or Reserves) at any time during the period of five years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

Such 26-week leave period shall only be available for a single 12-month period.<sup>6</sup> To the extent spouses work for the Town, the aggregate number of workweeks available to both spouses shall be limited to 26 weeks during the single 12-month period. In addition, any leave taken during that single 12-month period for one of the other qualifying reasons (as noted in this Policy) shall count against the 26 weeks available. (Only 12 of the 26 weeks total may be used for an FMLA-qualifying reason other than to care for a covered service member.)

**(c) Section Three**

Under some circumstances, employees may take FMLA leave intermittently.

When intermittent leave is needed to care for an immediate family member, the employee's own illness, or a covered service member, and is for planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the Town's operation.

The Town may temporarily transfer an employee taking intermittent or reduced schedule leave to an alternative job, with equivalent pay and benefits, that accommodates recurring periods of leave

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<sup>6</sup> Calculation of the single 12-month period in this Section shall be based off the 12-month period immediately following the first day of such FMLA-qualifying leave. Such 26-week period shall not be based on the rolling measurement noted in Section 1.

better than the employee's regular job when such leave is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment.

Also, the Town may require employees to use accrued paid leave<sup>7</sup>, such as sick or vacation leave, or compensatory time, to cover some or all of the FMLA leave. When paid leave is used, the employee must follow the Town's paid leave policies and procedures with respect to use of such leave.

Any leave taken by an eligible employee for any of the reasons covered by this policy will be considered FMLA leave and will be designated as such even if the employee does not specifically identify the time off as FMLA leave.

### **C. MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH BENEFITS**

The Town will maintain group health insurance coverage for an employee on FMLA leave whenever such insurance was provided before the leave was taken and on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. The employee will make arrangements with the Town to pay his or her share of health insurance premiums while on leave. The Town may recover premiums it paid to maintain health coverage for an employee who fails to return to work from FMLA leave.

### **D. JOB RESTORATION**

Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee will be restored to his or her original job, or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

In addition, an employee's use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of an employment benefit that the employee earned or was entitled to before using FMLA leave.

### **E. NOTICE, CERTIFICATION, AND STATUS REPORTS**

Employees seeking to use FMLA leave are required, as appropriate, to provide to the Town:

#### **(a) Notice**

- Thirty (30) days advanced notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable, otherwise as soon as is practicable.

#### **(b) Medical Certification**

- Medical certification supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or an immediate family member, or a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness;

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<sup>7</sup> The Town's policy on use of paid leave is subject to, and will be administered in accordance with, the Massachusetts Parental Leave statute.

- Second or third medical opinions and periodic recertifications (at the Town’s expense) if requested by the Town; and
- Medical certification and/or fitness for duty certification supporting the employee’s ability to return to work as requested by the Town, which the Town may request include a statement from a health care provider that the employee can perform all of the essential functions of the job.

**(c) Qualifying Exigency**

- Certification supporting the need for leave due to a qualifying exigency.

**(d) Status Reports**

- Periodic reports during FMLA leave regarding the employee’s status and intent to return to work as requested by the Town.

**F. OTHER PROVISIONS**

This Policy shall at all times be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Department of Labor’s Regulations pertaining to the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The FMLA does not affect any other federal or state law that prohibits discrimination, nor supersede any state or local law that provides greater family or medical leave protection. Nor does it affect the Town’s obligation to provide greater leave rights under a Collective Bargaining Agreement or employment benefit plan, where applicable.

**G. PROCEDURES**

The Town’s department heads, with the approval of the Town Administrator, may establish their own procedures to implement this policy, consistent with the policy.

**H. ADOPTED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER**

This policy was adopted by Executive Order of the Town Manager on March \_\_\_\_, 2017.

AS ORDERED BY TOWN MANAGER

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Charles T. Blanchard



## 5.8 SMALL NECESSITIES LEAVE POLICY

### A. ELIGIBILITY

Employees that have been employed by the Town of Palmer (“the Town”) for at least twelve (12) months and have provided 1250 hours of service to the Town during the previous twelve (12) month period of time and qualify for Family Medical Leave status are eligible for leave under the Massachusetts Small Necessities Leave Act (“SNLA”).

### B. PURPOSE AND AMOUNT OF LEAVE

An eligible employee is entitled to 24 hours of SNLA leave for any of the following purposes:

- to participate in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of the eligible employee’s son or daughter<sup>8</sup>, such as parent-teacher conferences or interviewing for a new school<sup>9</sup>;
- to accompany the eligible employee’s son or daughter to routine medical or dental appointments, such as check-ups or vaccinations; or
- to accompany the eligible employee’s elderly relative<sup>10</sup> to routine medical or dental appointments or appointments for other professional services related to the elder’s care, such as interviewing at nursing or group homes.

### C. TWELVE MONTH PERIOD

The twelve (12) month period shall be consistent with that established under the Town’s Family and Medical Leave Act Policy.

### D. INTERMITTENT USE OF LEAVE

Eligible employees may use SNLA leave in increments of time of one (1) hour or more.

### E. USE OF ACCRUED LEAVE

Eligible employees that have accrued vacation, personal or sick leave (for medical appointments only) at the time they use SNLA leave will be required to use such accrued leave during the time they are on SNLA leave.

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<sup>8</sup> A “son or daughter” is defined as a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing *in loco parentis*. Further, the son or daughter must be under 18 years of age or 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.

<sup>9</sup> A “school” is a public or private elementary or secondary school, a Head Start program assisted under the Head Start Act, or a licensed children’s day care facility.

<sup>10</sup> An “elderly relative” is an individual that is at least 60 years of age and who is related by blood or marriage.

Eligible employees that do not have accrued vacation, personal or sick leave (for medical appointments only or as otherwise permitted by Town by-law or collective bargaining agreement) at the time they use SNLA leave will receive unpaid leave.

**F. RETURN TO WORK**

An employee that receives SNLA leave will be restored to the position he or she held when the SNLA leave commenced.

**G. PROCEDURES**

**(a) Notice**

Eligible employees must request SNLA leave at least seven (7) days in advance of the time for which SNLA leave is requested whenever the need for SNLA leave is foreseeable. If the need for SNLA leave is not foreseeable, an eligible employee must give the Town notice as soon as practical. All notices to the Town shall be made in writing unless circumstances prohibit written notice.

**(b) Certification**

Each time an eligible employee takes SNLA leave, the eligible employees must complete a certification. Certification forms are available at the Town Hall. As required by law, the certification will be maintained in the eligible employee's personnel file for three (3) years.

**(c) Administrative Procedures**

The Town Manager may adopt administrative procedures to carry out this policy.

**H. EXECUTIVE ORDER BY TOWN MANAGER**

This policy was adopted by Executive Order of the Town Manager issued on March \_\_\_\_, 2017.

AS ORDERED BY TOWN MANAGER

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Charles T. Blanchard

ATTEST:

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Town Clerk

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received a copy of the Town of Palmer's Employee Handbook, and I understand that I am responsible for reading the personnel policies and practices described within it. I understand that this Employee Handbook replaces any and all prior Employee Handbooks, policies and practices of the Town.

I understand that the policies and benefits contained in this Employee Handbook may be added to, deleted or changed by the Town at any time. I understand that neither this Employee Handbook nor any other written or verbal communication is intended to, in any way, create a contract of employment.

I understand that I am an employee-at-will.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

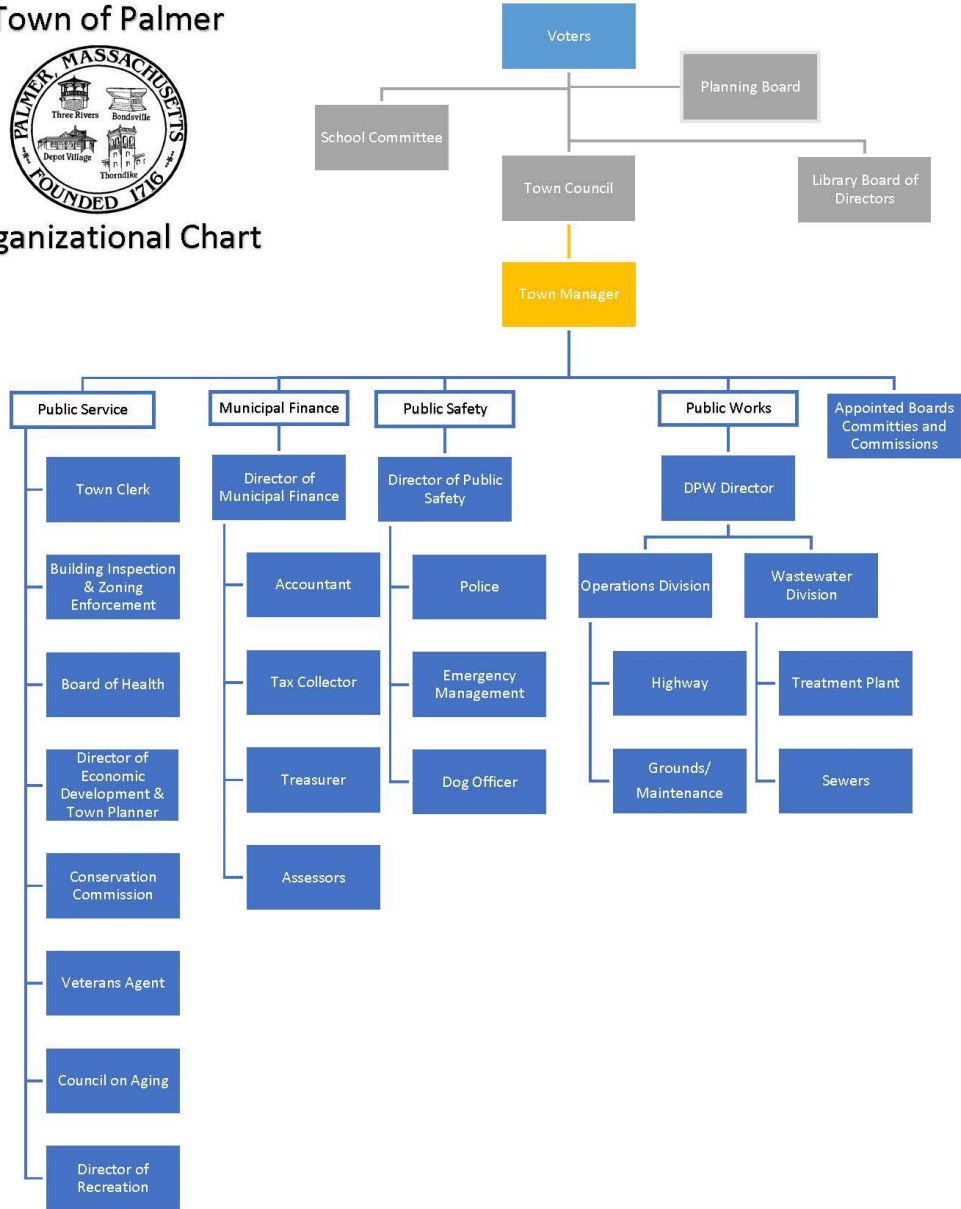
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

# Town of Palmer



## Organizational Chart



Monday, August 24, 2015