

# **City of Rockledge, Florida**



## **PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Effective April 1, 2008

Approved and adopted by  
Resolution No. 2008-625  
of the  
Rockledge City Council  
on April 2, 2008

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The municipal government of the City of Rockledge exists for the sole purpose of providing needed services to citizens and businesses of the community. This mission is accomplished through a Council/Manager form of local government, wherein policy directives are established by the Mayor and City Council in public meetings and implemented by the City Manager, Departmental Administrative Directors, and the employees of the City of Rockledge.

### Our Mission as City Employees

- To be always mindful that the citizens are our customers and to treat them with value, dignity, courtesy, and fairness.
- To provide the highest quality service possible at the most reasonable cost.
- To be intolerant of waste, both in materials and time.
- To treat our fellow employees with dignity, honesty, and fairness while looking for the opportunity to assist others.
- To be solution-finders and problem-solvers.
- To promote the City positively, remain loyal to the community as our employer, and remember always that we are public servants.
- To work toward the goal of maintaining and improving the quality of life for all citizens of Rockledge.

## USE OF GENDER PRONOUNS STATEMENT

For the purposes of this manual, it is understood that the use of masculine gender pronouns to indicate employees of the City shall be interpreted to mean both male and female employees, that such usage is in the interest of readability and follows proper rules of English, and, further, that such usage is not intended as, nor shall it be interpreted to be, sexual discrimination.

# Table of Contents

SECTION 1 .....	1
GENERAL STATEMENTS .....	1
1.    EMPLOYEE OPPORTUNITY .....	1
2.    EMPLOYEE CONDUCT .....	1
3.    EMPLOYEE COURTESY .....	3
4.    OFFICE AND WORK HOURS .....	3
5.    TELEPHONE USAGE .....	3
6.    MEAL PERIODS .....	3
7.    PAYROLL CHECKS .....	3
8.    VACATION AND SICK LEAVE PAYROLL CHECKS .....	3
9.    CHANGES IN REGULAR PAYROLL DATES .....	4
10.   PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS .....	4
11.   EMPLOYMENT LAWS .....	4
12.   CODE OF ETHICS (CONFLICT OF INTEREST) .....	4
13.   MANAGEMENT RIGHTS .....	4
14.   OFFICIAL PERSONNEL POLICY .....	4
15.   SEPARATE DEPARTMENT MANUALS .....	4
16.   CONFLICTS WITH BARGAINING UNIT AGREEMENTS .....	5
17.   SMOKING POLICY .....	5
18.   DRUG-FREE WORK PLACE .....	5
19.   PERSONAL VISITS IN THE WORKPLACE .....	5
20.   BREAK PERIODS .....	5
21.   FACIAL HAIR .....	5
22.   BODY PIERCING .....	5
SECTION 2 .....	7
EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES .....	7
1.    GENERAL POLICY .....	7
2.    EMPLOYEE APPLICATIONS .....	7
3.    HIRING PRACTICES .....	7
4.    NOTICE OF POSITION VACANCY .....	8
5.    PHYSICAL EXAMINATION .....	8
6.    HIRING OR PROMOTION OF RELATIVES .....	8
7.    NEW POSITIONS ESTABLISHED .....	9
8.    PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS - ANNUAL BUDGET .....	9
SECTION 3 .....	11
EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM .....	11
1.    GENERAL POLICY .....	11
2.    AWARD CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA .....	11
SECTION 4 .....	13
WAGE AND BENEFITS .....	13
1.    GENERAL POLICY .....	13
2.    ANNUAL SALARY REVIEW .....	13
3.    EXTRA TIME COMPENSATION .....	13
4.    COMPENSATORY TIME OFF .....	13

5.	INSURANCE BENEFITS .....	13
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY AND RETIREMENT PROGRAM .....	14
7.	INJURY BENEFITS .....	14
8.	SAFETY PRACTICES.....	15
9.	PROBATIONARY PERIOD.....	15
10.	OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT.....	15
11.	LONGEVITY PAY .....	16
SECTION 5 .....		17
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE .....		17
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	17
2.	EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.....	17
SECTION 6 .....		19
DISCIPLINARY ACTION .....		19
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	19
2.	CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENSES.....	19
3.	DISCIPLINARY ACTION.....	20
4.	EMPLOYEE DUE PROCESS.....	21
SECTION 7 .....		23
HOLIDAYS .....		23
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	23
2.	WORK DURING HOLIDAYS .....	23
3.	HOLIDAYS OCCURRING ON SATURDAY OR SUNDAY .....	23
4.	PAYMENT FOR HOLIDAY .....	23
SECTION 8 .....		25
VACATIONS.....		25
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	25
2.	VACATION SCHEDULES .....	25
3.	DEPARTMENT POOLING OF VACATION TIME.....	25
SECTION 9 .....		27
SICK LEAVE.....		27
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	27
2.	SICK LEAVE NOTIFICATION .....	27
3.	SICK LEAVE EARNED .....	27
4.	PHYSICIAN VERIFICATION OF SICK LEAVE .....	27
5.	ILLNESS IN FAMILY .....	27
6.	ABUSE OF SICK LEAVE .....	27
7.	ACCUMULATED SICK LEAVE.....	28
8.	PAYMENT FOR SICK LEAVE .....	28
9.	USE OF SICK LEAVE FOR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.....	28
SECTION 10 .....		31
MILITARY LEAVE .....		31
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	31
2.	NOTICE OF MILITARY LEAVE.....	31
SECTION 11 .....		33
ABSENCES AND OTHER LEAVES.....		33
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	33

2.	EXCUSED ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY .....	33
3.	BEREAVEMENT LEAVE.....	33
4.	JURY DUTY ABSENCE.....	33
5.	WITNESS ATTENDANCE ABSENCE .....	33
6.	LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY.....	34
7.	EMERGENCY DISMISSING.....	34
8.	MATERNITY LEAVE.....	34
9.	FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993.....	34
SECTION 12 .....		35
PERSONNEL RECORDS.....		35
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	35
2.	CHANGE OF STATUS.....	35
3.	TRAINING.....	35
4.	DISCIPLINARY ACTION.....	35
5.	DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL RECORDS .....	35
6.	EMPLOYEE AUTHORIZATION OF INFORMATION.....	36
7.	EMPLOYEE DEBTS .....	36
SECTION 13 .....		37
USE OF CITY PROPERTY.....		37
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	37
2.	VALID DRIVER LICENSE.....	37
3.	USE OF TOOLS, EQUIPMENT, PROPERTY AND VEHICLES .....	37
4.	SAFETY MEETINGS .....	37
5.	REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS.....	38
SECTION 14 .....		39
EMPLOYEE EDUCATION.....		39
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	39
2.	EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES.....	39
3.	SELF-IMPROVEMENT COURSES.....	39
4.	JOB IMPROVEMENT COURSES .....	39
5.	REIMBURSEMENT FOR JOB IMPROVEMENT COURSES.....	39
SECTION 15 .....		41
TRANSFERS .....		41
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	41
2.	EMPLOYEE TRANSFERS .....	41
3.	ACCRUED BENEFITS.....	41
SECTION 16 .....		43
TERMINATIONS .....		43
1.	GENERAL POLICY .....	43
2.	RESIGNATION .....	43
3.	RETIREMENT.....	43
4.	DISCHARGE FOR CAUSE.....	43
5.	REDUCTION IN FORCE .....	44
6.	DEATH OF EMPLOYEE .....	44
7.	CONSOLIDATED OMNIBUS BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT (COBRA).....	44

**SECTION 1**  
**GENERAL STATEMENTS**

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**1. EMPLOYEE OPPORTUNITY**

- A. The City of Rockledge, Florida, provides an excellent opportunity for a career to its dedicated employees. The City is committed to recruit, hire, train and promote, on merit principles, persons in all job classifications without regard to race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, or a special need which does not preclude the performance of the essential functions of the job, with reasonable accommodation(s) provided as necessary. Advancement shall be based solely upon an individual employee's total qualifications and job performance compared to the job or position requirements.
- B. Equal employment opportunity means that every person has an equal opportunity in employment based on his qualifications. This applies to all the areas of employment, such as hiring, promotions, training, job assignments, benefits, discipline, discharges and compensation.

**2. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT**

- A. Employees of the City shall be expected to keep in mind that they are public servants and to conduct themselves accordingly. Every employee should clearly demonstrate a commitment to serve the City and to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This applies equally to your fellow workers, supervisors, City Council, and the general public.
- B. The City of Rockledge has established a chain of authority which will be used for the processing of official City business. This chain of authority is to be followed either up or down, whichever is applicable, unless otherwise specified in other sections of this manual:

Mayor and City Council Members

City Manager

Department Director

Supervisor

Employee

- C. Good citizenship is essential for a good public servant. Each employee shall make an effort to practice good citizenship, thereby setting an example for the entire community.
- D. The City of Rockledge prohibits sexual harassment of employees in any form. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

It is the City's policy to prohibit harassment of one employee by another employee or supervisor on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, or special need. While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment on any of these bases is, it includes, but is not limited to, slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments and unwelcome jokes, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct such as uninvited touching or sexually-related comments. It is the responsibility of any employee who feels that he or she is a victim of such harassment to report the matter to their supervisor or any other management official, who, in turn, will be responsible for reporting all incidents/complaints to the Department Director. In the event the harassment is initiated by a supervisor, Department Director or management official, it will be the responsibility of the affected employee to bypass the violator's position in the chain-of-command and report the violation to the next higher management level. Violations of this policy will not be permitted and may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

- E. The City of Rockledge encourages its employees to develop friendships with their co-workers. However, under no circumstances shall these friendships create a disruption to work routine or

other employee relationships, nor shall these friendships be a consideration during employee evaluations, pay increases, promotions, layoffs, or career advancement opportunities.

#### F. Workplace Violence Policy

The City of Rockledge provides a safe workplace for all employees. To ensure a safe workplace and to reduce the risk of violence, all employees should review and understand all provisions of this workplace violence policy.

##### 1. Prohibited Conduct

- a. The City of Rockledge does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities.
- b. This list of behaviors, while not inclusive, provides examples of conduct that is prohibited.
  1. Causing physical injury to another person;
  2. Making threatening remarks;
  3. Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress;
  4. Intentionally damaging employer property or property of another employee;
  5. Possession of a weapon while on City property or while on City business;
  6. Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or domestic violence.

##### 2. Reporting Procedures

Any potentially dangerous situation must be reported immediately to the Human Resource Specialist. Reports can be made anonymously and all reported incidents will be investigated. Reports or incidents warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately and information will be disclosed to others only a need-to-know basis. All parties involved in a situation will be counseled and the results of the investigation will be discussed with them. The City will actively intervene at any indication of a possibly hostile or violent situation.

##### 3. Risk Reduction Measures

- a. Hiring: Based upon reasonable availability of information with regard to applicant backgrounds, the Human Resource Specialist will consider this as a factor prior to proceeding with hiring.
- b. Individual Situations: While the City does not expect employees to be skilled at identifying potentially dangerous persons, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform the Human Resource Specialist if any employee exhibits behavior which could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior includes:
  1. Bringing weapons to the workplace
  2. Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility or anger
  3. Making threatening remarks
  4. Sudden or significant deterioration of performance
  5. Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior

##### 4. Dangerous/Emergency Situations

Employees who confront or encounter an armed or dangerous person should not attempt to

challenge or disarm the individual. Employees should remain calm, make constant eye contact and talk to the individual. If a supervisor can be safely notified of the need for assistance without endangering the safety of the employee or others, such notice should be given. Otherwise, cooperate and follow the instructions given.

5. Enforcement

Threats, threatening conduct, or any other acts of aggression or violence in the workplace will not be tolerated. Any employee determined to have committed such acts will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Non-employees engaged in violent acts on the City's premises will be reported to the proper authorities.

**3. EMPLOYEE COURTESY**

- A. City offices are open to visits by the public. Employees are expected to render professional courtesy and assistance whenever possible. In those instances when visitors would unavoidably disrupt essential work operations, the visitor will be given the opportunity to reserve an appointment for a later time.
- B. Every employee must keep in mind that the public considers him to be their public servant. Friendliness and business-like manner will help formulate a good public attitude toward each employee and the City Government. Each employee shall strive to promote the City at all times, whether on or off duty.

**4. OFFICE AND WORK HOURS**

- A. The Administrative Offices at City Hall shall be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except for legal holidays listed in Section 7.
- B. All other City offices and departments shall maintain the hours and work schedules required by the City Council to serve the public. These hours and work schedules are the responsibility of the Department Director with the approval of the City Manager. Individual work schedules may be made flexible by the Department Director so long as that flexibility does not hamper the operation of the department and meets with the approval of the City Manager.

**5. TELEPHONE USAGE**

- A. The telephones are for conducting necessary City business.
- B. Long distance calls in any department shall be made by personnel authorized by the respective Department Director.
- C. Personal telephone calls by an employee will be made only when necessary, and shall be limited in scope and duration; all work-related calls shall always take precedence over personal calls. Abuse of this privilege may result in disciplinary action as identified in Section 6.2.A.

**6. MEAL PERIODS**

The scheduling of employee meal periods will be determined by the Department Director to facilitate servicing the public and permit efficient department operations.

**7. PAYROLL CHECKS**

- A. In general, payroll checks, including vacation and sick leave checks, will only be written at the time the department payroll checks are scheduled, to be in accordance with a schedule maintained by the Finance Division.
- B. Any variation from this policy requires the approval of the City Manager or designee.

**8. VACATION AND SICK LEAVE PAYROLL CHECKS**

Payroll checks for vacations and sick leaves will be written only on regular payroll dates. Therefore,

if an employee desires a check to cover the period that he will be on authorized leave, a written request for said check must be submitted by the Department Director to the Finance Division ONE (1) WEEK in advance of the next payroll date. Failure to comply with this requirement will prevent the employee from receiving his advance check.

**9. CHANGES IN REGULAR PAYROLL DATES**

Changes in regular payroll dates may be required in the event of holidays. In such cases, the Finance Division will inform the various departments as to any change in the payroll dates.

**10. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

The City Council has authorized the following deductions:

- Income Withholding Tax ..... (mandatory)
- Social Security (F.I.C.A.) ..... (mandatory)
- City-sponsored Employees Group Medical Insurance..... (provided for employee; optional for dependents)
- Other Hospital and Insurance Programs .....(optional for employees and their dependents)
- City Retirement Fund ..... (mandatory)
- Deferred Compensation Program ..... (optional)
- Credit Unions and Banking Institutions ..... (optional)
- Union Dues ..... (optional)
- Child Support Payments .....(Voluntary or Court Ordered)
- Any miscellaneous deduction authorized by the City Manager

**11. EMPLOYMENT LAWS**

All applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to employment practices shall be imposed as they are deemed applicable, within the City's employment practices.

**12. CODE OF ETHICS (CONFLICT OF INTEREST)**

The ethical conduct of all City employees and officials shall be regulated by the provisions of Chapter 112 (Part III) of the Florida Statutes.

**13. MANAGEMENT RIGHTS**

This manual is designed to be a guide for management and employees. Management rights will prevail in the administration and decisions of these Personnel Procedures as adopted by City Council.

**14. OFFICIAL PERSONNEL POLICY**

- A. This personnel manual and any subsequent amendments will be reviewed periodically and updated by the City Manager and appropriate staff.
- B. A copy of this manual will be presented to all present and future City employees.
- C. Any deviation from this policy will be made only by the City Manager in writing to the Department Director of the department or employee affected.

**15. SEPARATE DEPARTMENT MANUALS**

In cases where language in the Personnel Manual is not consistent with separate departmental policies and procedures manuals, the separate departmental policies and procedures manual, after having been approved by the City Manager, shall apply in all cases, with the exception of Management Rights only and with the approval of the City Manager.

**16. CONFLICTS WITH BARGAINING UNIT AGREEMENTS**

In instances where the Personnel Policies and Procedures are in conflict with approved bargaining unit agreements, the bargaining unit agreement shall prevail, except in cases of management rights.

**17. SMOKING POLICY**

The interior offices and rooms of all City buildings will be smoke-free. Smoking areas at individual departmental facilities and vehicles shall be determined by the respective Department Director.

**18. DRUG-FREE WORK PLACE**

The City of Rockledge strives to provide a safe work environment and encourages personal health and safety. In regard to this, the City considers the abuse of drugs on the job to be an unsafe and counterproductive work practice. Furthermore, the City sees substance abuse or use as a serious threat to its employees and citizens. With these statements in mind, the City of Rockledge declares all work environments for City employees as **DRUG-FREE**. Use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or abuse of prescription drugs shall not be tolerated and shall subject individuals to disciplinary measures. Physician-prescribed pharmaceuticals may be taken by an employee during work hours; however, the employee shall notify his immediate supervisor of the situation. The medication container must be clearly labeled as to contents and warnings of potential side effects. If special accommodation is required by the employee due to potential side effects of the medication, the employee shall provide, to his supervisor, a statement of such from his physician. Federal Regulations relative to random drug testing of specified employee job categories will be adhered to by the City of Rockledge.

**19. PERSONAL VISITS IN THE WORKPLACE**

It is realized that, from time to time, there is a need for employees to receive personal visitors while on duty. Personal visits by an employee's family members or other individuals are permitted during working hours, but should be limited in length and frequency. Abuse of this privilege may result in disciplinary action as identified in Section 6.2.A.

**20. BREAK PERIODS**

Each City employee is entitled to three (3) breaks per work day, not to exceed ten (10) minutes each, or two (2) breaks per work day, not to exceed fifteen (15) minutes each, as determined by the Department Director. Breaks are not to be used in conjunction with any authorized leave time or lunch period, nor is it permissible to consecutively combine breaks to create a lengthier break period. Employees may not leave their designated work site during break periods. Abuse of this privilege may result in disciplinary action as identified in Section 6.2.A.

**21. FACIAL HAIR**

Employees will be allowed to have facial hair at a reasonable length, provided it does not interfere with safety equipment that may be required to be worn. Hair and facial hair will be kept clean and groomed. The Department Director will be responsible for enforcement of this provision.

**22. BODY PIERCING**

The only visible body piercing allowed will be in the ears.

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**SECTION 2**  
**EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

The City of Rockledge has established the policy wherein personnel are recruited and interviewed by the individual Department Director or his designee. The City Manager or his designee retains final hiring authority.

**2. EMPLOYEE APPLICATIONS**

- A. All persons seeking employment with the City must file an application prior to employment.
- B. Applications will be retained for a minimum of one (1) year for future consideration.

**3. HIRING PRACTICES**

- A. Prerequisite upon the Department Director is the assurance that the employee hired is properly placed and in an authorized position. All new hires are subject to availability of open positions.

**B. MINORITY RECRUITMENT AND HIRING**

The City of Rockledge is committed to a policy of fairness and equity for all employees. In this pursuit, the City is obligated to give every employee the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential. Therefore, the City takes steps to:

- 1. Recruit, hire, and promote individuals for all job classifications without regard to race, age, color, religion, gender, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or special need.
- 2. Base its decisions on employment selection to assure furthering the principles of equal employment opportunity.
- 3. Insure that promotion decisions are in accord with the principles of equal employment opportunity by imposing only valid requirements for promotions.
- 4. Insure that all personnel actions, such as compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, recalls, training, and education, will be administered without regard to race, age, color, religion, gender, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or special need.
- 5. Insure that all facilities and programs of the City of Rockledge are available to all employees on a non-discriminatory basis.
- 6. Pursue the development of programs to hire qualified minority individuals in order to be a reflection of the City's recorded demographics in supervisory, non-traditional, and positive role model enhancement positions. The programs shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Traditional and non-traditional methods for recruitment and retention, free of preferential or discriminatory treatment of any group.
  - b. Direct involvement of community groups and Council-appointed ad-hoc committees.
  - c. Implementing policies and plans as adopted by the Rockledge City Council.
  - d. The development of plans for the establishment of near- and long-term goals, particularly relating to expanding employment opportunities and affirmative action efforts.

**C. VETERAN'S PREFERENCE**

It is the policy of the City of Rockledge to give preference to eligible veterans and spouses of veterans regarding selection and promotion positions, in accordance with Florida Statutes.

#### D. AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT

The policy of the City of Rockledge is to abide by the American Disabilities Act and adhere to Title 1, which states, "... an employer may not discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability because of such individual's disability with regard to job application procedures, hiring, or discharge of employees, compensation, advancement, job training and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

- E. Qualified applicants will be interviewed by the Department Director or his designee before a decision is made regarding employment. City Manager approval as to salary and grade must be obtained prior to the commencement of employment.
- F. Before a prospective employee can be hired, he must submit to, and pass, a drug screen conducted by a qualified medical laboratory. The individual shall not be employed by the City, nor promised employment, until such time as he has submitted to the drug screen procedures and has passed same.
- G. Applicants must possess an appropriate Florida Driver License, if required to perform the essential function(s) of the position applied for or to operate any City vehicle.

#### 4. NOTICE OF POSITION VACANCY

- A. If a position is not filled by promotion or transfer of personnel currently employed by the City, then the position will be recruited.
- B. The City Manager or his designee may actively recruit to secure the best qualified applicant for the position.
- C. If an unfilled promotional vacancy exists, a notice of same will be placed on all departmental bulletin boards. Such notice will clearly state eligibility requirements and application procedures. Sufficient time will exist between posting and filling the job to allow all interested and qualified employees an opportunity to apply.

#### 5. PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

- A. The City may require a physical examination as a condition of employment. Initial employment of any applicant is tentative until the physical examination has been completed and satisfactory results are received.
- B. All physical examinations should be taken prior to the date of the employee's reporting to work. At no time should the doctor's report be received by the Department Director later than the first week of employment.
- C. An employee may be required at any time, given sufficient cause, to undergo a physical examination or drug and alcohol screen at the City's expense to determine that employee's fitness for duty. The examining doctor will be selected by the City.

#### 6. HIRING OR PROMOTION OF RELATIVES

- A. For the purpose of this section, the term *relative* shall mean: husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or first cousin, whether or not they reside at the same house.
- B. The State of Florida adopted Section 112.3135, serving as a restriction on employment of relatives. This section shall serve to incorporate the requirements of Section 112.3135 and if amended shall be deemed incorporated in this section.

The City of Rockledge shall not appoint, employ, promote nor advance an individual to a position within the City who will be serving under or over another individual who exercises jurisdiction or control over a relative.

- C. Relatives are permitted to work within the same division or section of a City department unless it is determined that such employment is not in the best interests of the City. Consideration will include the operational job-related difficulties that would be anticipated or encountered within the division or section. The Department Director may recommend against same in writing to the City Manager, who will make the final determination. Job-related difficulties include employee morale, environment conducive to inordinate friction between employees, undue pressure on employees, or the potential for internal disciplinary problems between employees.

**7. NEW POSITIONS ESTABLISHED**

- A. When departmental operation conditions may justify the addition of a new employee position during a budget year, the Department Director shall submit a request to the City Manager for a review of existing positions and procedures. The City Manager will submit a report stating his findings and recommendations to the Department Director and Human Resource Specialist.
- B. If an emergency situation or unusual circumstances require the need for immediate addition of temporary or permanent employees, the Department Director should use any means necessary and report the facts to the City Manager.
- C. Any and all new positions are subject to the approval of the City Council.

**8. PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS - ANNUAL BUDGET**

Required changes in departmental personnel requirements to new, expanded, reduced, or discontinued work programs shall be submitted with proper justification in the annual department budget requests submitted to the City Manager for his review and recommendations to the City Council for its determination and action.

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**SECTION 3**  
**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

The City has instituted a recognition program for its employees, whereby employees exhibiting exceptional qualities during the performance of their duties are rewarded as prescribed in the criteria for the award category.

**2. AWARD CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA**

**A. CITY EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER**

1. **CRITERIA:** Dedication to duty, attitude, attendance, courtesy to the public, as well as to fellow employees, outstanding job performance, and promotion of City image.
2. **AWARD:** A \$100.00 gift card, one (1) day of paid personal leave, and a Certificate of Commendation to be presented publicly by the Mayor and City Council.
3. **METHOD FOR SELECTION:** Each Department Director will *nominate* one (1) person from his department who qualifies to receive the award. From this pool of departmental nominations, the City Manager will evaluate each nominee, based on the prescribed criteria, and will select one (1) of the nominees as the recipient of the award.

**B. CITY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

1. **CRITERIA:** Eligible employees include those who were *nominated* to receive the Employee of the Quarter award.
2. **AWARD:** A \$250.00 gift card, two (2) days of paid personal leave, and a commemorative plaque to be presented publicly by the Mayor and City Council.
3. **METHOD FOR SELECTION:** A committee consisting of one (1) employee representative from each department and the City Manager will canvass the nominees and select the one (1) nominee the committee determines is most deserving of the award.

**C. QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD**

1. **CRITERIA:** Attitude, service to community, exceeding duty requirements to meet needs, ability to work with fellow employees, and innovative approaches to duty. This award represents the spirit of the positive image the City wishes to be displayed in the community
2. **AWARD:** A \$100.00 gift certificate, a commemorative plaque and a letter of commendation will be presented publicly by the Mayor and City Council.
3. **METHOD FOR SELECTION:** Each department will form its own committee of at least three (3) employees whose task it will be to select one (1) person from their department to receive the award. The committee shall be appointed by the Department Director and shall reflect the diversity of the respective department. Individual awards will be given to the selected employee representing each of the City's departments:
  - City Hall/Building Department
  - Fire Department
  - Police Department
  - Public Works Department
  - Waste Water Treatment Department

#### D. EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOGNITION PROGRAM

1. **CRITERIA:** Employees being considered for safety recognition are evaluated on their personal safety record, their safety training participation and completion records, their adherence to safety rules, how they recognize safety hazards and promote safety awareness among co-workers, and their significant safety related contributions towards making a safe workplace.

The City Manager, Department Directors, and Safety Committee Members are not eligible to participate in the Safety Recognition Program but may otherwise be recognized for their safety efforts and achievements at the discretion of the City Council, City Manager, or Safety Committee.

2. **AWARD:** A \$100.00 gift certificate, a commemorative plaque to be presented publicly by the Mayor and City Council on a yearly basis; presentation to be coordinated with the Employee of the Year Award.
3. **METHOD FOR SELECTION:** Each department will form its own committee of at least three (3) employees whose task it will be to select one (1) person from their department to receive the award. One member of the Committee will be the department's Safety Committee Representative, the other two members of the committee shall be appointed by the Department Director and shall reflect the diversity of the respective department. Individual awards will be given to the selected employee representing each of the City's departments:
  - City Hall/Building Department
  - Fire Department
  - Police Department
  - Public Works Department
  - Waste Water Treatment Department

**SECTION 4**  
**WAGE AND BENEFITS**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

The wages provided by the City of Rockledge are intended to provide fair compensation for all positions with regard to range of pay for other positions, prevailing rates of pay for similar employment in other like-sized public jurisdictions in the area, the financial conditions of the City, and other factors. The City Manager or designee shall, every three years, make comparative studies as required of all factors affecting the levels of salary ranges.

**2. ANNUAL SALARY REVIEW**

- A. The Department Director and the City Manager will review the salary of all employees at the time of preparing the annual budget requests.
- B. All salary increases are subject to City Council approval of the budget.
- C. Additional increases in pay and job title changes may be granted during a fiscal year to an employee with a superior performance rating and recommended in writing by the Department Director and approved by the City Manager. This applies only for exceptional performance above and beyond normal duty and only as provided for in the budget, or a substantial change in job responsibilities.

**3. EXTRA TIME COMPENSATION**

- A. Extra time pay at the rate of one and one-half (1 & 1/2) times regular pay will be given non-exempt employees in excess of the authorized work week hours when provision is made for same in the annual budgetary appropriations. Time worked shall include vacation leave, holidays, scheduled sick leave, and compensatory time. All extra time must be approved in advance by the Department Director or designee.
- B. No employee will be required to work extra time, unless it is an emergency or as required to meet minimum staffing requirements, as determined by the Department Director, or in the event of a meeting scheduled beyond normal working hours.
- C. An employee who has left his normal place of work for his residence and is called back for overtime work shall be paid for such overtime in accordance with the above, provided that he shall receive a minimum payment of two (2) hours at one-and-one-half (1½) times his regular rate of pay. The minimum time provided herein does not apply if an early call-in period extends into the start of an employee's regular work period or extends beyond the normal work period.

**4. COMPENSATORY TIME OFF**

- A. Foremen or supervisory personnel may be granted compensatory time off for extra time hours worked on an hour for one and one-half (1 & 1/2) hour basis when approved by the Department Director.
- B. Exempt personnel may receive compensatory time off when approved by the City Manager.
- C. Non-exempt personnel may request compensatory time in lieu of overtime pay, as approved by the Department Director.
- D. Accumulation of compensatory time shall not exceed 80 hours.

**5. INSURANCE BENEFITS**

- A. Group medical insurance is provided at no cost as a part of the employee benefit package. Should the employee take advantage of the family coverage provision of the plan, he may do so, provided he authorizes a payroll deduction of one-half (1/2) the additional cost (see Section

- 1.10). The City reserves the right to place a limit on the portions of medical insurance paid by the City.
- B. Life insurance is carried on all employees of the City at no cost to them. Additional coverage is provided firefighters and police officers as required by Florida Statutes.
- C. Any employee can contact his immediate supervisor or City Hall for specific hospitalization benefits and required waiting period (90 days waiting period).
- D. Coverage and benefits will be determined by contracts recommended by the City Manager and approved by the City Council.
- E. The costs for medical insurance coverage can be controlled by employees through proper use of the plan, as well as through preventive illness and wellness programs taken by the employee.

## **6. SOCIAL SECURITY AND RETIREMENT PROGRAM**

- A. All City employees are covered by the Social Security Act. Any question regarding impending employee retirement should be referred to the Finance Division for appropriate answers and required action.
- B. A general retirement program has been established for City employees after retirement to supplement Social Security benefits. This pension plan is administered by the appropriate committee of trustees (Police, Fire, General Employees).
- C. Employee participation in the City's Retirement Plan is mandatory, commencing with the employee's date of employment.
- D. Accumulated employee contributions to the retirement fund, plus interest, will be paid to terminating employees, after completing necessary forms at City Hall. Receipt of retirement contributions by the terminated employee may take up to sixty (60) days.

## **7. INJURY BENEFITS**

### **A. WORKERS COMPENSATION**

1. All employees of the City of Rockledge are covered by Workers Compensation, which provides for payment of medical care required pursuant to an on-the-job injury and in accordance with state law.
2. When an injury occurs, all emergency attention required shall be taken by the immediate supervisor or employee in charge. A *MEDICAL TREATMENT REQUEST FORM* shall be completed in duplicate and the duplicate copy retained for departmental records. A written report, *REPORT OF INDUSTRIAL INJURY OR ILLNESS*, shall be made as soon as possible to the City Manager or his designee by the employee. The employee shall be responsible for reporting the injury within seventy-two (72) hours, unless conditions render the employee physically unable to do so.
3. If, due to the serious nature of the injury, the employee is unable to return to work, the attending physician will present written evidence as to the extent and nature of the injury to the office of the Human Resources Specialist. In any case, the employee shall have the written permission of the physician before he may return to work.
4. Should an employee be injured in the line of duty, while Workers Compensation eligibility is being determined, the City will, at the employee's option, pay the employee's regular weekly wages for the first five (5) work days following the accident, and charge this time to sick leave, provided the employee has adequate sick leave accrued. In the event the employee does not have adequate sick leave accumulated, or elects not to use sick leave, the employee will not receive weekly wages until Workers Compensation is activated eight (8) days from the date of the injury. Sick leave used in connection with Workers Compensation will not be credited back to the employee's sick leave account; however, the employee will receive the full payment for Workers Compensation.

When an employee chooses sick leave for the first five (5) work day period, each department is responsible for indicating the leave time as *Workers Compensation/Sick Leave* on the monthly reports.

While on Workers Compensation leave, the employee will be responsible for payment of the portions of the insurance benefit normally paid by the employee.

All provisions of Workers Compensation are subject to bargaining unit contract provisions.

5. Whenever possible, generic drugs will be used for prescriptions in connection with Workers Compensation, in an effort to control health care costs.
6. Employees who are out on workers compensation are prohibited from working a second employment unless approved by the workers compensation physician.
7. The Drug-Free Workplace policy and procedure shall be adhered to by all employees. Pursuant to State Law, employees shall be subject to substance testing when such injury requires medical assistance.

#### B. LIGHT DUTY ASSIGNMENT

The City of Rockledge does not recognize "light duty" as an applicable phrase with regard to the ability of an individual to perform his job function. However, it reserves the right to permit temporary assignment for up to sixty (60) days, if doing so serves the best interest of the City and has the concurrence of the Department Director and the City Manager.

### 8. SAFETY PRACTICES

- A. Safety practices shall be observed at all times in order to facilitate protection of all employees.
- B. The City's safety officers shall be designated by the Department Director and approved by the City Manager to investigate all industrial injuries and submit to the required Department Directors or Supervisors and City Manager applicable recommendations for prevention of similar accidents in the future.
- C. The use of seat belts is MANDATORY in all City vehicles and failure to use them shall result in disciplinary action.

### 9. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- A. The City shall require a six (6) month probationary period for all newly-hired employees in all departments, with the exception of Police and Fire Departments bargaining-unit personnel, who will require a one (1) year probationary period. Upon recommendation by the Department Director, and approval of the City Manager, probation may be extended by a period of up to ninety (90) days.
- B. The probationary employees shall be evaluated at the end of the first three (3) months, and at the end of the six (6) month probationary period. Police and Fire Departments personnel shall also be evaluated thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of the probationary period.
- C. All employees on probationary status shall not have recourse through the grievance procedure in any matter of discipline, termination for cause or lay-off due to reduction in force. The City may, at its sole discretion, terminate any employee, with or without cause, during the initial employment probationary period.
- D. An employee receiving a promotion is subject to a probationary period of ninety (90) days in his new position.

### 10. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

- A. All employees may engage in outside employment, providing it in no way interferes with their regular City employment requirements. No employee may engage in part-time employment that may be considered to be a conflict of interest.

- B. No employee shall engage in outside employment during sick leave or while on workers compensation time off.
- C. All City of Rockledge employees who engage in outside employment automatically make themselves ineligible, as far as their City relationship is concerned, to receive sickness and accident benefit payments of Workers Compensation on account of disability contracted during or resulting from such outside employment, except accidental insurance.
- D. No equipment, facilities, vehicles or property of the City shall be utilized by any employee while engaged in outside employment, except in those instances in the best interest of the City of Rockledge as approved by the City Manager.
- E. No employee shall work outside employment while being paid by and on duty for the City of Rockledge.
- F. Violation of any of the above shall result in disciplinary action.

**11. LONGEVITY PAY**

- A. Effective October 1, 2004, longevity pay shall be awarded as follows:
  - First pay week after completion of the 5th anniversary of active employment, and each anniversary thereafter until the 10th year - \$250.00.
  - First pay week after completion of the 10th anniversary of active employment, and each anniversary thereafter until the 15th year - \$400.00.
  - First pay week after completion of the 15th anniversary of active employment, and each anniversary thereafter until the 20th year - \$600.00.
  - First pay week after completion of the 20th anniversary of active employment, and each anniversary thereafter while employed - \$800.00.
- B. Longevity pay is not guaranteed and is only available as appropriated by the City Council. Longevity pay shall not be added to base wages, but shall be considered as incentive pay. For purposes of this section, active employment shall not include leaves of absence, worker's compensation leave, or any other leave when an employee is out for greater than six (6) months.

**SECTION 5**  
**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

A. The City Manager invites employees to make suggestions for work improvement and to register complaints regarding working conditions, personnel handling, distribution of work, and any other personnel matters. It is his desire to implement recommended suggestions and eliminate the cause of any justifiable complaints whenever possible. Any suggestion, complaint, etc., should be made to the immediate supervisor, and it shall be the responsibility of said supervisor to pass the comments through the chain of command.

B. "WHISTLE-BLOWER" PROTECTION

The City of Rockledge will not tolerate discrimination against employees who make complaints in accordance with the proper supervisory levels or grievance procedure. No employee shall be subject to reprisal, separation, or other disciplinary action for disclosure, not prohibited by law, of violations of laws, rules, regulations, wrongdoings, inefficiencies, or other improper actions. Employees who have knowledge of such actions are encouraged to report them to their immediate supervisor or Department Director. These reports are kept confidential on a need-to-know basis. No reprisal, of any type, by any person, will be permitted and should this occur, the offending party shall be subject to disciplinary action. The employee will immediately bring any reprisals to the attention of the appropriate management personnel.

The above statement does not protect against proper disciplinary actions taken against an employee who files a knowingly-false or malicious report.

C. In any case where a valid union contract specifically modifies the grievance procedure set forth herein below, the provisions of the union contract will prevail. In every other instance, however, the provisions of this manual shall be adhered to.

**2. EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The grievance procedure can only be instituted in accordance with the procedures set forth below. In every case, written documentation of the grievance discussion and decision will be filed at the departmental level; in cases that the grievance reaches the Office of the City Manager (Step 3), written documentation will be retained in the employee's Official Personnel File at City Hall.

A. STEP 1:

The employee shall first orally discuss his grievance with his immediate foreman or supervisor within five (5) work days of the date that the employee became aware of the action giving rise to the grievance. The supervisor will either:

1. Give an immediate decision within City policy, or
2. Tell the employee when a definite answer may be expected. The supervisor will be held responsible for giving the employee a decision when promised. The question and reason of a delay of five (5) working days must be put in writing and delivered to the Department Director immediately.

B. STEP 2:

If an employee is not satisfied with the decision given by the supervisor, the employee may request the supervisor to arrange a meeting with the Department Director within five (5) scheduled working days by the following procedure:

1. The employee shall put the alleged grievance in writing on the City Grievance Form;
2. The employee shall present the form to the supervisor or foreman for forwarding to the

Department Director. The supervisor cannot deny the right to this request; and

3. Upon receipt of the written grievance, the Department Director will schedule a hearing with the employee(s) and may have the foreman or supervisor in Step 1 present. This must be completed within five (5) working days.

C. STEP 3:

If the grievance is not settled in Step 2, the employee(s) may appeal the decision to the City Manager within five (5) scheduled working days. The City Manager will schedule a hearing in a manner consistent with that used in Step 2, and may have the Human Resource Specialist, supervisor or foreman and Department Director present. The City Manager will make his decision within ten (10) days of the hearing and inform all parties involved of his decision.

D. STEP 4:

Should the employee be unwilling to accept the decision of the City Manager, he may require him to schedule a hearing of the grievance before the Administrative Committee of the City Council.

- E. The Administrative Committee shall have final authority in the resolution of all grievances, subject to any questions of law which may arise.

**SECTION 6**  
**DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

- A. The City of Rockledge does not employ unreasonable or harsh disciplinary measures, but recognizes the need for discipline in any well managed organization. Employees shall be made aware of the consequences that will arise should any regulation be violated or action taken that is not in accord with this manual or reasonable work responsibility. Disciplinary actions will range from a verbal reprimand (written documentation in personnel file) to immediate discharge, and the employee should be aware that disciplinary action will become a permanent part of his personnel file and will be reviewed during consideration for promotion or pay increase.
- B. If, in the course of a disciplinary action, the Department Director becomes aware of extenuating circumstances, he may request of the City Manager a waiver of the discipline required for the indicated offense.

**2. CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENSES**

- A. Offenses are divided into three (3) categories, as set forth below, and include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - 1. MINOR OFFENSES
    - a. Excessive tardiness (more than two (2) times within a 30-day period)
    - b. Lack of courtesy to the general public
    - c. Careless use of City property involving damages of less than \$500
    - d. Selling, soliciting or distributing handbills on City property
    - e. Receiving a citation for traffic law violation in a City vehicle (employee is responsible for paying citation)
    - f. Damage to private and/or City vehicles caused by carelessness and resulting in damage of less than \$1,000
    - g. Failure to perform job assignment in a satisfactory manner
    - h. Fraternalization between employees that is disruptive to work routine or employee relationships
    - i. Safety violations
    - j. Any other action of a minor nature that is deemed unacceptable as a public servant.
    - k. Leaving the workplace without notification to a supervisor
  - 2. MAJOR OFFENSES
    - a. Continued violation of safety rules
    - b. Careless use of City property resulting in damage in excess of \$500
    - c. Failure to report absence within twenty-four (24) hours of schedule duty
    - d. Falsification of personnel or other City records
    - e. Abuse of sick leave policy
    - f. Damage to private and/or City vehicles caused by carelessness and exceeding \$1,000
    - g. Leaving the workplace without permission

- h. Absence without notification during duty hours
- i. Having knowledge of thievery or misappropriation of City funds or equipment, and failing to report same to proper supervisory personnel
- j. Excessive unexcused absences (more than two (2) within a 30-day period)
- k. Actions or comments which discriminate against another employee or citizen concerning race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, or a disability.
- l. Any other action of a major nature that is deemed unacceptable as a public servant.
- m. Refused to work during a declared disaster

**3. INTOLERABLE OFFENSES**

- a. Stealing the property of the City, the public, or a fellow employee
  - b. Willful damage to City property, equipment or vehicles, regardless of the extent of the damage
  - c. Engaging in any slow-down activities
  - d. Failure to report a major contagious disease in household that could infect fellow employees and citizens as a result of exposure
  - e. Operation of City vehicle without a valid Florida State Operator's License
  - f. Insubordination or failure to carry out a lawful order
  - g. Consumption of, or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any other intoxicant during working hours
  - h. Sexual harassment (refer to Section 1.2.D)
  - i. Possession of a deadly weapon during work hours (authorized personnel are exempted)
  - j. Gambling on City property or during working hours
  - k. Job abandonment (unexcused absences for three (3) consecutive days)
  - l. Failure to respond to progressive discipline
  - m. Conduct unbecoming a public servant
  - n. Continued abuse of sick leave policy
  - o. Falsification of personnel, employment, or other city records
  - p. Asleep during working hours.
- B. If an employee receives no further minor offenses for a one (1) year period (2 years for major offenses), his record shall be considered cleared, insofar as progressive discipline is concerned. However, an employee's entire record will be considered in cases where the City is considering termination.

**3. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- A. **MINOR OFFENSES.** Should an employee be found to have committed a minor offense, the recommended disciplinary action used will be the following:
- 1st Offense: Verbal reprimand (written documentation in personnel file)
  - 2nd Offense: Written reprimand to be placed in personnel file
  - 3rd Offense: Suspended for one (1) working day without pay
  - 4th Offense: Suspended for three (3) working days without pay

- 5th Offense: Dismissal
- B. MAJOR OFFENSES. Should an employee be found to have committed a major offense, the recommended disciplinary action used will be the following:
- 1st Offense: Written reprimand to be placed in personnel file
  - 2nd Offense: Suspended for three (3) working days without pay
  - 3rd Offense: Suspended for five (5) working days without pay
  - 4th Offense: Dismissal
- C. INTOLERABLE OFFENSES. Should an employee be found to have committed an intolerable offense, the recommended disciplinary action may result in ***IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL***.
- D. In extenuating circumstances, management reserves the right to suspend employees, with or without pay, pending the outcome of an investigation into said circumstances.
- E. Management reserves the right to modify disciplinary procedures when it is determined that extenuating circumstances exist.

#### 4. EMPLOYEE DUE PROCESS

The City of Rockledge recognizes that all employees are to be afforded due process when accused of rule or policy violations. The City recognizes the following classes of employees and establishes procedures which an employee may elect to use.

##### A. Probationary Employees

1. Name Clearing Hearing- Generally probationary employees have only a "liberty interest" during the process. Any disciplined employee may request a name clearing hearing when a public record indicates that he acted improperly and it affects his good name and reputation associated with employment. The purpose of the hearing is to afford the employee an opportunity to refute stigmatizing information and pursue the removal of that information, as well as any unsubstantiated allegations, from public record. In all cases, employees who wish to have a Name Clearing Hearing must request it to their Department Director.

##### B. Non-Probationary Employees

1. Grievance Procedure- An employee may use the grievance procedure to appeal a disciplinary action taken against him when there is a disagreement over the issued discipline. The grievance procedure to be utilized is established within this manual or within labor agreements. During an appeal the employee will retain seniority status but must accept any disciplinary action. Should the disciplinary action be reversed on appeal, the employee is entitled to have returned to him all wages for time lost, not to exceed a normal work week.
2. Pre-Determination Hearing- Accused employees facing discipline that could result in dismissal, suspension or demotion for disciplinary reasons shall be offered a pre-determination hearing by their Department Director. The purpose of this hearing is to afford the employee an opportunity to present information to explain his action and/or dispute the charges prior to a disciplinary decision. Attendance to a scheduled hearing is optional for the employee.
3. Name Clearing Hearing- Any disciplined City employee may request a name clearing hearing when a public record indicates that he acted improperly and it affects his good name and reputation associated with employment. The purpose of the hearing is to afford the employee an opportunity to refute stigmatizing information and pursue the removal of that information, as well as any unsubstantiated allegations, from public record. In all cases, employees who wish to have a Name Clearing Hearing must request it to their Department Director.

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**SECTION 7  
HOLIDAYS**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

The City Council has authorized the following paid holidays during each calendar year for all City employees in all departments. The City Council reserves the right to designate other holidays for the benefit of City employees.

- A. The first day of January.....**New Year's Day**
- B. The third Monday of January .....**Martin Luther King's Birthday**
- C. The last Monday of May ..... **Memorial Day**
- D. The fourth day of July .....**Independence Day**
- E. The first Monday of September.....**Labor Day**
- F. The eleventh day of November ..... **Veterans Day**
- G. That day in November proclaimed as..... **Thanksgiving Day**
- H. The day following Thanksgiving Day ..... **Thanksgiving Holiday**
- I. The twenty-fifth day of December .....**Christmas Day**

J. **Employee's Birthday**, calendar year 2004 (employee only) to be taken within 15 days before or 15 days after the actual birth date, unless prevented by extenuating circumstances as approved by the Department Director, an explanation for which shall be forwarded to the City Manager. Birthday holiday shall be taken in an increment of not less than eight (8) hours.

Effective calendar year 2005, the Employee Birthday holiday will be eliminated.

K. **Floating Holiday**, calendar year 2004 (granted to employees who have six (6) months of unbroken service with the City; date is subject to approval of Department Director; shall be taken in an increment of not less than eight (8) hours).

Effective calendar year 2005, two (2) Floating Holidays will be granted to employees who have six (6) months of unbroken service with the City; dates are subject to approval of Department Director and shall be taken in increments of not less than eight (8) hours.

**2. WORK DURING HOLIDAYS**

- A. Any Department Director who finds it necessary to do so may request some or all employees of his department to report to work on any of the holidays listed above.
- B. An employee who is required to work on a holiday shall receive extra time compensation in the manner consistent with Section 7.4.B or C of this manual, or the labor contract for that employee group, whichever is applicable.
- C. Employees who request to work on an observed holiday may take a different day off after receiving approval from the City Manager. Exchange will be on an hour-for-hour basis.

**3. HOLIDAYS OCCURRING ON SATURDAY OR SUNDAY**

Whenever any legal holiday listed above falls on a Saturday, the Friday before will be the paid holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be the paid holiday.

**4. PAYMENT FOR HOLIDAY**

- A. Holiday pay will not be permitted if an employee is absent from his job responsibilities both the last scheduled working day prior to the holiday and the first scheduled working day after the holiday; subject to collective bargaining unit agreements. For purposes of interpretation, a

scheduled working day shall exclude prior approved use of vacation or compensatory days, or absences where a physician has required time off for the employee, or a doctor's excuse is provided for an illness. However, continued abuses by any employee of absences prior to and following holidays, will be considered sufficient grounds for progressive discipline.

- B. An employee who, as a part of his normal work schedule, must work a City holiday will be compensated at a rate not to exceed double time for actual hours worked on that holiday, provided that the employee meets all other eligibility requirements.
- C. Any employee who is required to work on a holiday will be compensated at straight time unless he has worked in excess of forty (40) hours, in which case the employee will be compensated at a rate not to exceed time-and-one-half (1 & 1/2). This also applies to employees who are in a standby situation subject to call-outs.

**SECTION 8**  
**VACATIONS**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

- A. City employees will receive vacation with pay in accordance with the following schedule, if they have been in continuous employ of the City of Rockledge

<u>COMPLETED SERVICE</u>	<u>DAYS (HOURS) PER YEAR</u>
1 year through 3 years	10 (80)
4 years through 7 years	12 (96)
8 years through 12 years	15 (120)
13 years through 18 years	20 (160)
19 years through 23 years	22 (176)
24 years and over	25 (200)

- B. Up to ten (10) days (80 hours) of vacation may be automatically carried forward into the next year of employment. However, in no case shall the carry forward be for a period in excess of one (1) year.
- C. Employees with greater than twelve (12) years of service may automatically carry forward up to fifteen (15) days of vacation to the next year of employment. In addition, they may reduce the carry-forward to ten (10) days and be paid for up to five (5) days at their current rate of pay on the anniversary; however, qualified employees shall request this option in writing to the City Manager at least seven (7) days prior to their anniversary date, or the option is automatically null and void. In no case shall the carry-forward be for a period in excess of one (1) year.
- D. Vacation will not be used in increments of less than one (1) hour; however, this provision is not available to those individuals on shift duty of greater than 8 hours.

**2. VACATION SCHEDULES**

- A. Vacation schedules will be made up by the Department Director on a basis of seniority and department work schedules. Vacations shall be arranged as to be mutually convenient to both the employee and the City, when possible, but should a conflict occur, the requirements of the City shall prevail.
- B. Vacations may be taken any time during the employment year subject to the approval of the Department Director.
- C. The Department Director may change the vacation schedule if required.

**3. DEPARTMENT POOLING OF VACATION TIME**

In the case of extreme hardship where the employee has exhausted all sick leave, vacation leave and compensatory time, the Department Director shall discuss the matter with the City Manager for appropriate action. Actions allowed may include departmental pooling of vacation time and advance leave, as approved by the City Manager.

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## SECTION 9 SICK LEAVE

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### 1. GENERAL POLICY

- A. Paid sick leave will be granted to all City employees when they are ill if they have accumulated sufficient sick days on their record. (Annual leave and compensatory time may be used after accumulated sick leave has been exhausted.)
- B. Sick leave time will be accumulated at the rate of eight (8) hours per month for all City employees, except where modified by bargaining unit contracts.
- C. Sick leave is a privilege which shall be allowed only for personal sickness or quarantine because of contagious disease in an employee's family.
- D. No employee may use accumulated sick leave prior to completing six (6) months of continuous employment.
- E. Sick leave used will be charged in increments of not less than one (1) hour.

### 2. SICK LEAVE NOTIFICATION

To receive sick pay, an employee must call or notify his supervisor or department office within thirty (30) minutes from the time he is scheduled to be at work. Departmental policy to the contrary shall supersede this notification requirement.

### 3. SICK LEAVE EARNED

- A. No employee is permitted to use sick leave that has not already been accumulated, except by approval of the City Manager. The Human Resource Specialist and Finance Division will be held responsible for accurate records being kept on sick leave during any current year with weekly attendance records supplied by each Department/Division. A monthly list of the use of sick leave shall be forwarded to the Office of the City Manager.
- B. In the case of extreme hardship where the employee has exhausted all sick leave, annual leave and compensatory time, the Department Director shall discuss the matter with the City Manager for appropriate action. Actions allowed may include departmental pooling of sick leave and advance leave, as approved by the City Manager.

### 4. PHYSICIAN VERIFICATION OF SICK LEAVE

At times, employees absent due to illness will be required to provide to their Department Director a physician's statement of the need for the employee's absence and estimated duration of the absence. This will be required:

- A. When an employee is absent in excess of five (5) consecutive days, and/or
- B. When required by a Department Director due to concerns of possible abuse of sick leave.

### 5. ILLNESS IN FAMILY

- A. Employees required to leave their positions in order to take care of family members who are ill are permitted to use up to five (5) days of sick leave per calendar year, except in extenuating circumstances as approved by the Department Director and the City Manager.
- B. Family members are defined as the following relatives of the employee or the employee's spouse: mother, father, brother, sister, children, grandchildren or grandparents.

### 6. ABUSE OF SICK LEAVE

- A. Sick leave shall apply only to health conditions. Sick leave shall not be used for vacation or

personal time off, and such abuse may result in grounds for discharge.

- B. Use of sick leave which establishes a pattern that is substantially different from use by most employees will be considered as abuse.
- C. Employees out on paid sick leave are required to remain at their residence unless leaving to see a doctor or to obtain medication.
- D. The City will utilize the standard of substantial evidence to determine proof of abuse of sick leave. Substantial evidence is defined as "what a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion".
- E. Continued abuse of sick leave shall be grounds for discharge.

## **7. ACCUMULATED SICK LEAVE**

- A. Sick Leave accumulation shall be limited to a maximum of 3200 hours; non-union employees with greater than this amount as of April 1, 2000 shall be allowed to accumulate time for use purposes only.
- B. If an employee accumulates more than 1600 hours of available sick leave, the employee may elect to convert not more than twenty-four (24) hours of sick leave to personal days. This time must be taken in not less than eight- (8-) hour increments, and will require that not less than 1600 hours of sick leave be available at all times. This personal leave will be considered to be the same as vacation time and shall be limited to 24 hours per calendar year and may not be carried forward from year to year. This shall require approval in writing by the City Manager, following a written request submitted by the eligible employee.

## **8. PAYMENT FOR SICK LEAVE**

- A. Upon termination of the employee for any reason, excepting discharge for cause, accumulated sick leave will be paid at the employee's current rate of pay for fifty percent (50%) of available sick leave, up to 1,600 hours (200 days), or according to labor contract provisions, whichever is applicable.
- B. No sick leave will be paid any employee upon separation from the City if said employee has been employed less than one (1) continuous year, or if employee fails to give at least one (1) week notice.
- C. Terminating or retiring employees whose available sick leave extends beyond 500 hours are subject to the option of the City to pay for the hours extending beyond 500, at the employee's rate of pay at retirement or termination, over a 36-month period. Or, at the choice of the terminating or retiring employee, said employee may opt to leave all or a portion of the entire earned benefit with the City and designate same to cover health care insurance costs selected by the employee.

## **9. USE OF SICK LEAVE FOR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

Employees should attempt to schedule medical and dental appointments on off-duty hours; however, sick leave may be used for necessary appointments during working hours. Employees needing time away from their employment for medical/dental appointments will be charged sick leave in accordance with the following:

- A. Employees away from work for less than one (1) hour will not be charged for any sick time.
- B. Beyond one (1) hour, fractional time will be charged at half-hour intervals. For example, an employee away from work for more than one (1) hour but less than one-and-one-half (1 & 1/2) hours would be charged for one (1) hour of sick leave; an employee away from work for more than one-and-one-half (1 & 1/2) hours but less than two (2) hours would be charged for two (2) hours of sick leave.
- C. For payment, employees must present certification of a doctor's appointment, if required by the Department Director.

- D. Employees attending medical/dental appointments who are away from work for more than one (1) hour must utilize available sick leave in order to take advantage of the privilege set forth in Subsection A of this section. Under no circumstances may employees use other available leave categories (i.e. vacation, compensatory time, etc.) in combination with available sick leave to accommodate medical/dental appointment absences.

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**SECTION 10**  
**MILITARY LEAVE**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

All employees who are military reservists shall be granted annual military leave on all days in which they may be engaged in a field exercise or other training ordered under the provision of the United States Military regulations, not to exceed seventeen (17) days in any one annual period. (This shall be consistent with the governing Florida Statute and shall be without loss of vacation leave, pay, time, or seniority.)

**2. NOTICE OF MILITARY LEAVE**

The City Manager should be notified by the Department Director two weeks prior to the employee going on military leave, and stating the period of time off. This requirement may be waived under emergency situations.

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**SECTION 11**  
**ABSENCES AND OTHER LEAVES**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

- A. All absences, sick and other leaves, vacation and other time off, whether authorized or unauthorized, must be recorded on the weekly Attendance Record submitted by the Department Director for payroll purposes.
- B. Habitual or unjustified absenteeism shall be sufficient cause for discharge, as provided in Section 6.
- C. Recognizing that Department Director staff is required to work beyond normal hours on frequent occasions, the City Manager shall have the authority to grant additional hours for time off as requested by the Department Director.

**2. EXCUSED ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY**

- A. An employee may be granted an excused absence without pay for up to five (5) working days for a valid reason. Such recommendation is required in writing from the Department Director and must be approved in advance by the City Manager, a copy of which shall be forwarded to the Human Resource Specialist for inclusion in the employee's personnel record file.
- B. Department Director absences for personal business are with the approval of the City Manager.

**3. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

- A. Upon notification to the Department Director or designee, an employee may be granted time off with pay due to a death in the employee's immediate family or step-family, or the spouse's immediate family or step-family (mother, father, brother, sister, children, grandchildren, grandparents). If leave is requested, it must begin within seven (7) days following the date of death, using the following criteria:
  - 1. In-state: Up to three (3) consecutive working days (not to exceed five (5) calendar days)
  - 2. Out-of-state: Up to five (5) consecutive working days (not to exceed seven (7) calendar days)
- B. An employee may request to use sick leave for additional days off related to a family death; however, it shall require approval from the City Manager or designee.
- C. Bereavement leave shall not be deducted from any other form of leave unless approved by the City Manager or designee.
- D. To be eligible for pay, a newspaper clipping, funeral memorial card, certification of the obituary or death certificate may be submitted for verification.
- E. In extenuating circumstances, the City Manager shall be authorized to modify the bereavement leave policy.

**4. JURY DUTY ABSENCE**

- A. Any City employee called for jury duty during regular scheduled working hours will be paid the difference between their pay for jury duty and their straight-time pay for all days they are required to serve on jury duty.
- B. The Department Director will record the jury duty time on the attendance record for payroll purposes.

**5. WITNESS ATTENDANCE ABSENCE**

Employees who receive witness fees for job-related witness appearance during regular scheduled

working hours shall endorse and submit the witness fee check to the City of Rockledge through their Department Director. Those attending off-duty have the choice of accepting the fee given or receive compensation provided in bargaining unit contracts.

**6. LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY**

- A. An employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay up to sixty (60) days for a valid reason. Such recommendation is required in writing from the Department Director and must be approved in advance by the City Manager.
- B. No employee shall be granted a personal leave of absence (except military) prior to the completion of twelve (12) months of continuous service with the City.
- C. Employees returning from leave of absence in excess of thirty (30) days may be required to report for physical re-examination to ascertain their fitness to continue their employment.
- D. Employees granted a leave of absence without pay shall retain seniority status during such leave, but shall accrue no other employee benefits (i.e. sick leave, vacation, and retirement).
- E. During a leave of absence granted for a period of thirty (30) days or more, the employee must pay to the City the amount required to fully cover all applicable insurance costs. These costs will include all portions which the City may provide as a benefit during the normal course of employment.

**7. EMERGENCY DISMISSING**

- A. Due to an Act of God or a National Emergency, hurricane, tornado or Civil Defense alert or attack warning, the City Manager may grant pay for those employees authorized to leave.
- B. Some employees may be requested to remain for Civil Defense duties and other emergency support as required by their departmental operations.

**8. MATERNITY LEAVE**

The City shall adhere to the provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978) as it relates to pregnant employees and maternity leave.

**9. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993**

Those employees desiring to use this provision of the law, and meeting eligibility requirements, shall complete all pertinent U.S. Department of Labor forms and submit them to the Department Director in order to ascertain eligibility.

**SECTION 12**  
**PERSONNEL RECORDS**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

Personnel file records on each employee will be kept in the custody of the Human Resource Specialist. The records are public information and accessible through an official request, subject to limitations of the law.

**2. CHANGE OF STATUS**

A. The Department Director shall require all supervisors to notify all employees of the importance of keeping their personnel record current. The employee should submit a change of status form to the Department Secretary listing any status changes as follows:

1. Change of address, even if temporary
2. Change of telephone number or nearest telephone number
3. Change of life insurance/retirement beneficiary(ies)
4. Number of dependents
5. Change in marital status
6. Any change of status not previously reported that was originally given at time of employment
7. Change in employment classification.

The Department Secretary shall immediately forward the Change of Status form to City Hall Management Officials.

B. Reporting changes of status is a responsibility of the employee and failure to keep personnel records up to date may result in incorrect federal income tax withheld, incorrect life insurance and retirement beneficiary(ies), and loss of other employee benefits.

C. The City requires current telephone numbers and addresses in cases of required work call-outs, and national or weather emergency call-outs.

**3. TRAINING**

The office of the City Manager should be advised of any special training courses completed by the employees. Copies of diplomas or certificates should be forwarded to become a permanent addition to the employee's personnel file.

**4. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Department Directors shall forward a signed copy of all disciplinary actions to the City Manager. All disciplinary actions will become a permanent record in the employee's personnel file, except when overturned by due process.

**5. DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL RECORDS**

A. Daily attendance records shall be maintained by each department office and are the responsibility of the Department Director. The original signed copy shall be forwarded to the Finance Division weekly as authorization for the payroll preparation record.

B. Weekly records for vacation, sick time, overtime, compensatory time, and other leaves shall be the responsibility of the Department Directors; weekly records shall be transferred to the Finance Division for payroll purposes. Cumulative records shall be the responsibility of the Human Resource Specialist and Finance Division.

- C. Letters requesting time off for all personal leaves, emergency leaves, military leaves, leaves without pay, will be forwarded by the Department Director to the City Manager for inclusion in the employee's personnel file. All authorized time shall be recorded on the Department Attendance Record form submitted weekly for payroll purposes.

**6. EMPLOYEE AUTHORIZATION OF INFORMATION**

An employee may make a request in writing for the City to make information available to a bank, mortgage company, insurance company or any other institution to help secure a loan for purchase of a home, automobile, insurance or any other purposes the employee specifically authorizes.

**7. EMPLOYEE DEBTS**

- A. All City employees should endeavor to maintain a good credit rating by prompt payments of all debts. A poor payment record or non-payment by a few City employees can reflect upon all City employees as a group.
- B. Telephone calls or correspondence from loan companies, credit bureaus, detective agencies, or business firms complaining about City employees' abuse of credit should be referred to the City Manager, who will contact the employee's Department Director.

**SECTION 13**  
**USE OF CITY PROPERTY**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

- A. The City attempts to provide each employee with adequate tools, equipment and vehicles for the job being performed, and expects each employee to observe safe work practices and safe and courteous operation of vehicles and equipment in compliance with all municipal, county and state vehicular regulations.
- B. Failure to comply with the provisions hereinafter made a part of this section shall result in disciplinary action in accordance with Section 6.

**2. VALID DRIVER LICENSE**

- A. All operators of City vehicles and equipment are required to have a valid State of Florida driver license required for their position and to keep supervisors informed of any change of status in their license.
- B. Suspension or revocation of the driver license of an employee who is assigned as a vehicle or equipment operator may result in a demotion or discharge.

**3. USE OF TOOLS, EQUIPMENT, PROPERTY AND VEHICLES**

- A. Employees who are assigned tools or equipment or vehicles by their department are responsible for them and their proper use.
- B. No personal use of any City property, materials, supplies, tools, equipment (including computers and related peripherals) or vehicles shall be permitted, except as authorized by union contract or the City Manager. Violations may result in discharge and possible prosecution.
- C. Department Directors are assigned vehicles and may use the vehicles for personal use, in Brevard County only, to accommodate their on-call status.

As an alternative, with the approval of the City Manager, the Department Director may receive a monthly automobile allowance in an amount that is 90% of the allowance afforded to the City Manager by contract or \$400.00, whichever is greater. In addition, with the approval of the City Manager, the Department Director may revert to the use of a city-owned automobile. All City-related travel will be included in the car allowance unless it is outside Central Brevard County, for which reimbursement shall be at the state-approved rate per mile.

- D. Any employee under the influence of either a prescription or non-prescription drug that may cause impairment shall not operate City equipment, tools, and/or vehicles.
- E. Use of a cellular phone while operating a City vehicle is prohibited unless it is an operational necessity or an emergency. This will be strictly enforced.

**4. SAFETY MEETINGS**

- A. Safety Manuals are provided to each employee of the City and it is the responsibility of the employee to familiarize himself with the contents of said manual.
- B. Each Department Director shall work with the City Manager as required to arrange and conduct safety meetings that will be beneficial to his departmental operations and reduce worker, equipment and vehicle accidents.
- C. The City has designated a Safety Committee consisting of employee representatives from each department. This committee shall meet at least quarterly and make a written report to the City Manager. Pursuant to Florida Statutes, the City Manager will respond concerning specific actions to be taken with regard to Committee recommendations.

**5. REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS**

- A. Any employee operating City equipment or vehicles must report immediately all vehicular accidents and property damage or liability claims to his Department Director or immediate Supervisor.
- B. All vehicular accidents shall be reported to the Police Department, Florida Highway Patrol, or Sheriff's Department as the particular case may require, so an official accident report can be filed.
- C. The Police Department shall forward a copy of all accident reports involving City equipment and vehicles to City Hall as soon as possible.
- D. Employees involved in equipment or vehicle accidents shall not leave the scene of the accident prior to release by a law enforcement officer or City Supervisor.

**SECTION 14**  
**EMPLOYEE EDUCATION**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

The City encourages City employees to attend educational conferences and take self-improvement and job-improvement courses, which are related to their work. Additional educational training will be one measure used in making recommendations for advancement and promotion.

**2. EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES**

- A. An employee may be granted leave with pay to attend an educational conference as approved by the Department Director.
- B. Qualified educational conferences specifically related to a City department and its operations may be conducted by colleges, universities, technical schools, manufacturers (as an operation or service clinic), or state and national associations.

**3. SELF-IMPROVEMENT COURSES**

- A. Self-improvement courses are defined as those taken by an employee that will lead to personal upgrading, but which have no bearing on his present position assignment.

Example: A clerk typist position does not require shorthand. Should an employee occupying such a position take a course in shorthand and complete it satisfactorily, the office of the City Manager should be notified in order that the employee's personnel file may be marked accordingly and the City Manager will recognize such an employee for the next opening requiring shorthand.

- B. Any self-improvement courses attended shall not conflict with the employee's departmental work schedule.

**4. JOB IMPROVEMENT COURSES**

- A. Job-improvement courses are defined as those that have a direct bearing on the employee's present position by increasing skills and knowledge.

Example: An electrician working with traffic signals takes a course in electronics. This prepares the employee to do a better job within his present position classification.

- B. Any job-improvement courses attended shall not conflict with the employee's departmental work schedule.

**5. REIMBURSEMENT FOR JOB IMPROVEMENT COURSES**

Reimbursement of tuition/registration for all job-improvement educational courses shall be approved in advance of the employee starting the course of study and will depend on the employee receiving a grade of "C" or better, or "pass" in a pass/fail class. Approval of the reimbursement shall be by the City Manager.

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## SECTION 15 TRANSFERS

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### 1. GENERAL POLICY

It is City policy to promote within the organization whenever possible, provided the individual employee meets the education and work experience requirements. The City Council, in establishing this policy, provides opportunities for advancement or more responsible positions on the basis of demonstrated performance, attitude, general ability, education, seniority, and other particular qualifications that may be required.

### 2. EMPLOYEE TRANSFERS

- A. Transfers of employees between sections or departments of the City are to be encouraged if they will effect better utilization of an employee's capabilities, better opportunities for an employee to advance, more efficient utilization of manpower within the City, or retention of an employee who would otherwise be terminated because of reduction in force.
- B. Transfers of employees, except for reduction in force or reorganization, must have the concurrence of the employee, the receiving department, and the City Manager.
  - 1. To effect a transfer of an employee, the receiving department will submit an employee transfer form or memorandum to the City Manager.
  - 2. The department from which the employee is transferring shall submit a CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT STATUS or memorandum to the City Manager, outlining the change as a transfer.

### 3. ACCRUED BENEFITS

Accrued sick leave, vacation and compensatory time will be transferred with the employee in any promotion, demotion, or transfer in all City departments. City seniority will be transferred, but not departmental seniority.

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**SECTION 16**  
**TERMINATIONS**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

The City of Rockledge recognizes that all employees will terminate their employment at some point. No termination made through this section shall take effect without the prior approval of the City Manager or his designee. The following sections outline the several ways through which the separation may be accomplished.

**2. RESIGNATION**

- A. Resignation is defined as an announcement by the employee, either written or verbal (documented by the Department Director), of his intention to voluntarily terminate his services with the City.
- B. Employees shall be required to submit not less than a one- (1-) week notice of intent to resign, in writing, to their Department Director, who will forward same to City Hall for processing.
- C. Accrued vacation will be paid upon resignation after completion of at least six (6) months of employment, unless the employee fails to comply with Subsection B above, in which case no vacation pay shall be awarded.
- D. Accumulated sick leave will be paid at fifty percent (50%) of unused accumulated sick leave. However, this section does not apply in the presence of a contract provision stating otherwise, will not apply in the absence of compliance with Subsection B above, and in all cases, if due, will be paid in accordance with Section 9.8 of this Manual.
- E. Accumulated employee contributions to the Retirement Fund, plus interest, shall be paid to the employee upon termination. However, the amount provided shall, in all cases, be consistent with the provisions of the Retirement Plan as they exist at the time of resignation.

**3. RETIREMENT**

- A. Retirement is defined as an involuntary procedure on the part of the employee, if the retirement is for disability.
- B. Normal retirement is a voluntary procedure upon reaching stipulated retirement age. Employee benefits will be based upon the applicable retirement plan.
- C. Accrued vacation pay will be paid upon retirement unless the employee fails to provide notice of retirement in a manner consistent with that indicated in Section 16.2.B.
- D. Accumulated sick leave will be paid at fifty percent (50%) of the unused accumulated sick leave. However, this section does not apply in the absence of notice of retirement in a manner consistent with that indicated in Section 16.2.B, and in all cases, if due, will be paid in accordance with Section 9 of this Manual.

**4. DISCHARGE FOR CAUSE**

- A. Discharge for cause is defined as action taken by the City to terminate an employee's services because of violation of employment conditions and policies, for lack of qualifications or failure to perform work satisfactorily.
- B. An employee discharged for cause will receive no separation pay, except as indicated in Sections C, D, and E below. However, the employee must be given the reason(s) for discharge in writing, and must be given the opportunity to defend himself during a pre-determination hearing with the City Manager and the Department Director or respective designee(s).
- C. Accrued vacation pay will be paid upon discharge for cause after completion of at least six (6)

months of employment, not to exceed eligible vacation.

D. Accumulated sick leave shall not be paid.

E. Accumulated contributions toward the Retirement Plan, plus interest, will be paid.

## 5. REDUCTION IN FORCE

A. If it becomes necessary for the City to abolish a position or reduce the number of employees, severance pay will be granted as per the following:

- 1 through 5 years service - 2 weeks severance pay
- 6 through 10 years service - 4 weeks severance pay
- 11 through 25 years service - 6 weeks severance pay
- over 26 years service - 8 weeks severance pay

B. Accrued vacation pay will be paid due to reduction in force, not to exceed eligible vacation.

C. Accumulated sick leave will be paid at fifty percent (50%) of unused accumulated sick leave. However, this section does not apply in the presence of a contract provision stating otherwise, and in all cases will be paid in accordance with Section 9 of this Manual.

D. Accumulated contributions toward the Retirement Plan, plus interest, will be paid.

## 6. DEATH OF EMPLOYEE

A. Should an employee's services terminate by reason of his death, his beneficiary(ies) will be eligible to receive the following:

1. Accrued vacation pay, in accordance with Section 8 of this Manual.
2. Fifty percent (50%) of unused accumulated sick leave, in accordance with Section 9 of this Manual.
3. Retirement benefit(s) calculated in accordance with the provisions of the Retirement Plan existing at the time of death.
4. Benefits from the life insurance policy issued by the City.

## 7. CONSOLIDATED OMNIBUS BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT (COBRA)

The Combined Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) of 1985 was approved by the U.S. Congress to assure employees and their covered dependents an opportunity to continue their health/dental/vision coverage **at their own expense**. Employees covered under the City's health plan have a legal right to choose continuation of COBRA coverage if that coverage will be lost through reduction in working hours or termination of employment. This section may be amended as dictated by federal law.