

City of Beaufort Employee Handbook



ALL EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY ARE EMPLOYED AT-WILL AND MAY QUIT OR BE TERMINATED AT ANY TIME AND FOR ANY OR NO REASON. NOTHING IN ANY OF THE CITY'S RULES, POLICIES, HANDBOOKS, PROCEDURES OR OTHER DOCUMENTS RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT CREATES ANY EXPRESS OR IMPLIED CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT. THIS HANDBOOK REPLACES ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED POLICIES, PRACTICES AND UNDER-STANDINGS, WRITTEN OR ORAL, GOVERNING EMPLOYMENT. NOTHING CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE LIMITATIONS IN THIS PARAGRAPH CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT UNLESS: 1) THE TERMS ARE IN WRITING; 2) THE DOCUMENT IS LABELED "CONTRACT"; 3) THE DOCUMENT STATES THE TERM OF EMPLOYMENT; AND 4) THE DOCUMENT IS SIGNED BY THE CITY MANAGER OR APPROVED BY VOTE OF COUNCIL.

Revised December 2025
(Benefits)

City of Beaufort, South Carolina

HANDBOOK DISCLAIMER

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I acknowledge receipt of the City's personnel handbook and understand that it is not a contract of employment.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Employee: This disclaimer will be placed in your personnel file to confirm and verify you have received, read and understood the City's Employee Handbook to include Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy.

EMPLOYEE COPY

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HUMAN RESOURCES COPY

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Welcome to the City of Beaufort!

We asked you to become a member of our team because we are confident that you will help us render the highest standard of service in our community.

Whatever your particular job may be, we want you to be successful. Our City's continued provision of quality services depends upon many people with a variety of skills and talents, all of whom play a valuable role in helping to achieve our objectives.

This Handbook will provide you with important information regarding your employment with The City of Beaufort.

In addition to this handbook, the Police and Fire Departments have Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) that are to be adhered to as well.

Please read it carefully and retain it for future reference.

We are excited to have you join our team!

Beaufort Area History

Locals and newcomers are enchanted by the beauty of Beaufort, tucked off the beaten path on the banks of the Beaufort River that connects St. Helena and Port Royal sounds. Historically, however, Beaufort was not so isolated. Over its 400-year recorded history, Beaufort has been witness to and a part of many of this nation's important events.

Incorporated as South Carolina's second municipality in 1711, before that Beaufort was home to ancestors of North American native peoples dating back to 8000 B.C. In the 16th century, both French and Spanish settlements were established, with the Spanish remaining for 21 years on Parris Island.

Like the other original 13 colonies, South Carolina was developed by the British with the earliest outpost established in Beaufort 1706 along the current waterfront. Named for Lord Proprietor, Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, the town was laid out with 397 lots and two focal points, one on the bay, and the other at the intersection of Carteret and Craven Streets where each corner was reserved for public use.

Throughout the 1700s provision crops and naval stores were the economic mainstay. Later the main sources of wealth were shipping and agricultural exports. Large fortunes were made in trade and provided some of the largest private fortunes in America as well as the highest per capita income on the continent. Rice was an important export, but the cultivation of indigo became the favored cash crop. Shipbuilding was a growing industry along Bay Street and on Black's Point in the present-day Point neighborhood.

With independence, Beaufort's economy rebounded with the introduction of a new crop, Sea Island cotton, the finest and most expensive grown in America. In the antebellum period, wealthy planters began to build grand homes surrounded by verdant gardens. With some periodic dips in the economy, this was Beaufort's greatest era of prosperity and influence. One traveler described Beaufort as "the wealthiest, most aristocratic and cultivated town of its size in America. Beaufort gained the reputation for having some of the finest private libraries and the best preparatory schools in the South. The most notable of these was the Beaufort College whose building, erected in 1852, now houses the branch campus of the University of South Carolina.

Politically, South Carolina was nationally important into the 19th century, and Beaufort was no exception as it played an active role in the secession movement. On November 7, 1861, a Federal fleet with a force of 12, 000 men attacked and easily took the city. The Sea Islands and the City of Beaufort were evacuated by the majority of the white inhabitants who abandoned their plantations, town houses and their slaves

On January 1st, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation was read to the African American population which was growing as refugees from nearby plantations made their way to town looking for shelter and work. These former slaves took part in the first efforts to assimilate freed blacks into the broader society known as the Port Royal experiment, giving them access to educational opportunities and property ownership.

The War brought about profound social and political changes in the City. It became a haven for African Americans during Reconstruction, when they availed themselves of the opportunities offered by a new world order. Some acquired the mansions of former slaveholders; others built new dwellings scattered within existing neighborhoods. Still others began to acquire property and to build houses within the Northwest Quadrant neighborhood, an area that had largely been undeveloped before the war and now part of the Historic Landmark District. In 2017, the National Park Service recognized Beaufort's Reconstruction History as a National Monument.

The introduction and development of phosphate mining improved the economic climate before the turn of the 20th century. During this post-bellum period, Beaufort also became a winter resort for Northerners. In addition, the continued strategic importance of Beaufort led the United States government to maintain the Port Royal Naval Station and also established the U.S. Marine Corps Post on Parris Island in 1891.

Beaufort's fortunes improved in the 1920s with the advent of truck farming. Prosperity brought renewed confidence to the town and an increased effort was made to boost tourism with some of the large antebellum mansions turned into guest houses. Tourism, the seafood industry including the canning of shrimp and oysters, and truck farming remained the most important economic activities throughout the first half of the 20th century. The tourist trade continued to grow as did employment from Parris Island. In 1940, Beaufort was once again ravaged by a hurricane but survived and was rebuilt.

An important part of what makes Beaufort a destination today is the historic preservation movement which began in the 1940s. In the 1960s, the first architectural inventory was completed, and the entire Beaufort Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. By 1975, the historic district was given its highest ranking by the National Park Service with a Landmark designation.

Today, light manufacturing, military installations and tourism bring in new dollars to Beaufort. Retirees and young families, drawn by the climate, history and the as-yet unspoiled beauty, are the new settlers who add to the intellectual and cultural life of the Sea Islands. The town, in the words of the Federal Writers Program of 1940, continues to be "a monument to endurance."

General Policies

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the City of Beaufort to provide equal opportunity in employment and not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, veteran status, disability, or any other protected status, in accordance with appropriate law.

This policy applies to recruitment and placement, promotion, training, transfer, retention, rate of pay and all other terms and conditions of employment.

Employment and promotion decisions will be based on merit and the principle of furthering equal opportunity. The requirements we impose in filling a position will be those that validly relate to the job performance and skills required.

All other personnel actions including compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, recalls from lay-offs, training, education, tuition assistance and recreation programs will be administered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other protected status, in accordance with appropriate law.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against in violation of the law, you should contact your Department Head/Supervisor or Human Resources Department.

Anti-Harassment

Various laws and regulations generally prohibit employment decisions from being made on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, color, age, genetic information, disability or similar distinctions. In addition, it is our desire to provide a working environment in which employees are free from discomfort or pressure resulting from jokes, ridicule, slurs, threats and harassment either relating to such distinctions or simply resulting from a lack of consideration for a fellow human being.

The City does not tolerate harassment of any kind and forbids retaliation against anyone who has reported harassment in good faith.

If you feel that you have been harassed, you should contact your Department Head/Supervisor or Human Resources Department.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment warrants special mention. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal or visual conduct based on sex constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to the conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment; or
2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision; or
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented kidding or teasing, practical jokes, jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, "put-downs" or condescending or derisive comments or terms based on gender, and physical conduct, such as patting, pinching or brushing against another person. This policy prohibits such conduct regardless of the gender of the perpetrator or victim.

Anti-Harassment Complaint Procedure and Investigation

If you feel this policy has been violated by anyone with whom you come in contact on the job, regardless of whether it is by a fellow worker, a supervisor or a member of the general public, you should report the incident(s) to your supervisor or to a higher level in your "chain of command." Complaints against the City Manager should be made to the Human Resources Director.

Supervisors and Department Heads who receive complaints or become aware of harassment must coordinate with the Human Resources Director.

Harassment allegations are investigated, and the investigatory process may vary from case to case. The investigation is conducted as confidentially as possible consistent with the efficient handling of the complaint. All employees have a responsibility both to cooperate fully with the investigation and to keep the matter confidential, whether the employee is the

accused person, the complaining one, or merely a potential witness. Persons who are interviewed should not discuss the matter at all with co-workers, friends, or supervisors. This does not mean, however, that employees may not complain to the civil right agencies.

-- Important --

In order to avoid misunderstandings, complaints made to supervisors involve the completion of a complaint report, either by you the employee or by the person to whom the complaint is made, which summarizes the allegations and list any witnesses to the alleged harassment. The employee should be sure to obtain a copy of this initial complaint report to confirm the employee has complied with this procedure.

These procedures have been established to enable the employee to get the relief when they feel they are the victim of harassment. The U.S. Supreme Court has said that as a general rule the employee may not sue the City of Beaufort for a violation of the employees' rights unless the employee first gives the City notice and an opportunity to end the harassment. The reporting procedures which the City has adopted are intended to establish a clear record of what has been reported.

Benefits

The City of Beaufort offers an excellent and comprehensive employee benefit package. The City continually seeks ways to expand and improve benefits.

The employee benefits program is subject to change. Employees will be notified of changes in the benefits program when updates occur. Contact Human Resources with any questions regarding City offered benefits.

Health Insurance

Full time employees and legal dependents are eligible for health insurance. The benefits plan is designed to provide a supplemental package of programs which contribute to the physical, mental health and wellbeing of the employee and their dependents.

Health Benefits offered are – Medical, Dental, Vision and Tele Health.

Open enrollment will be announced and communicated to all employees with a start and end date. During the open enrollment period employees, may change plans and/or make any other necessary changes. Once open enrollment period closes changes may not be made unless the occurrence meets the requirements of a qualifying event (birth of child, death, adoption, change in external health care coverage, divorce) or unless otherwise instructed by the Human Resources Director. Contact Human Resources within 30 days of any qualifying event.

Dependent care coverage (legal spouse and children) are eligible for the benefits with an additional cost incurred by the employee.

The City charges a \$25.00 smokers' surcharge per employee to include spouses.

Retirement

All regular full-time and regular part-time employees of the City of Beaufort are required to participate in the South Carolina State Retirement System (SCRS) which offers and maintains programs designed to provide for the employee's retirement years. A portion of the cost of such participations shall be borne by the City of Beaufort; the exact proportion of which shall be determined through an agreement between the City and the South Carolina Retirement

System. The remaining cost shall be borne by the employee through mandatory payroll deductions.

Police and Fire Department personnel shall participate in the South Carolina Police Officers Retirement System (PORS).

COBRA

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) give employees their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the City of Beaufort's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in a loss of eligibility.

Some qualifying events would be:

- Resignation/termination of employment, or death of an employee
- A reduction in an employee's hours, leave of absence, employees divorce or legal separation
- A dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements

Under COBRA, the employee or qualified beneficiary pays the full cost (100%) of coverage at the City of Beaufort's group rates plus an administrative fee established by the City's Insurance provider.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP is a confidential counseling, assessment and referral program designed to help you manage your life. Just as health insurance is designed to address your physical wellbeing, your EAP is designed to address your emotional and mental health, as well as manage your work/life issues to achieve a healthy balance. EAP also provides legal and financial consultation services, assistance with elder care, childcare, adoption, and education. All calls made to the EAP are kept private and confidential.

For the most current vendor the City has selected, visit the City of Beaufort's website – www.cityofbeaufort.org, look in the Human Resources Department under Employee Health and Benefits information.

Additional Payroll Deductions

The City may offer additional programs to employees that could be payroll deducted. The cost of participating in such programs shall be the responsibility of the employee. Such programs may include life insurance, disability insurances, savings plans, retirement plans, dependent care plans, and Gym memberships.

Workers' Compensation

City employees are covered by workers' compensation for on-the-job injuries. Benefits are governed by state law and not set by the City. Employees must report immediately **any** on-the-job injury, regardless of severity, to their supervisor.

An employee who is eligible for Worker's Compensation due to a job-related injury, is entitled to sixty-six and two-thirds ($66 \frac{2}{3}$) of his gross wages while he is disabled up to a maximum weekly compensation set by law. The first 7 days of disability are not reimbursable unless the employee is disabled more than 14 days. If the employee is disabled more than 14 days, the first 7 days are usually paid at the end of the disability period. The employee will receive compensation during the disability period as follows:

- The employee will be paid directly by the City of Beaufort's Third-Party Administrator directly to their address of record. This payment is tax free. When the employee returns to work, they will resume being paid through the City of Beaufort payroll system. Employees must pay the City of Beaufort directly for health and other voluntary benefits during this time.
- If an employee is offered light duty and declines to work the light duty position preferring to use sick leave, the employee's use of sick leave hours will not be reimbursed to their sick leave bank.

Employment Policies

Code of Conduct

Employees must be committed to one's work and commitment to the City of Beaufort as its primary employer.

Employees may not hold financial interest that conflict with the conscientious performance of their job duties.

Employees must not divulge any City confidential information.

Employees must put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties and overall as a City employee.

Employees may not use public office for private gain.

Employees must act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

Employees must protect and conserve City property and shall not use it for other than City authorized activities.

Employees may not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating employment, that conflict with official City business and responsibilities unless officially approved by the Department Head and the City Manager.

Employees must disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to their Department Head/Supervisor.

Employees must adhere to all State and Federal employment laws.

Employees must make an effort to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law, or the ethical standards promulgated pursuant to policy.

Employees must be courteous at all times and transcend excellent customer service.

Hiring/Recruiting

The City endeavors to hire the most suitable candidate for open positions and encourages current employees to apply for positions for which they are qualified. All job vacancies are posted on the City's website. The City may/will also solicit and consider applications from external applicants. Decisions to fill an open position are made by Department Heads and the City Manager. All new positions require approval by the City Manager.

Rehires/Reinstatement of Employees

Rehires – Employees who are hired after being separated from the City for longer than 90 days are classified as rehires. Vacation, sick pay and disability benefits are determined according to the new date of rehire. All other benefits are activated on the first of the month following 30 days of employment (after the rehire date).

Reinstatement – Employees who are hired within 90 days of his/her separation are classified as reinstated. Vacation, sick pay and disability continue according to the original date of hire.

Nepotism/Employment of Relatives

People in the same immediate family may not be employed or continue to be employed if one directly or indirectly supervises another or interacts with another in the handling of money or compensation. For purposes of this policy, immediate family is defined as spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister, parent-in-law, grandparent-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law. The immediate family is also considered to include stepparents, stepchildren, stepbrothers and stepsisters when the employee and the step-relative have lived together regularly in the same household. Unrelated employees residing together or otherwise engaged in a close personal relationship (such as domestic partner, co-habitant or significant other) are treated as being within the immediate family of each other for the purposes of this nepotism policy. Members of the immediate family of elected officials of the City are not eligible for City employment.

If employees become related by marriage and create a situation prohibited by this policy, one of the employees may be asked to give up his/her position. If the employees cannot choose which of them it will be, the employee having the lower budgeted annual compensation may be removed. The removed employee may be considered for other positions within the City for which he/she is qualified.

Situations not specifically addressed in this policy that, in the City's opinion, create a conflict of interest or give the appearance of a conflict of interest, will be handled at the City's discretion.

Employment Status

Regular full-time employees are those who have completed their probationary periods and fill a full-time position with the City. Employees in this status are normally scheduled to work at least 40 hours per week. Regular full-time employees are eligible for fringe benefits.

Full-time Police Officers are scheduled to work 85.50 hours within the 14 day pay cycle.

Full-time Fire Fighters are scheduled to work 96 hours (4 shifts) or 120 hours (5 shifts) in a 14 day pay cycle.

Police and Fire have adopted the 28-day work cycle provided by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Regular part-time employees are those who have completed their probationary periods and fill a part-time position with the City. Employees in this status are normally scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week but may be called upon to work above their normally scheduled hours of work when workloads require. Regular part-time employees are not eligible for fringe benefits.

Probationary employees are part-time and full-time employees who have not yet completed their probationary period.

Temporary employees are those hired for a limited period of time or until completion of a particular project or projects. Such employees may work part-time or full-time hours depending on the needs of the City. Temporary employees are generally not eligible for fringe benefits.

Probationary Period – New Hire/Rehire

All new employees, including former employees who have been rehired, are considered to be on probation for the first 6 months. This period is a continuation of the selection process and is a time in which the new employee should demonstrate that he/she is suited for the job. This period is not a guarantee of employment for 6 months. If the Department Head concludes at any time that the employee is not suited for the position, the employee may be terminated or may be placed on extended probation if approved by the City Manager.

The probation period ends successfully when the Department Head, not sooner than 6 months after the employee was hired, evaluates the new employee in writing and authorizes his/her classification as a “regular” employee.

Promotions

Promotion is defined as the change of an employee from one position in one grade to a position in another grade of a higher level. The employee will be paid at least the minimum of the pay range of the grade to which they are promoted.

A newly promoted employee is considered to be on probation in their new position for 6 months. A promotion probation period allows employees to demonstrate that they are well suited for the promotion.

If the Department Head concludes at any time during the probationary period the newly promoted employee is not suited for the position, the employee will be restored to the position from which he/she was previously in, or to a comparable position, or terminated if neither alternative is considered practical.

Demotions

Demotion is defined as the change of an employee from a position in one grade to a position in another grade at a lower level. Employees demoted for cause shall be placed in lower salary grade as determined by the Department Head, Human Resources Director and the City Manager.

Transfer

Transfer is defined as the movement of an employee within the classification plan not otherwise covered by demotion, promotion, or reclassification.

Reclassification

The salary of an employee whose position is reclassified and allocated to another grade at a higher level shall be based on that employee's qualifications and experience.

All Promotions, Demotions, Transfers, and Reclassifications are initiated by Department Heads with final approval from the City Manager.

Dual Employment

The City expects an employee's work for the City to take precedence over any outside employment engaged in by an employee. Employees must get prior written approval from their Department Head and the City Manager before engaging in other employment. Should the City, in its sole discretion, determine that the outside employment interferes with or is otherwise incompatible with employment for the City, the employee may be asked to choose between the jobs.

Each change in dual employment shall require separate approval. All approvals are kept in the employees' personnel file.

Employees may not engage in any private business or activity while on City work time or at City workplaces.

Conflict of Interest

City employees are covered by state ethics laws that prohibit public employees from using their public position for their own personal gain or to benefit a family member or business associate. State law also prohibits employees from making governmental decisions on matters in which they, their family or business associates have an economic interest. Employees must notify their supervisors in writing of any matter in which they, their family or business associates have an economic interest and in which they must act on behalf of the City. The supervisor must send the notification to the City Manager for review. If the City

determines a potential conflict or appearance of conflict of interest exists, the matter will be reassigned to another employee.

Separation of Employment

Voluntary - Employees must submit and work a 2-week written notice of resignation from their position to their Department Head/Supervisor, which will allow for the department to prepare for the transition. An employee who resigns from employment with the City of Beaufort will be paid for accrued, unused annual leave hours provided they have completed their probationary period at the time they give notice of resignation. All City property assigned to the employee must be returned in good working condition upon separation of employment.

Involuntary – The Department Head will notify the City Manager of the intended termination. All City property assigned to the employee is considered an advance of wages and must be returned in good working condition. If not returned in good working condition, the value of the items will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

Gifts and Gratuities

No employee may directly or indirectly solicit, accept or receive a gift under circumstances in which it could be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him in the performance of his official duties or was intended as a reward for an official act on his part. A gift is defined as any benefit, favor, service, privilege or thing of value that could be interpreted as influencing an employee's impartiality. A gift includes, but is not limited, to meals, trips, money, loans, rewards, merchandise, foodstuffs, tickets to sporting or cultural events, entertainment, and personal services or work provided by City suppliers or contractors. The South Carolina Code of Laws section 8-13-710 defines the monetary value of \$25.00 a day or \$250.00 in a year. This policy is not intended to prohibit the acceptance of items of nominal value that are distributed generally to all employees.

A determination as to whether this policy has been violated is in the City's sole discretion and would adhere to the South Carolina Code of Laws section 8-13-710.

Political Activity

Employees may fully and freely associate themselves in organizations of their own choosing, except those organizations whose purpose is the violent overthrow of the government of the United States, the State of South Carolina or any of its political subdivisions. In addition, supervisory employees may not join or support labor organizations that accept to membership subordinates of such supervisors.

In certain circumstances involving real or potential conflicts, employees who run for any partisan or non-partisan public office may be placed on an unpaid leave of absence until after the election. If an employee is placed on leave of absence, his employment will terminate upon his election to a partisan or non-partisan public office.

For purposes of this policy, an employee is considered a “candidate for public office” as soon as he begins actively campaigning for nomination or election, or when he files for candidacy, whichever comes sooner.

Attendance

Attendance is an essential part of total job performance and is critical to the efficient operation of the City.

If you are aware of being absent or becoming absent, you must discuss with your Department Head and/or Supervisor. This is the sole responsibility of the employee to ensure that proper notifications are given. Employees are to follow Department policy that has been established.

Unless otherwise protected by law, excessive absences, lack of proper advance notification, unauthorized absence from work, excessive tardiness, leaving work early, excessive breaks, constitute unsatisfactory performance and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

If an employee is absent from work for 3 consecutive days or more for health-related reasons, may be required by Department Head to have an official doctor’s note stating that you can return to work and perform your duties. Employees who utilize the Tele-Health program must

provide confirmation of same. An absence of more than 5 consecutive days is considered an extended illness (See Leave of Absence).

Dress Code for the City of Beaufort

The City of Beaufort approves business casual attire for employees, while recognizing that we interface daily with the public for whom we serve.

The City's dress code encourages employees to use their best judgement when choosing their appropriate work attire.

Professional appearance is an important factor in building the confidence of others, and City employees should take pride in their appearance. The following are guidelines for choosing your work attire. Uniformed employees are to follow department policy - Police, Fire and Public Works outdoor workers.

Appropriate work attire:

Tops – Long and short-sleeved shirts, polo/golf shirts, blouses, and sweaters are appropriate.

Bottoms - Slacks, capris, skirts, and dresses are appropriate.

Shoes – closed toed shoes, open toed shoes (strap, dressy sandals) are appropriate

Friday Dress Down - Nice clean jeans may be worn.

Inappropriate work attire:

Tight or promiscuous clothing (leggings), no clothing with advertisements, writing or pictures, no faded jeans, or any clothing with torn holes and no Flip Flops.

Workplace Privacy/Computer and Internet Use

The workplace is intended to be a place of work. An important part of work is communications and recordkeeping. No employee is at work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and there are times when management needs access to communications or records maintained by employees in their individual workplaces. Personal items and personal communications received or stored on City property are not entitled to a guarantee of privacy.

Management may search City property and documents in City-owned vehicles, employee desks, lockers, file cabinets, electronic devices, etc. Further, to help provide for the safety and security of City employees, guests and property, the City conducts video surveillance of City property.

Electronic media raise similar issues. The City provides electronic and telephonic communication and, when necessary, computers and mobile devices to employees. Although assigned to the employee, these items still belong to the City. Similarly, any electronic files created on or software downloaded on, a City computer or mobile device belong to the City. Unauthorized programs and files may not be used or installed on City computers without the written permission of the City. Employees may not destroy or delete files from City computers or mobile devices except pursuant to the City's record retention policy.

The City reserves the right to review voice mail, electronic mail, computer and mobile device files, text messaging, and other electronic information generated by or stored in the City's electronic systems. The City also reserves the right to report the finding of such reviews to appropriate agencies. The City consents to the reasonable personal use of its computers and mobile devices.

Although the City consents to the "reasonable" use of its computers and mobile devices for personal business, what is "reasonable" is determined in the sole discretion of the City. The only sure way to avoid violating the City's policy on personal computer and mobile device use is to not use the City's computers for **any** personal purpose.

The following use is absolutely forbidden:

1. to access any material the City considers to be pornographic; to transmit or knowingly accept receipt of any communication that is pornographic, obscene, or in the City's opinion might contribute to a hostile work environment in that it demeans individuals on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, disability or some similar distinction
2. to conduct business for outside employment or a side-business
3. to solicit others for non-work-related reasons

City employees may not use personal electronic equipment (including but not limited to personal laptop computers, mobile devices and cellular phones) on City property or at City work sites to engage in conduct that would be prohibited if using City equipment.

Important Notice: *The City has the capacity to examine the computer and mobile device usage of individual employees in detail. Even though an item has been "deleted" and the*

employee cannot retrieve it; this does not mean that the City cannot do so. It is also possible to generate a report of every Internet connection made by each user and of how much time was spent in each connection.

Social Networks, Personal Websites and Blogs

Social networking, personal websites, and blogs have become common methods of self-expression. The City respects the right of employees to use these media during their personal time. Employees may not access social media sites, other than for business use, during working hours or using City equipment.

Employees must understand that material posted on these media may be read by persons other than those for whom it is intended. Employees are cautioned that they are responsible for the contents of social media posts they make. Posts that contain obscene or harassing material, that are unlawful, that contain personal attacks on coworkers, that reasonably call into question the employee's judgment, or that reasonably cause concern among the public may result in discipline, up to and including termination from employment. Similarly, conduct that would violate City policies if done in person also violates City policy if done through social media. Employees may not disclose confidential information over social media or similar sites.

Employees who post on media sites and who have identified themselves as a member or employee of the City on those sites must make it clear that they are expressing their own views and not those of the City.

Email and Communications Activities

The following is prohibited:

- Sending unsolicited messages, including the sending of "junk mail" or other advertising material to individuals who did not specifically request such material (spam).
- Any form of harassment via computer, telephone or paging, whether through language, content, frequency, or size of messages.
- Unauthorized use, or forgoing, or header information.
- Solicitation of email for any other address, other than that of the poster's account, with the intent to harass or to collect replies.
- Creating or forwarding "chain letters", "Ponzi" or other "pyramid" schemes of any type.

Risk Management Committee

The City's Risk Management Committee is established to improve the safety and health of all City employees. The Committee is focused on three areas of concern: Workplace safety, Employee Wellness, Vehicle Operations Safety. The RMC is tasked with monitoring and improving the above areas of concern. The success of the RMC is measured by changes in the City's overall annual Workman's Compensation premium. In addition, the RMC is also the makeup of the Accident Review Board.

Safety and Accident Reporting Procedures

Safety – Thinking and working safely can prevent most accidents. Always maintain a safe work environment and avoid driving distractions of all types.

Accident Reporting Procedure – All accidents are to be reported to your Department Head/Supervisor and subsequently to the Human Resources Department immediately. All accidents will be reviewed by the City's Risk Management Committee.

Motor Vehicle Accidents – It shall be the duty of the driver /operator of any City owned motor vehicle which is involved in any type of accident or incident to:

- Stop vehicle immediately
- Accidents involving Beaufort Police Department vehicles will be investigated by the South Carolina Highway Patrol.
- All other City vehicle accidents will be investigated by the Beaufort County's Sheriff's Office or the South Carolina Highway Patrol.
- Comply with Law Enforcement instructions concerning proper forms to be completed.
- No information is to be released concerning the accident/incident unless it's your Department Head/Supervisor or investigating Law Enforcement, unless otherwise directed by the City Manager.
- The driver/operator of any City owned motor vehicle involved in an accident or incident which causes personal or property damage shall comply with all aspects and procedures prescribed in the City's Accident Review Policy. Failure to follow procedure can result in disciplinary action.

Accident Review Board

The primary goal of the Accident Review Board is to promote safe driving, reduce the number of accidents involving city vehicles, and overall safety for employees. All operators must accept personal responsibility for the safe operation of vehicles and equipment. In cases where an individual is unable or unwilling to consistently operate vehicles or equipment safely, the board will recommend disciplinary action to the City Manager via the Human Resources Director based on the facts of each case.

- Accident review boards will be convened at the request of the City Manager, the Human Resources Director, a Department Head, or as recommended by the Risk Management Committee. The accident review board will consist of a minimum of three members.
- The board will consist of the Chairman of the Risk Management Committee, a member of the Risk Management Committee's Vehicle safety sub-committee, the Human Resources Director or designee, and other experts or experienced operators as requested by the risk management committee.

The purpose of the Accident Review Board is to:

- Determine if any City policies were violated.
- Categorize the incident as no-fault, preventable, or negligent.
- Make recommendations to assist involved employees in preventing future incidents.
- Determine if prevention measures exist or can be implemented to aid all employees in preventing the reoccurrence of similar incidents.
- Recommend punitive and non-punitive disciplinary action.

Accident Review Board Process

- Upon receiving a request to conduct an accident review board the Chairman of the Risk Management Committee will send a written request to the Human Resources Director to notify the involved department head of the pending action. The chairman will request evidence/information in accordance with the policy and determine the need for additional technical expertise for assistance.
- The Chairman will call the meeting to order and ensure a scribe is assigned for the duration of the proceeding. Members present must be documented.

- The Chairman will offer a brief overview of the incident and then present the evidence/information provided. Evidence/information may be duplicated and physically presented, electronically presented, or presented with any visual, audible, physical, or electronic aid deemed valuable to the board.
- Members of the board should determine from the evidence presented:
 - A description of the intersection, including blind corners and visibility in all directions, park vehicles, etc. as applicable
 - If warning lights or sirens were in use?
 - If safety equipment was being used? (Seat belts)
 - Was the operator distracted? (Cell phone/ computer / GPS)
 - Did the operator know the Department policy?
 - Was the operator trained properly?
 - Were City policies violated?
- The Chairman will allow board members to review evidence, prepare questions, and deliberate.
- The Chairman will ensure that the employee/s are available for interview as requested, as well as ensure that employees have the opportunity to state his/her case. The employee has the right to request a witness to speak on his/her behalf and may also have a supervisor present.

Accident Review Board meetings will be considered a formal meeting, facilitated by the Chairman. Each accident review board will be conducted using the agenda shown below.

- Chairman calls meeting to order.
- Chairman gives a “brief” of the incident to be addressed.
- Review evidence/information presented to board
- Board deliberates and prepares questions
- Employee invited in when request to state case
- Board discussion with Employee
- Employee presents additional witness
- Board excuses employee/witness and prepares decision for the final report

Report

The Chairman of the accident review board will provide a written statement of the board's findings to the Department Head. This statement will be a simple statement of fault, followed by the board's recommendation of disciplinary action. The board may also offer commentary with each letter of findings.

Each incident will be determined to be:

No Fault - No action could have been taken by the driver to prevent the accident. The board shall require that appropriate written report be filled, and no disciplinary action be taken.

Preventable - An accident in which the driver is judged to have been partially at fault and could have prevented the accident. Disciplinary action may be recommended to the Department Head.

Negligent - An accident in which the driver disregarded established policy, his/her safety and the safety of the public. The driver knows or should know that his/her actions had an unreasonable chance to cause serious bodily injury or death and significant damage to City and private property. The driver operated a vehicle or equipment in a way which was not consistent with a "duty to act" based on the information available at the time of the incident. Disciplinary action shall be recommended in direct proportion to the seriousness of the negligent act.

Board Recommendations

The City Manager and respective Department Head will ensure proper recommendation for final review and that the review is consistent.

Examples of disciplinary action include but are not limited to:

Non-Punitive Recommendation

- In service training on proper operation of a City owned vehicle

Punitive Recommendations

- Loss of take-home privileges of vehicle for a period of time
- Reimbursement maybe required depending on the severity of the incident and frequency

- Fine for reimbursement would not exceed the City's insurance deductible

Evidence and Information

Department Head's must provide all applicable evidence/information available listed below but not limited to:

- City of Beaufort Accident Injury Report
- Workers' Compensation – First Report of Injury or Illness 12A
- Written statements from individuals involved
- Written statements from witnesses
- State of South Carolina FR-10 Traffic collision Report Form
- Photographs
- Repair Estimates
- Applicable department policy's
- Applicable training records

City Vehicles and Equipment

All City of Beaufort vehicles (other than certain designated Law Enforcement vehicles) must have the City's logo permanently affixed in the pre-designated place on the vehicle.

Only authorized City of Beaufort employees are allowed to operate City vehicles and equipment. Employees who are authorized to operate City owned vehicles/equipment are responsible for maintenance of the vehicle/equipment and are expected to follow maintenance service times.

City vehicles/equipment is solely for the use of City business. All other uses are strictly prohibited and will lead to termination of employment.

Smoking and the use of smoke free tobacco products are NOT allowed inside City vehicles/equipment. Cellular telephone and or texting use by the employee in City owned vehicles/equipment is NOT allowed and is against the law. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

Hazardous Weather/Emergency Attendance & Pay Policy

The City must continue to provide services during periods of bad weather, emergencies or other situations in which the demand for public services is expected to be great. The need for employees to be on the job is especially critical during these emergencies. Employees are expected to make every effort to report to work, unless specifically directed, in writing by the City Manager or his designee. This policy describes special attendance and pay provisions applicable to non-exempt (hourly) and exempt (salaried) employees whether performing their regular responsibilities or reassigned as a result of a declared emergency.

A. Employees essential for preparing for, responding to the event or cleaning up after the event will be required to be available for such work as may be necessary to maintain safety and essential services.

1. Non-exempt and Exempt employees required to work during the preparation phase leading up to an event will be compensated at their regular pay in accordance with FLSA rules, unless otherwise authorized in writing by the City Manager.

B. Applicability of the Special Pay Provisions

1. The Provisions of this policy become effective when both of the following conditions are met:
 - i. The Mayor of the City of Beaufort has declared that a State of Emergency exists in the City, or a state of emergency for an area encompassing the City of Beaufort has been declared by the Governor or other competent authority; **and**
 - ii. The City has suspended normal City operations and is operating under emergency conditions, as determined by the City Manager.
2. Once the conditions of item B.1. above are met the City will be under a declared emergency.

C. Non-essential personnel who are released from work or directed by the City Manager, in writing, to not report to work for their regular shift will be compensated as follows:

1. Employees who report to work but work fewer hours than their normal shift because the office was closed will be paid for the full shift.
2. Employees unable to report to work because their office or activity was closed (as

authorized by the City Manager) will be paid for their normally scheduled hours.

3. All hours paid for but not worked will be shown as Administrative Pay (Pay Code 175) in the time reporting system. Administrative Pay hours will not be included in the calculation of overtime.
 4. Employees will be compensated on Administrative Pay up to a maximum of their regularly scheduled bi-weekly hours, equivalent to one pay period.
- D. Essential personnel who are required to work during an event following effective notifications as indicated in B.1 above will be compensated as follows:
1. Non-exempt (hourly) employees required to work during this period are eligible to receive 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for all hours worked. This rate of pay is applicable even if they have taken vacation, sick leave, or holiday during the pay cycle.
 2. Exempt (salaried) employees required to work during this period will be paid their regular salary up to 80 hours and their regular hourly rate (determined by dividing the employee's bi-weekly salary by 80 hours) for each hour above 80 hours up to a maximum of 3 consecutive work weeks.
 3. All time spent stationed or assigned to outposts (a workstation or rest station that is a required location other than the employees' home) will be included in the calculation of overtime.
- E. Following the event, the City Manager will determine which department/functions are still working overtime, which exempt employees will be compensated for hours worked beyond a normal pay period and provide an estimated timeframe for each department to return to normal operations. Once a department return to normal work schedule, all pay returns to normal FLSA rules.
- F. Elected Officials, the City Manager and the Municipal Court Judges are not eligible for compensation as described in D. And E.
- G. Eligibility for Pay:
1. During the applicability of this policy, scheduled leave may be cancelled and employees on leave may be recalled. Eligibility for pay in such situation is described in sections C. and D.

2. Employees on paid or unpaid leave who are not recalled to duty during or following and emergency are not subject to special pay provisions until such time as their leave ends and they return to duty.
 3. During a declare emergency, should and employee not report for work when scheduled or not check in at the designated time and /or location, the employee is not eligible to receive compensation and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- H. When normal operations resume, should an employee not report for work when required or not request and receive approval for time off, the employee will be considered to have resigned from employment with the City.

Tuition Assistance

The City of Beaufort is committed to the short and long-term development of its employees' knowledge and skills and demonstrates this commitment through the establishment of the following standards for tuition reimbursement. Tuition assistance is not intended to finance an employee's full tuition toward any degree.

Eligibility - Department Heads are responsible for verifying they have included in the budget (and the amount was approved) an amount sufficient to cover any reimbursements that they will approve in any given fiscal year.

Regular full-time employees are eligible for reimbursement of tuition costs, matriculation, examination and the cost of textbooks for courses begun after their employment start date. Reimbursement is not eligible for late registration fees, parking, deferred payment fees, travel expenses, equipment or any other incidental expense.

An eligible employee must be employed in an active status through the date of reimbursement to be eligible for reimbursement.

The City of Beaufort reserves the right to limit funds available for the Tuition Reimbursement Plan.

Prepayment - Prepayment of costs is not available. Tuition reimbursement is available only by reimbursement following the successful completion of course work.

Job-Related Study - Regular full-time employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement after six months of full-time employment. The job-related course(s) must have begun after

their employment start date and after their six-month anniversary date. A course is considered job-related if the knowledge gained from it will enhance the performance of a significant portion of the employee's present position. Courses must be approved individually and in advance through the City's approval process. Assistance for entire degree programs must have prior written approval by the City Manager or his/her designee.

Career-Related Study - Regular full-time employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement for career related study after six months of full-time employment. A course is considered career related if it prepares the employee for another field of work in which there are realistic opportunities for future employment within the City of Beaufort. Courses must be approved individually and in advance through the City's approval process. Assistance for entire degree or certification programs must have prior written approval by the City Manager or his/her designee.

The following qualify for tuition reimbursement:

- Regular courses taken for credit at accredited schools, colleges and universities;
- Courses credited toward a high school diploma or equivalency certificate;
- University extension or continuing education courses;
- Review courses and examinations for initial trade or professional licenses or certifications offered at accredited schools, colleges, and universities;
- Distance or e-Learning courses offered through accredited colleges or universities.

The following do not qualify for tuition assistance:

- Professional seminars and workshops
- Review courses and examinations for renewal of trade or professional licenses or certifications (Paid out of departmental budgets)
- Test preparation courses (e.g., GMAT, GRE, LSAT, MCAT preparation courses).

Assistance is subject to a maximum aggregate reimbursement of \$2,400 per City of Beaufort fiscal year for undergraduate courses; \$5,000 per fiscal year for graduate courses.

Employees will be reimbursed following completion of the course and assignment of grade according to the schedule below:

When a grade of B or above (a grade of C is not eligible for reimbursement) or certificate of completion is received, the City of Beaufort will reimburse an employee for the cost of tuition,

laboratory fees, and textbooks specifically required for the course. Original receipts showing the author, title and price of the text must be provided to substantiate a claim for textbook reimbursement. Pass, Satisfactory, Credit or similar grades are acceptable only if the sponsoring institution issues those grades to all students enrolled in the approved course. Participating employees must choose to receive a letter grade if it is an option.

Any employee interested in participating in the Tuition Reimbursement Program is responsible for obtaining appropriate written approval prior to course registration. An employee seeking reimbursement for educational costs incurred while taking an approved course is responsible for submitting supporting original documentation within 30 days of completion of the course.

Employee will not receive reimbursement if documentation is received after 30 days from completion of the course.

Tuition Assistance During Off-Duty Hours - An employee who takes an approved course during off-duty hours may be reimbursed under the following conditions:

- Approval is received from the Department Head and the City Manager at least 30 days prior to commencement of the course. The course is job-related, or career related.
- The course has been successfully completed with a minimum grade of “B” at both the undergraduate and graduate level.
- Funds for reimbursement have been approved in the department budget.
- Reimbursement is not being received from any other source.
- The employee is employed by the City at the time of reimbursement.

Tuition reimbursement is considered an advance of wages. Employees who receive reimbursement for educational expenses are required to work a minimum of one (1) year following receipt of funds. Otherwise, the City may deduct from wages due at termination the amount paid for tuition reimbursement.

Applying for Reimbursement - The employee shall submit an “Application for Tuition Reimbursement” to the Department Head within ten (10) days after receiving his grades, with the following attachments:

- Class schedule – must have the student’s name, school and semester pre-printed on it by the school
- Invoice/itemized bill – must specify exact amount of tuition, fees and other charges

as well as detail the term, student and school

- Official proof of payment showing method of payment. A receipt from the school is acceptable if it clearly itemizes payments. If it does not, a copy of the cancelled check, credit card statement, or documentation that details each payment's source.
- Official proof of 3rd party payments showing method of payment – If you receive grants, scholarships or other non-repayable funds you must report the amounts of those payments.
- Proof of successful completion/grade report – Must obtain a grade of B or better. Grade must be submitted on official school documents.

Residency Requirements

Employees of the City of Beaufort's Police and Fire Departments may be required to reside in a proximate location to provide effective response times. Police and Fire Department prospective and newly hired candidates are required to discuss and adhere to Department requirements prior to and during employment.

Wages, Hours of Work and Compensation

Classification System

The Human Resources Director is charged with developing a system for classifying positions within the City, including pay ranges for those positions. Classification systems and pay ranges are subject to change at any time. Classification systems and pay ranges will be reviewed periodically.

Hours of Work

The City's normal hours of business are from 8a.m. to 5p.m. However, some departments must operate outside the City's normal hours of business, and schedules of employees of those departments may differ from the City's normal hours. Each department is responsible for scheduling its employees to meet the needs of the City. Employees may be required to work overtime.

Work from Home – Although this is discouraged, should the need arise, a work plan must be developed and coordinated with your Department Head, the City Manager and the Human Resources Director.

Regular full-time employees who work during the City's normal hours of business receive one unpaid lunch break of 60 minutes. Lunch breaks for employees whose departments operate outside the City's normal hours are set by those departments. The allowance of use of lunch breaks to be used for reporting to work late or leaving early is at the sole discretion on the Department Head.

Overtime and Compensatory Time

Non-exempt employees, with the exception of Law Enforcement and Fire, receive overtime premiums at 1.5 times their regular hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of 40. It is at the discretion of the Department Head when overtime is warranted.

Law enforcement personnel are scheduled to work 86 hours in a 14-day work period. Fire suppression personnel are scheduled to work either 96 hours (4 shifts) or 120 hours (5 shifts), which includes 106 straight hours plus 14 hours of FSLA qualified overtime in a 14-day work week. Any hours in excess will be paid at 1.5 times their regular hourly rate.

Employees must accurately record all hours worked and must have worked all hours recorded. Employees may not work "off the clock," and employees may not work overtime without the permission of their supervisor except in cases of emergency. Employees who are exempt from overtime receive a salary that compensates them for all hours worked in the workweek. Such employees do not receive overtime pay or compensatory time off. However, Department Heads may grant additional paid time off to exempt employees who have worked unusual amounts of time in excess of the normal schedule, but no exempt employee has a right to such additional paid time off. There is no payment for such additional time upon termination.

Payment of Wages

Employees are paid bi-weekly on Thursday's by direct deposit. Should a pay day fall on a Holiday, the pay day date will be adjusted. Employees should examine their pay stubs immediately to ensure they have been properly paid for all hours and that no improper deductions have been made. Any payment errors must be reported to the payroll division within the Finance Department within 14 days.

The City deducts from employees' gross pay taxes and withholding required by the taxing authorities. The City may also deduct from employees' pay the employees' share of any premiums or plan contributions for insurance, retirement and similar plans that are elected by the employee. The City may make other deductions as required by law or court order. The

City does not make unauthorized deductions and will reimburse employees if such deductions are made inadvertently and reported to the payroll division within the Finance Department.

Cash, debts owed the City, benefits, uniforms, tools, equipment, vehicles, instruction manuals, keys, City identification cards and other items belonging to the City that are advanced or issued to an employee but not repaid or returned by him at the time of his termination are considered advances of wages, the value of which may be deducted from the employee's pay.

Longevity

Longevity is a recognition of uninterrupted service with the City of Beaufort. The recognition comes upon reaching 2, 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 years of uninterrupted service.

Effective July 1, 2017 all longevity for all milestones will be 2.5%, which at such time of the anniversary, it will be paid out in one lump sum to the employee on an annual basis.

Performance Evaluations

The City will conduct annual performance reviews. Employees must sign written evaluations. The employee's signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents of the evaluation, only that he has been made aware of it. Employees may attach comments to their evaluations. While favorable performance evaluations may be a factor in determining wage increases, no employee is entitled to a wage increase because he receives a favorable evaluation.

Each year, the City Manager and the Finance Director with the assistance of the Human Resources Director salary fact findings/comparisons, will determine the pool of merit increase funds available. Both the objectives of the compensation program and financial resources available will be considered in the decision-making process.

The purpose of performance reviews is to evaluate the performance of a non-probationary employee through a constructive process. The employee's evaluation shall be sufficiently specific to inform and guide the employee in the performance of her/his duties, while establishing specific goals that the employee should attain.

Merit pay is used to reward successful performance. Larger merit increases will be awarded to employees who consistently exceed performance standards. Increases will not be granted to employees whose performance has been rated as unsatisfactory overall.

Determination of Merit Increase

Department Heads/Supervisors will recommend: A. whether an employee should receive any merit increase based on his/her annual performance evaluation and B. the amount of increase appropriate for the performance results.

The following factors are the basis for awarding merit pay to employees:

- The employee's performance as reported in the annual performance review.
- The appropriate pay level within the range for the employee considering the employee's performance and performance of others in the range.
- Recommendations of Supervisors, as approved by Department Heads.

Review of Merit Increase

Merit increase require the recommendation of the employees Department Head or immediate Supervisor and the approval of the City Manager and the Human Resources Director. The chain of command applies to the process as outlined below:

- Department Head/Supervisors evaluate each employee; final performance evaluations are reviewed by the Department Head.
- City Manager evaluates all Department Heads
- All original evaluations are forwarded to Human Resources

If the performance evaluation results indicate a need for improvement, a 3-month probation may be given, or any other discretionary action may be taken. After any probation, the employee may be terminated if performance has not improved satisfactorily.

Holidays

The City recognizes and pays for 10 designated holidays each year. The holiday schedule is determined by the City Manager.

Each active employee will be paid holiday pay for the holiday whether they work on the holiday or not. To clarify – If an employee works on the observed holiday, they will receive pay for the actual number of hours worked and the holiday pay.

The City observes the following holidays:

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day

Labor Day

Veterans Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Day

And the day before/after Christmas as determined by the City Manager

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be declared a holiday for City employees. When a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be declared a holiday for City employees.

Leave Policies

Annual Leave

It is the policy of the City to provide full-time employees an Annual Leave benefit.

Annual leave accrual rate for Employees is determined by the length of continuous employment and is based on a calendar year. January 1 begins the annual leave calendar.

Employees desiring to take annual leave should give their supervisors at least two weeks' advance notice. Annual leaves will be scheduled as much as practical in accordance with employee requests. The City's workload demands, however, are paramount.

When more employees request particular days off than can be accommodated, supervisors will make annual leave assignments taking into account the date the requests were made, special needs for particular annual leave dates and the employees' lengths of service.

The maximum number of annual leave hours that can be accumulated in one calendar year is 400 hours. Any hours in excess of 400 at the end of the calendar year will be forfeited.

Accrued, unused annual leave will be paid, up to the maximum number of annual leave hours, for at termination only if the employee is terminated or resigns for non-disciplinary reasons. Employees who resign must give and properly work a two-week notice of resignation to receive accrued, unused annual leave. The notice may be waived by the City Manager.

New employees will not be allowed to use accrued Annual Leave until completion of 6 months' probation period.

Employees with less than 6 months of service are not eligible for annual leave therefore will not receive a payout of leave upon separation of employment.

When a holiday occurs during the period an employee is on authorized Annual leave with pay, Annual leave shall not be charged for the holiday.

Annual Leave Accrual Rates

40 Hour Regular Employee

<i>Years of Service</i>	Days Per Year	Hours per Pay Period (Bi-Weekly)
<i>6 months thru 4 years</i>	10	3.08
<i>5 years thru 9 years</i>	15	4.62
<i>10 years thru 19 years</i>	20	6.15
<i>20 years and over</i>	25	7.69

12 Hour Shift - Police

<i>Years of Service</i>	Days Per Year	Hours per Pay Period (Bi-Weekly)
<i>6 months thru 4 years</i>	10	4.71
<i>5 years thru 9 years</i>	15	7.07
<i>10 years thru 19 years</i>	20	9.42
<i>20 years and over</i>	25	11.78

48 Hour Shift - Fire

<i>Years of Service</i>	Days Per Year	Hours per Pay Period (Bi-Weekly)
<i>6 months thru 4 years</i>	10	9.23
<i>5 years thru 9 years</i>	15	13.84
<i>10 years thru 19 years</i>	20	18.46
<i>20 years and over</i>	25	23.07

Sick Leave

It is the policy of the City to provide sick leave with pay for full-time employees. Sick leave is a privilege and may be used only when an employee is incapacitated due to personal illness or injury or has a medical/dental appointment or when an employee is exposed to a contagious disease, diagnosed by a licensed physician, and the employee's presence may endanger the health of their employees.

Employees may use up to 5 days per year to care for an immediate family member who is ill or injured. Any other exceptions will be at the discretion of the Department Head.

Abuse of the privilege to be absent from work due to personal illness or injury may result in termination and/or discipline of employment. Employees shall not abuse, show a pattern of sick leave and/or leave without pay usage.

At the discretion of the Department Head or Human Resources Director, the employee may be required to present a certificate from a physician attesting illness or incapacity for the extent of the days out from work. If the absence extends beyond 1 day, the employee must keep his/her supervisor advised on a daily basis of his/her condition and expected date of return.

Police and Fire Departments reserve the right to have personnel undergo Fit for Duty examinations based on the sickness or injury as a precaution to both the employee and the City. Employees may not return to work until cleared by examination.

Annual leave may be used for sick leave purpose after sick leave is exhausted. Employees who have exhausted all sick leave and Annual leave credits and who are not entitled to FMLA may be granted a leave of absence under the Leave of Absence section of this handbook.

Upon returning to work from an unscheduled sick leave, the employee shall complete and sign a leave request form and submit it to his/her Department Head. If the unscheduled sick leave exceeds 3 days, the Department Head may request a physician attesting to the illness or incapacitation for the extent of the days out from work. If the employee uses the Tele-Health service, confirmation of service must be provided.

Accrued unused sick leave *will not* be paid for termination or voluntary separation from the City. The only instance in which accumulated sick leave will be paid out is when the employee is retiring, becomes disabled or death has occurred, at which time only a maximum of 160 hours will be paid.

When a holiday occurs during the period an employee is on authorized Sick leave with pay, sick leave shall not be charged.

Annual leave, Sick leave and Holidays are not considered work time.

Military Leave

Employees are entitled to leave of absence and reinstatement upon return from leave of absence for military service (including Reserve and National Guard duty) as may be provided by applicable state and federal law. The provisions of such laws may change from time to time and for that reason no effort is made to set forth the law in this policy.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects service member's reemployment rights when returning from a period of service in the uniformed services, including those called up from the reserves or National Guard, and prohibits employer discrimination based on military service or obligation. The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) administers USERRA.

Employees are responsible for providing proof of military leave (orders or verification letter from the unit) prior to the processing of payroll in order to receive pay for the dates listed on the City of Beaufort's timesheets as military pay. Once the documents are received, the employee will be paid for said military time.

Employees on military leave will receive paid leave for up to 15 days per military fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) for training or call-up. In addition, if an employee is called upon to serve during an emergency the employee will receive paid leave of absence for not exceeding thirty additional days.

Jury Duty

An employee who is called for jury duty will be given a jury duty leave of absence. Employees called for jury duty must keep their Department Head informed of their status.

For regular jury duty, an Employee shall be entitled to receive jury duty pay for the period of absence required up to a maximum of ten (10) days per calendar year. Such leave shall not be charged to annual or sick leave earnings. On any day when such employee is excused from service he will be expected to report for duty at his/her regular place of work or be charged annual leave for time excused from jury duty.

An employee called for Grand Jury Duty an employee shall be entitled to a maximum of (20) days paid time off in any calendar year.

Employees will receive their regular pay for each day on jury duty. The pay will be based on the average number of hours worked per week. The employee will be paid the difference between the normal salary and payments made by the court. Employees must submit juries slip from the court showing the total hours and days served and the amount of money earned to the payroll department.

An employee returning from jury duty must submit to his Department Head a jury slip from the court releasing the employee from jury duty.

Likewise, any period of time for which an employee is excused from jury duty because of illness shall be charged to sick leave. An employee shall be entitled to all fees received as a juror. An employee will be required to present a statement from the court indicating jury service.

Light Duty

The City of Beaufort is committed to provided work, when possible, for employees who have been restricted by a physician due to an injury or illness. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify Human Resources with documentation as soon at their physician deems that work should be limited. The assignment, when possible, will be coordinated between the Department Head and the Human Resources Director. If and when necessary employees will be placed where an appropriate position can accommodate light duty within any of the City of Beaufort Departments.

Employees on light duty must furnish a written update on their medical condition to the Human Resources Director from the treating physician after each visit to their physician in order to remain in the assigned light duty position.

Being placed on light duty assignment does not excuse an employee from following all policies, rules and regulations.

Bereavement Leave

The City will provide per incident, a maximum of 3 regularly scheduled days off with pay to an employee in the event of death(s) of family members occurring within the Employee's immediate family. The immediate family is defined as spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandparent-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law. The immediate family will be considered to include stepparents, stepchildren, and stepbrothers and stepsisters only when the employee and the deceased had lived together regularly in the same household at or prior to the time of death.

Employees must request bereavement leave by contacting their Department Head/Supervisor before going on leave.

Employees may be excused from work to attend the funerals of other family members and, upon request, may be paid for such absences from accrued annual leave balances.

Leave of Absence

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

All employees who have been employed at least 12 months, and who worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months prior to the leave request, are eligible for an unpaid family and/or medical leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 for a period of up to 12 weeks during a 12-month period under the following circumstances:

- To care for the employee's child after birth, adoption of child or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform work;

- To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability status.

Employees must provide 30 days' advance notice when the leave is foreseeable. The City may require medical certification to support a request for leave because of serious health condition and may require second or third opinions (at the employer's expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work. Taking of leave may be delayed if requirements are not met. For the duration of FMLA leave, the City will maintain the employees' health coverage under the group health plan. Upon return from FMLA leave, employees will be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

To the extent, the City of Beaufort can accommodate the employee during this leave period; an effort will be made to allow the employee to return to the same or comparable position.

For group, medical benefits to continue the employee is required to make contributions for the payment of medical premiums.

Employees must utilize any accrued paid time off during the period of FMLA. Employees who fail to report to work after expiration of the leave must reimburse the City of Beaufort for any premiums paid on the employee's behalf while on leave. This provision will be waived if the employee cannot report to work due to a continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition. It will also be waived if the employee returns to work for a period equal to twice the period of take as leave.

Employees may not engage in other employment while on leave of absence.

Automatic Termination of Employment

An employee's employment automatically terminates if he does not return to full active employment status at the conclusion of his leave of absence or extended leave of absence. This does not affect the employee's ability to reapply for the position at a later time. Further, employees with circumstances that warrant special consideration should bring those circumstances to the attention of management.

Use of Leave

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block.

Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

Employees must use accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave (sick and annual). In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Discipline

Discipline Policy

As is the case with all organizations, instances arise when an employee must be disciplined. The discipline that may be imposed includes but is not limited to oral reprimand, written warning, probation, suspension without pay, demotion and discharge. In addition, the City may procedurally suspend an employee pending investigation to determine if disciplinary action is appropriate. If the City determines an unpaid suspension is appropriate discipline, exempt employees will be suspended in full-day increments; non-exempt employees will be suspended in partial or full-day increments. In addition, the City may impose a combination of disciplinary measures. **THE DISCIPLINE IMPOSED IN ANY PARTICULAR SITUATION IS AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE CITY. NOTHING IN ANY OF THE CITY'S POLICIES OR BY VIRTUE OF ANY PAST PRACTICE OF THE CITY REQUIRES THE CITY TO FOLLOW ANY PARTICULAR COURSE OF DISCIPLINE.** Department Heads/Supervisors must submit terminations to the City Manager for review.

- *Employees must sign disciplinary notices, counseling memoranda, performance appraisals and similar documents. The employee's signature indicates only that the employee is aware of the action taken and does **not** indicate that the employee agrees with such action.*
- *An employee who refuses to sign such a document will be relieved of all duty until the document is signed. If the document has not been signed and returned by the end of the*

employee's next scheduled work day, the City will consider the employee to have resigned.

Conduct Warranting Disciplinary Action

It is not possible to list all acts and omissions that may result in disciplinary action. The disciplinary action that is appropriate for any misconduct is at the sole discretion of the City. The following are merely examples of some of the more obvious types of misconduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge:

- conviction of or plea of guilt or no contest to a charge of theft, violation of drug laws, sexual misconduct, offense involving moral turpitude or offense that affects the City's reputation or that reasonably could create concern on the part of fellow employees or the community. Employees who are arrested may be relieved of duty (with or without pay) pending the City's determination on continued employment.
- Incompetence
- unauthorized absence or tardiness or a pattern of absenteeism or tardiness
- insubordination, including disrespect for authority, or other conduct that tends to undermine authority
- failure or refusal to carry out instructions
- unauthorized possession or removal, misappropriation, misuse, destruction, theft or conversion of City property or the property of others
- violation of safety rules; neglect; engaging in unsafe practices
- interference with the work of others
- threatening, coercing or intimidating fellow employees, including "joking" threats
- dishonesty
- failure to provide information; falsifying City records; providing falsified records to the City for any purpose
- failure to report personal injury or property damage
- neglect or carelessness
- introduction, possession or use of illegal or unauthorized prescription drugs or intoxicating beverages on City property or while on duty anywhere; working while under the influence of illegal drugs or intoxicating beverages; off-the-job illegal use or possession of drugs.

For purposes of this policy, an employee is “under the influence” if he has any detectable amount of any such substance in his system.

- unsatisfactory performance
- violation of City policies
- lack of good judgment
- Conduct unbecoming a City officer or employee. Any conduct which affects the employee’s reputation, or which reasonably could create concern on the part of citizens or fellow employees.
- and any other reason that, in the City’s sole determination, warrants discipline

Drug Free/Zero Tolerance Workplace Policy

The City of Beaufort has a zero-tolerance approach to any drug and/or alcohol usage in the workplace as outlined in the policy.

All employees of the City are prohibited from swallowing, inhaling, injecting, dealing in, or otherwise using, illegal drugs and substances (such as marijuana, cocaine, LSD, heroin, meth, etc.). Further, this prohibition applies to the misuse, abuse or any unlawful use or possession of otherwise legal drugs. These prohibitions apply to use at any time, both on the job and off the job. City employees are, of course, permitted to possess any substance when required by their jobs or for the purpose of lawful delivery to another person.

Similarly, employees are prohibited from reporting to work, using or being anywhere on City property while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or improperly used controlled substances. For purposes of this policy, “under the influence” means having any detectable amount of any such substance in the employee’s system.

The City may test employees for drug or alcohol use at any time the City has reasonable suspicion of a violation of the policy.

Testing for reasonable suspicion is based on specific objective facts and reasonable inferences drawn from these facts in the light of experience and common sense.

Factors that could establish reasonable suspicion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Direct observation of an individual engaged in drug-related activity, on or off duty;
- A pattern of abnormal conduct;

- Unusual, irrational or erratic behavior;
- Unexplained, increased, or excessive absenteeism or tardiness;
- Sudden changes in work performance;
- Repeated failure to follow instructions or operating procedures;
- Violation of safety policies or failure to follow safe work practices;
- Unexplained or excessive negligence or carelessness;
- Discovery or presence of drugs in an employee's possession or near the employee's workplace;
- Odor or residual odor peculiar to some drugs;
- Arrest or conviction for a drug-related crime;
- Information provided either by reliable and credible sources or independently corroborated; or
- Physiological symptoms such as excessive sweating dilated pupils or slurred speech.

Employee Responsibility

Employees on physician-prescribed medications must notify his/her Department Head/Supervisor if his/her healthcare provider has informed him/her that such medication could affect job performance and safety.

Reasonable Suspicion

When a supervisor or manager believes, reasonable suspicion exists, he/she should report his/her observations to the City Manager. Factors which support reasonable indications should be documented by the department head. Upon approval by the City Manager, the employee will be asked to submit to a drug test. Refusal may result in immediate discharge. Employees may also be referred to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for assistance.

As a condition of employment, employees agree to notify the City within five calendar days after any criminal conviction for the workplace manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of illegal drugs and prescription drugs not prescribed for the individual employee's use. As required by the state and federal drug free workplace acts, the City will notify within ten days all state and federal grantors/contracting agencies of such employee convictions. "Conviction" means a finding of guilt, imposition of a sentence, a plea of no contest or a plea of guilty.

The City will notify law enforcement authorities whenever illegal drugs are found in the workplace.

Random Drug Testing

Employees in Police, Fire and Public Works (Uniformed positions) positions with the City of Beaufort will be randomly selected for unannounced alcohol/drug testing through a system using a scientifically/statistically and legally valid number generation process performed by a third-party administrator which will, at random, select the employees for testing regularly. Employees could be selected for testing more than once a year. Employees selected for testing will be notified on the day they are to be tested, just prior to being sent for testing.

There is no advance notice of random testing.

Grievance

It is the policy of the City of Beaufort to adopt a grievance procedure in accordance with the "County and Municipal Employees Grievance Procedure Act," Section 8-17-110, *et seq.*, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

Grievance is defined as any complaint by an employee that he/she has been treated unlawfully or in violation of City policies with regard to any matter pertaining to his employment transfer, promotion, and demotion. An employee's compensation level, salary grade and performance evaluation rating are not grievable, except as it applies to alleged inequities received or been credited with or has otherwise lost wages or benefits to which he /she is entitled, he/she must present their grievance in accordance with the procedure or such wages or benefits may be forfeited.

Grievance Procedure:

- The employee shall follow the chain of command, by discussing the grievance with their Department Head.
- Should the employee want to move forward with a formal complaint, the complaint must be made in writing to the Human Resources Director.

The Employee Grievance Committee:

- The composition of the grievance committee will include the Human Resources Director and 2 members of the Human Resources Committee, to exclude the grieving employee's department.

Decision:

- The committee shall, within 10 business days after hearing a grievance, make its finding and recommendations and report such findings and recommendations to the City Manager.

Amendments

Any section or provision of this handbook can be amended or changed at any time by the City Manager with or without notice.