

**TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

**(Not including Police Dept. Employees)**

**Adopted by Board of Selectmen on April 8, 2014**

**302 Main Street**

**Old Saybrook, CT 06475**

**[www.oldsaybrookct.org](http://www.oldsaybrookct.org)**

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## **SECTION I INTRODUCTION**

### ***Welcome to the Town of Old Saybrook***

As the First Selection of Old Saybrook, I recognize that we can only fulfill our goals and objectives with the dedicated work of our most important resource—our employees. If you are a new employee, congratulations, and welcome to our team. If you are a current employee, we appreciate the effort and contributions you make every workday to the services we provide to our residents and visitors. Our goal is to operate our town government in a professional, customer-focused, and trustworthy manner. To accomplish that goal, we need for each employee to do his or her best work every day and to work as a team to foster a supportive and cohesive work environment.

We are committed to providing our employees with a diverse, professional and safe workplace. We also are committed to providing our employees with the resources they need to be successful and build a strong team. As one of those resources, this Handbook is meant to serve as a ready guide about our culture, how we conduct business, what we expect, and what you can expect as we work together to provide exceptional and professional services to Old Saybrook residents and visitors.

Carl P. Fortuna, Jr.  
First Selectman

## *About This Handbook*

This handbook serves as a general reference during your employment with the Town of Old Saybrook. It is not intended to be a definitive source of information on all the terms and conditions of your employment.

The information contained in this Handbook is subject to revision based on changes in the law, collective bargaining agreements, Town policies and procedures or regulations. **The contents of this handbook are meant to serve as guidance and do not constitute the terms of a contract of employment or a guarantee of continued employment.** There are no promises in this handbook regarding your work assignment, work schedule, specific working conditions or length of employment. The Town reserves the right to review, revise, delete, and interpret the policies and procedures described in this handbook at its discretion, subject to any legal restrictions. Of course, we believe in open communication, and will keep you apprised of changes about which you need to be aware in order to perform your job.

Many Town policies and regulations have been referenced and paraphrased for the sake of brevity. Employees are responsible for making sure they are fully aware of the obligations and prohibitions contained in those policies. Policies are adopted by the Board of Selectmen and are available on the Town website or in the Selectman's Office.

In addition, this Handbook is not meant to change or conflict in any way with any terms and conditions of employment contained in any collective bargaining agreement. If you are in a position that is covered by the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, this Handbook supplements those agreements, but does not replace them.

Full time (paid) elected officials and employees with individual contracts are categorized as exempt employees for the purposes of personnel policies.

## **SECTION II**

### **OUR COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING A POSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE**

#### ***Our Culture of Appreciation and Respect***

Our work environment and culture are an essential part of our success. We believe it is important that employees consistently treat co-workers—as well as others with whom we interact while working—in a courteous and respectful manner. We also believe that a diverse workforce enhances the quality of our work environment and our service delivery to our Town residents and visitors. In addition to the common categories of individuals who are entitled to equal treatment by law, we value treating individuals with respect without regard to other differences, including education, economic status, family background, perspectives or other individual characteristics. Treating each individual as a person worthy of respect goes a long way towards having a higher performing, innovative and harmonious workplace.

#### ***Equal Employment Opportunity***

The Town of Old Saybrook is committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination in all of our employment policies and practices, including recruitment, hiring, training, compensation, benefits, transfers, promotions, and all other employment conditions. As stated in our *Equal Employment Opportunity Policy*, the Town will make every effort to ensure that our employment policies and practices provide equal opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression, parental status, marital status, past or present service in the uniformed services of the United States, or any other legally protected basis. Employment decisions will be based on individuals' qualifications and our business/operational needs.

#### ***Individuals with Disabilities***

One protected group of individuals we seek to employ and support is individuals with disabilities. A qualified person with a mental or physical disability must be provided the same employment opportunity as any other qualified individual. A qualified person with a disability is someone who has the knowledge, skills, and ability to perform the essential functions of a job, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include:

- removing physical barriers to the employee's work area;
- modifying an individual's job duties, work schedule or work environment;
- modifying how the job is normally performed;
- providing alternative means of work communications; and
- transferring the employee to an available position for which the person is qualified.

Any individual (employee or applicant) who is in need of accommodation should contact the Town's ADA Compliance Officer, Heather McNeil, at (860) 395-3190 or [HMNeil@town.old-saybrook.ct.us](mailto:HMNeil@town.old-saybrook.ct.us) about the specific need. Confidential discussions with the individual and consultation with the employee's supervisor will determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation will be made.

Please see the Town's complete *Individuals with Disabilities Policy* for more information.

## *Harassment Prevention Policy and Complaint Procedure*

### I. Introduction and Statement of Policy

The Town of Old Saybrook is committed to providing a work environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity, and are provided a work environment that is free of any form of harassment in the workplace. As an example of the importance we place on this commitment, the Town's *Harassment Prevention Policy*, including the complaint procedure, is set forth below:

The Town of Old Saybrook strictly prohibits harassment and any other form of discrimination, including but not limited to harassment based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, religion, age, disability, past or present service in the uniformed services of the United States, genetic makeup, or any other legally protected basis. The Town also prohibits discrimination or harassment against any individual based upon that individual's association with an individual in a protected class. In addition, the Town prohibits any form of harassment against any employee or applicant for employment, or by an employee against anyone, including anyone with whom we do business, residents or visitors, regardless of whether the victim is a member of a protected class.

All supervisors and employees are required to maintain a work environment free from such discrimination, harassment and intimidation. The Town will investigate all complaints of discrimination or harassment and preserve confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. Any employee who violates this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

## II. Non-Retaliation

Employees and applicants for employment will not be subjected to any retaliation or adverse consequences because they have (a) filed a legitimate complaint of discrimination or harassment; (b) assisted or participated in an investigation of such a complaint, or in any hearing or legal proceeding involving such a complaint; (c) opposed any unlawful conduct involving discrimination or harassment; or (d) exercised any other legal right protected by law that involves discrimination or harassment.

## III. Prohibited Forms of Harassment:

Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive, or abusive working environment. Some examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Making racial or ethnic slurs;
- Ridiculing, insulting or demeaning a person, a group of people, or their relatives, friends or associates based upon one or more of the following: race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or religion.
- Subjecting an individual to conduct that constitutes bullying.

Sexual harassment is verbal or physical conduct or abuse of a sexual nature, unwelcome sexual advances and requests for sexual favors in situations where:

- Submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment;
- An individual's submission to or rejection of such conduct becomes the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexually harassing conduct may be overt or subtle, and includes, but is not limited to:

- Repeatedly e-mailing, text-messaging, calling, or otherwise attempting to contact another employee to solicit a non-professional relationship with the individual;
- Basing any employment decision on an employee's or applicant's acceptance or rejection of personal relations or sexual advances;
- Verbal conduct, such as suggestive or offensive comments, sexual jokes, or sexual propositions;



- Non-verbal conduct, such as derogatory or pornographic images, pictures, or cartoons, leers or stares; and
- Unwanted physical conduct, such as making physical contact or assault.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex (gender) discrimination, and can occur against either a male or a female individual by either a male or female employee. It can be directed against an employee or a supervisor by another employee or supervisor. It can be directed against an employee by a client, customer, supplier, contractor, other outside business associate, or visitor, and vice versa.

This policy also applies to the Town's electronic communications systems. Employees may not use any Town communications systems to harass others, whether they are employees or non-employees.

#### IV. Complaint Procedure and Investigation:

Any employee who believes she or he has been subjected to any type of discrimination or harassment should immediately tell the other person to stop or make it clear that the conduct is not welcome or acceptable. In addition, the employee should immediately inform his or her supervisor of the perceived discrimination or harassment. This will provide the best opportunity to prevent further discrimination or harassment and promptly take effective corrective measures. Failure to report possible harassment which would enable the organization to correct the problem also may prevent further legal action that an individual may otherwise be entitled to take. In the event that you are uncomfortable, for any reason, with discussing the matter with your supervisor, you should contact the First Selectman directly.

The employee may be asked to state the complaint in writing. The First Selectman or designee will promptly and thoroughly investigate your complaint and inform the employee of the findings and resolution relative to the complaint. The Town also will take steps to ensure that information obtained during the investigation is shared only with those who have a business need to know about it. Everyone involved in the investigation will be told of the need for confidentiality and will be expected to maintain confidentiality. You will then be advised in writing of the Town's final resolution of the complaint.

In addition, it is the responsibility of any employee who has witnessed or been subjected to any discrimination or harassment as described above to report the incident to his or her supervisor or the First Selectman. Any supervisor who receives a report of potential harassment must promptly (within one business day) notify the First Selectman.

Harassment is a serious act of misconduct. If an investigation results in a finding that a person has knowingly, or in a malicious manner, falsely accused another of

statement(s) or conduct that did not occur, that person will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### *Resolving Workplace Issues*

We believe that employees should be treated in an impartial and consistent manner. We also believe that problems that are not brought to our attention will remain unresolved and eventually cause a breakdown in work relationships and dissatisfaction in working conditions. The goal is to solve any workplace problems as quickly and equitably as possible.

The first step is for you to let your supervisor know about the problem (unless the problem involves the supervisor, in which case you should bring the issue to the attention of the First Selectman). Every effort will be made to resolve the issue at this level in a prompt and fair manner.

Certain policies, such as our policy against discrimination and harassment, have their own complaint procedure. In addition, each collective bargaining agreement has its own grievance procedure that outlines the process to resolve issues that are specifically covered by those agreements.

## **SECTION III WORKING FOR THE TOWN**

### ***Selection and Hiring***

We strive to fill each open position with the most qualified candidate available for the position. This means the candidate selected has been determined to most closely match the total position requirements. Our selection process is based on guidelines and practices that are designed to screen applicants and identify those individuals who will best contribute to our overall success, consistent with our commitment to equal employment opportunity, as expressed above.

### ***Job Postings, Assignment, Transfers and Promotions***

We recognize that employees of the Town may wish to transfer to other positions as they become available. Vacancies will be posted internally in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements. Transfer and promotion decisions will be based upon an assessment of the employee's qualifications, experience, training, knowledge, skills, abilities, and prior performance.

### ***Screening of Selected Candidates***

In addition to a rigorous screening process, the Town will also conduct criminal background checks and reference checks on all candidates it selects to hire. The Town also may have candidates undergo a pre-employment medical examination, and individuals offered a job in certain positions (such as those that require a Commercial Driver's License) will be required to undergo a drug test. Finally, all new hires will be required to submit proof of eligibility to work in the United States, consistent with federal law.

### ***Employment of Relatives***

In order to prevent potential conflicts of interest, the Town has established rules for the employment of relatives of Town employees. Any candidates for hire must disclose the existence of any such relations. Employees may not supervise or report to any family member. This policy will not be applied retroactively to current employee reporting relationships as of the adoption date of this Handbook by the Board of Selectmen.

## *Employment Categories*

Proper classification of employees is essential in order to administer pay and benefit plans, and to comply with employment and tax laws. Under federal law, every employee who works for the Town of Old Saybrook must be classified as either (a) exempt or (b) non-exempt. Exempt employees are salaried, and work in administrative, managerial, and supervisory positions. Those employees are not eligible for overtime pay except as provided for in collective bargaining agreements. All other employees are non-exempt, paid for all hours they work to the nearest quarter hour, and are eligible for overtime pay.

## *Job Descriptions*

The Town maintains job descriptions, which define essential job functions, qualifications needed to perform the essential functions, and other aspects of the job. Job classifications and job descriptions will be reviewed and revised as necessary. Copies of all job descriptions are maintained in the Selectman's Office.

## *Probationary Period*

All employees must successfully complete a probationary period as set forth in the applicable collective bargaining or employment agreement. This is a time when newly hired employees receive information to make them familiar with the Town, including our goals, benefits, policies, and procedures. During this time, you will work closely with your supervisor to learn how best to do your job. You will receive feedback from your supervisor to recognize good performance and to help you improve aspects of your performance as needed. If you are in a position that is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement, your probationary period is six months.

This also is a time for us to learn about your work habits and abilities. After you complete this, you and your supervisor will conduct an evaluation of your performance as it relates to Town standards. If your performance evaluation is satisfactory, you will become a regular employee. If not, your probationary period may be extended or your employment may be terminated.

## *Work Schedules And Breaks*

### I. Standard Work Schedule

Standard business hours for the Town Hall are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Other Town facilities such as the Library or Transfer Station have their own hours of operation. For non-exempt employees, the workweek for full-time employees consists of

between thirty-five (35) and forty (40) hours per week. The regular daily work schedule is between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. A flexible work schedule (including working from home) may be established by written mutual agreement between the employee and his or her supervisor, with the approval of the First Selectman. Work schedule rules and procedures are set forth in the applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Exempt-level employees generally are expected to work the minimum number of hours per week established by the Town. The daily work schedule for exempt employees will be established by Town management and may require some flexibility due to Town business or operational needs.

## II. Meal Periods And Breaks

Each non-exempt employee who works a minimum of seven consecutive hours shall receive an unpaid meal break of at least thirty (30) minutes. The thirty minutes is in addition to the regularly scheduled work hours and must be taken after the first two hours of the work shift and before the last two hours of the work shift. The meal break will be scheduled with the approval of your supervisor. Other paid breaks may be scheduled on a daily basis with the approval of your supervisor.

Exempt professional employees will receive meal breaks each day according to when it best fits into their work schedule based upon operational needs and staff assignments.

## *Overtime*

Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime compensation except as provided in collective bargaining agreements. Nonexempt employees are eligible for overtime compensation. Overtime work (outside regularly scheduled hours) must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Overtime hours must be submitted for payment on your regular time sheet. No one will be paid overtime compensation unless the overtime work has been approved. A reasonable amount of overtime may be required with reasonable advance notice, except in emergencies. Please refer to your applicable collective bargaining or employment information for more information about overtime.

In lieu of overtime compensation employees in certain job classifications may be permitted to accrue compensatory time off in accordance with federal regulations. Approval in advance from the employee's supervisor or the First Selectman is required for the accrual of compensatory time.

## *Reporting Time Worked.*

All non-exempt employees must record their time for each workweek. The time sheet for each week should include time worked in each week from 12:00 a.m.

Sunday through 11:59 p.m. on the following Saturday. Each non-exempt employee must record his or her own work time only, including beginning time, ending time, and unpaid meal or break times. Non-exempt employees are not permitted to start work before your scheduled shift or work after their scheduled shift without prior authorization from their supervisor. Non-exempt employees also are not permitted by law to “volunteer” work time. When completing timesheets, you must accurately reflect the reason for your absence anytime you are absent from work. Timesheets should be turned into your supervisor at the conclusion of your workweek.

### *Receiving Your Pay*

Employees are paid on a weekly basis, every Friday. We offer direct deposit into a checking or savings bank account as a convenient way for you to receive your pay. If you have any questions about your pay, please contact the Accounting Department at (860) 395-3132.

### *Employee Records*

Employee personnel records are maintained at the Town Hall in a central file. Medical records are maintained in separate, secure files in accordance with federal and state law. You may view the contents of your personnel file upon request with reasonable notice.

Personnel files are considered public records. Written request to view any employee’s personnel files is required. The employee will receive notice of any such request. Any medical or confidential information (such as Social Security number) will be redacted in accordance with law.

It is your responsibility to notify the Accounting Office whenever there are any changes in home address, telephone numbers, marital status, number of dependents or children, death of a family member covered under the Town’s medical insurance, beneficiary for life insurance, or emergency contact(s).

## SECTION IV

### OUR BEHAVIOR AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

#### *Guidelines for Behavior in Our Workplace*

The Town takes great pride in the quality of its services to residents and visitors. As an important foundation of our success, we all must strive to maintain a positive and productive work environment. Our purpose in defining expectations of behavior and adopting certain work rules is to minimize conflict and the need for corrective action among employees. We hope to never find it necessary to take corrective action for any reason. However, when situations arise that are cause for concern, they will be investigated and dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Unless the situation involves the risk of injury or safety, violence, or an emergency, an employee will be given an opportunity to explain his or her actions before any disciplinary action is taken.

While we generally follow the concept of progressive discipline as outlined in applicable collective bargaining agreements, depending on the nature of the conduct, a serious infraction may lead to suspension or termination of employment, even for a first-time offense. Factors that may be considered in determining the appropriate corrective action include: the seriousness of conduct, an employee's employment record, an employee's honesty, willingness and ability to correct conduct, and corrective action taken with respect to similar conduct by other employees.

In all cases, no corrective action will be imposed without just cause in accordance with collective bargaining and employment agreements.

#### Desired and Expected Behaviors

- Treating fellow employees, residents, visitors and others with courtesy and respect;
- Performing job duties and assignments to meet or exceed performance standards;
- Following instructions and directions given by a supervisor;
- Knowing and complying with safety rules and ethical standards;
- Complying with Town Policies;
- Continuing to improve and develop work knowledge and skills;
- Efficient use of resources, supplies and time;
- Seeking solutions and innovation for problems or conflict;
- Not speaking disparagingly about other employees;
- Communicating openly about issues, ideas and problems; and
- Collaboration, teamwork, and mutual support for colleagues.

### Examples of Unacceptable Behavior That Could Result in Corrective Action

- Falsification of work records, including timesheets;
- Violation of another employee's privacy rights;
- Engaging in any harassing, intimidating, threatening or disruptive conduct while at work;
- Dishonesty;
- Excessive absenteeism;
- Engaging in disorderly conduct, fighting or attempting to fight, or poor conduct that violates common decency;
- Insubordination, including refusing to follow supervisor's instructions regarding job-related matters; and
- Violation of any Town Policy or the provisions of this Handbook.

### *Professional Development*

Employees are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for professional development to gain new skills or enhance existing skills. Please check with your supervisor regarding the use of time or reimbursement for cost involved for seminars, conferences, classes, webinars or other development opportunities.

### *Work Attire and Appearance*

Because our work involves public service, it is important that employees present a professional image to the public. Personal attire is expected to be professional, neat and clean while at work. Ripped, torn or otherwise damaged clothing, tank tops, cut-off shorts, sweats, and flip-flops are examples of inappropriate attire. Footwear needs to be practical and safe for the work environment. If you come to work in unacceptable attire, you may be asked to go home, change your clothes and then return to work in acceptable attire.

### *Being Here When We Need You*

Employees who come to work on time and everyday show us that they are a contributing member to the Town's team and its success. Regular attendance at work is an important part of satisfactory job performance. If you often miss work, arrive late or leave early, it puts added burdens on other employees and is detrimental to workplace morale and productivity. The Town monitors employee attendance so that we can address issues that may cause employees to be absent in an equitable and consistent manner.



### *Inclement Weather and Emergency Closings*

Employees generally are expected to report to work as assigned and make every reasonable effort to arrive on time whenever there is inclement weather. If severe weather conditions prevent you from coming to work or arriving on time, you must notify your supervisor as soon as possible. If you are unable to report to work due to the severity of the weather or other emergency, your absence may be excused upon the recommendation of your supervisor, and you will be charged personal or vacation leave. Employees who are needed for public safety or winter road maintenance (public works employees) must report to work as directed by their supervisor.

If weather is severe enough to cause travel safety concerns, the First Selectman may permit certain employees to arrive late or leave early without loss of pay. The First Selectman also may release employees, or require them to stay at work in cases of emergency, for safety or other legitimate reasons.

Should conditions warrant the closing or late opening of Town Hall or other town facilities, an announcement will be posted on the Town website ([www.oldsaybrookct.org](http://www.oldsaybrookct.org)) prior to 7:00 a.m. Closings/delayed openings will also be broadcast on WTNH television (Channel 8) and WLIS radio (AM 1420).

### *Requesting Leave and Reporting Absences*

We understand that occasionally you may need to be absent from work for a variety of reasons. We provide employees paid and unpaid time off from work to support needs for work-life balance. Leave benefits are fully described in the Benefits Section of this Handbook as well as applicable collective bargaining and employment agreements.

You must notify your immediate supervisor as soon as possible whenever you will be absent from or late to work. For unforeseeable leave, notice should be as soon as you know, and except in the case of an emergency, at least one hour in advance of the scheduled start time and should include the reason for the unscheduled absence (i.e., personal illness, illness of family member, emergency). For all foreseeable leave (e.g., vacation, medical appointments, non-emergency personal leave, jury duty), you should request time off as soon as you know of the need for time off. Collective bargaining agreements contain other stipulations regarding requesting and scheduling leave. Additional notice requirements are set forth in the Town's *Family And Medical Leave Act Policy*.

### *Returning to Work from Personal Illness or Injury*

If you are admitted for an overnight stay in a hospital, or are incapacitated for four (4) or more consecutive calendar days due to personal illness or injury, you may be required to submit a medical certification prior to returning to work indicating that you are able to return to work with or without medical work restrictions. Medical certification also may be required in accordance with the Town's Family and Medical Leave Policy or as permitted by law to substantiate the need for medical leave in other situations.

### *Personal Relationships*

Relationships of a romantic or personal nature in the workplace can interfere with the work environment. Therefore, employees who are engaged in a personal or romantic relationship must be careful not to display the relationship in a way that could interfere with their work, the work of others, or create an uncomfortable environment for others. Supervisors should not engage in personal or romantic relationships with employees under their supervision - such relationships raise issues of fairness. If such personal relationships exist, they should be disclosed to the First Selectman.

### *Ethics and Conflict Of Interest*

Respect for the Town's reputation, interests, and success requires all of us to maintain a high standard of ethical conduct, especially given the public nature of our work. Public employees hold a position of trust with responsibilities that require them to observe the highest ethical standards. Each employee is expected to conduct his or her personal affairs in a manner that avoids any conflict of interest or impropriety, or the appearance of a conflict of interest or impropriety, between those affairs and the employee's work, including their working relationships with other employees, members of the public, or others.

Examples of conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Having a significant financial interest or stake in any business or contract that could influence or affect your ability to perform your job
- Soliciting for money, purchases, gifts or donations in working areas during working hours.

Employees must immediately disclose to their supervisor any potential or actual conflict of interest. Town Ordinances include a section on Ethics which employees also must abide by.

### *Outside Employment*

The Town generally views the off-duty activities of its employees to be their own personal business. However, working another job while employed by the Town has the potential to conflict with an employee's work or with the Town's business or operational interests. Accordingly, we have established guidelines to cover outside employment. If you have (or plan to have) outside employment, you must notify your supervisor of the nature of the outside employment. In addition, the outside employment must not interfere or create a conflict of interest with Town business or conflict with the employee's job duties or work schedule, including any required overtime work.

If you are or plan to be employed at a job other than your job with the Town, please read and follow the Town's *Outside Employment Policy*.

### *Confidentiality and Individual Privacy*

Respect for others dictates that each employee must not discuss confidential information about other employees that is gained while working for the Town. Certain employees have access to business systems, personnel records and other information that is confidential in nature. Such information includes information about anyone's personal or medical conditions. Protection of this information by safeguarding it when in use, filing it properly, and discussing it only with those who have a legitimate need to know is an extremely high priority for everyone. Discussing or disclosing certain confidential information about another person may also be a violation of the law.

### *Use of Telephones*

The Town's telephone equipment system is intended for work-related or business calls. Personal phone calls, other than calls of short duration for a specific purpose, should be limited to designated break times, except in cases of emergency or other serious situations that need immediate attention. The same discretion applies to the use of cellular phones, including texting. In addition, anyone operating a vehicle on Town business must not use a cellular phone while driving, unless using a hands-free device.

### *Use of Computer Systems and Electronic Mail*

Our computer network, electronic information, and communication systems are owned and maintained by the Town of Old Saybrook for work-related business purposes. Use of those systems is subject to the Town's *Use of Information Technology and Internet Policy*. All users of the system are required to abide by the terms of that policy. There is no expectation of privacy in the use of these systems and the Town reserves the right to monitor the use of the systems or inspect materials stored on its systems.

### *Whistleblower Responsibility and Protection*

In order to uphold the highest ethical practice standards, as well as to comply with federal and state law, the Town encourages all employees to come forward with any information about conduct on the part of any Town employee that may be unethical or illegal, or that may constitute corruption, fraud, unethical practices, mismanagement or abuse of authority. Employees should immediately report any such information to a supervisor or the First Selectman.

In accordance with state and federal law, no employee will be disciplined or otherwise penalized because the employee, or a person acting on behalf of the employee, reports, verbally or in writing, a violation or a suspected violation of any state or federal law or regulation or any municipal ordinance or regulation, unethical practices, mismanagement or abuse of authority by any employee or supervisor. This rule does not apply if the employee knows that such report is false.

## **SECTION V**

### **THE BENEFITS OF WORKING FOR THE TOWN**

The Town's success is dependent on our employees' health and ability to perform their jobs in a reliable and productive manner. We have a variety of benefits to assist you and your family to cover expenses and promote your well-being. The benefits described in this section are generally available only to full-time regular employees. Some benefits are prorated for part-time employees. Because benefits may change as we monitor and review their value and effectiveness, this Handbook is meant to summarize the benefits and serve as a guideline only.

#### *Health, Dental, and Prescription Drug Insurance*

The Town of Old Saybrook knows how important it is for employees and their families to have affordable health care. We offer medical, dental, and prescription drug insurance coverage to full-time employees. Employees will be required to contribute a certain amount as a monthly premium toward the cost of their medical care. Your collective bargaining agreement and our plan summaries will provide you with more specific information about your medical care coverage.

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) provides for the temporary continuation of health insurance coverage at the group rate for individuals who experience certain life events such as legal separation, divorce, death of a spouse, or when a covered dependent ceases to be an eligible dependent. You will be provided with appropriate notices of your rights and eligibility as applicable.

#### *Life Insurance*

The Town provides life and accidental death/dismemberment insurance. The cost of this coverage is fully paid by the Town. The amount of coverage is determined in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining or employment agreement.

#### *Employee Assistance Program*

We understand that many individuals go through difficult times in their personal and professional lives. In order to assist any employee work through difficult situations they may be experiencing, we have established an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Employees can use the services of the Town's EAP Provider to get help dealing with work or non-related issues they are confronting, such as financial difficulties, stress, mental or emotional health issues, marital or other relationship

problems. All information an employee provides to the EAP Provider remains strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

For more information, you can contact our EAP Provider, Anthem Health Plans, Inc. directly, at 1-800-647-9151.

### *Retirement Benefits*

Employees of the Town will participate in the Town of Old Saybrook Pension Plan. Contributions to the plan are deducted from your paycheck on a pre-tax basis. Pension benefits are determined in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining or employment agreement.

In addition, the Town offers a 457 Savings Plan to eligible employees. You can enroll in the plan, or change the amount on the first day of each month. This plan allows you to deduct money from your paycheck before taxes are taken out to build your own retirement account. This is a voluntary program with no matching funds from the Town.

### *Paid Holidays*

The Town offices are closed in observance of the following holidays. Regular full-time employees receive paid holidays.

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

Observation of the holiday will be adjusted whenever the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday for purposes of time off for all employees. Pay for work on a designated holiday will be in conformance with applicable collective bargaining or employment agreements.

### *Paid Vacation*

The Town provides annual vacation leave for all regular full-time employees. The amount of annual vacation is based on job classification and length of continuous

employment with The Town. Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining or employment agreement for your position for more information on paid vacation.

Vacation may be taken in full day (shift) increments or half-day increments. An employee may carry over accrued vacation time in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements or with the approval of the First Selectman. Unused vacation hours in excess of any limit will be forfeited, unless approved by the First Selectman.

### ***Paid Sick Leave***

Sick leave is for the purpose of non work-related (a) personal illness, injury, or health condition, (b) medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a personal illness, injury or health condition, or (c) preventive medical care.

Medical certification may be required for all absences due to personal illness lasting four or more consecutive calendar days, in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act. Employees must use accrued paid sick leave to care for immediate family members (spouse, parent, child) who have a serious health condition (as defined by the FMLA). Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining or employment agreement for your position for more information on paid sick leave.

Non-exempt employees may take sick leave in full day (shift) increments or in increments of one hour or more. Exempt employees may take sick leave in increments of a full day or half-day increments.

### ***Paid Personal Leave***

Employees are entitled to personal leave for business that cannot be conducted outside of work time. Prior written notice and approval to use personal leave is required, except in cases of emergency. Such leave may be taken in increments of a full day (shift) or half-day. Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining or employment agreement for your position for more information on paid personal leave.

### ***Bereavement Leave***

In the event of death in the immediate family, you will be entitled to paid leave. Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining or employment agreement for your position for more information on paid bereavement leave.

### *Jury Duty Leave*

If you are summoned for jury duty, you will not lose your regular pay or benefits. You must notify your supervisor immediately and supply the jury notice. You must return to work whenever not actively serving on jury duty.

### *Family and Medical Leave*

In accordance with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), each employee is entitled to a certain amount of unpaid FMLA leave in a 12-month period. Available paid leave (i.e., sick, personal, vacation) must be substituted for unpaid FMLA leave that is permitted for the type of leave taken. The following types of leave qualify as FMLA leave:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal care, or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement of a child with the employee by adoption or foster care (leave must be taken within 12 months after birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition;
- For the employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more essential functions of his or her current position.
- Because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves (or from retired status in the U.S. Armed Forces or certain members of the retired Reserve) in support of a contingency operation of the United States.
- If the employee is the spouse, parent, son or daughter, or next of kin of a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank or rating, and (a) for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; (b) is in outpatient status; or (c) is on the temporary disability retired list.

Please see the Town's *Family Medical Leave Act Policy* for more information.



### *Military/Uniformed Services Leave*

In addition to leave set forth in collective bargaining agreement for this purpose, the Town proudly will comply with the requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act of 1993 ("USERRA") in its employment practices.

An employee who gives advance notice and who takes a leave of absence from the Town for any period of active or training service in the Uniformed Services of the United States is entitled to continued employment and, after completing longer periods of service will be re-employed in accordance with federal and state law. You must notify your supervisor as soon as you become aware of your military leave schedule.

### *Other Unpaid Leave*

Employees may request additional unpaid leave in accordance with applicable collective bargaining or employment agreements.

## **SECTION VI OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFETY AND HEALTH**

### ***The Importance of Safety At Work***

While the Town cannot guarantee to protect any employee from willful or reckless acts by third parties or other employees, preventing workplace accidents and ensuring a safe, clean, and healthy work environment for employees and visitors is of utmost importance for everyone who works for the Town. All employees are expected to comply with all applicable safety, health and security rules, regulations, policies and laws that apply to our Town.

### ***The Town's Commitment to Non-violence***

The Town of Old Saybrook has a "Zero Tolerance" workplace safety and anti-violence policy. Any violation of this policy will result in termination of employment. No employee other than authorized law enforcement officers may bring firearms into the workplace or any work-related setting. No employee may bring explosives, incendiary devices, or any other weapons into the workplace or any work-related setting. If you feel that you have experienced or witnessed any threats or violence in the workplace, you must immediately notify your supervisor or an appropriate administrator. Town policy prohibits retaliation against anyone who has reported workplace violence.

Please read the Town's *Workplace Threats and Violence Policy* for further information.

### ***Accidents and Workers' Compensation***

Injuries, no matter how slight, that occur at work must be reported to your immediate supervisor so that any necessary treatment or Workers' Compensation claims can be initiated. Supervisors should report injuries to CIRMA, the Town's insurance carrier, as soon as possible.

### ***Safety Committee***

The Town has established a Safety Committee that meets quarterly to discuss issues related to the safety of buildings, the work environment, and Town property. If you have any ideas or suggestions to improve the safety of the Town's buildings, work environment or property, please contact Police Chief Michael Spera or Finance Director Lisa Carver.

### ***Emergency Procedures***

Whenever you believe that an emergency situation exists or is about to exist, you must immediately call 911 for fire, police or emergency medical service. In addition, you must notify your supervisor. The supervisor will contact the employee's family member or other emergency contact, as warranted.

### ***Notice Concerning Electronic Monitoring***

As a safety measure, and in accordance with the requirements of Connecticut state law, Town employees should recognize that their work activities and communications may be subject to electronic monitoring. Electronic equipment that may be monitored includes, but is not limited to, telephones, computer files, and e-mails. Employees should not have any expectation of privacy while using the Town's electronic equipment. Employees will not be subject to any such monitoring or recording in areas designed for the health or personal comfort of the employees or for safeguarding of their possessions, such as rest rooms or break rooms.

### ***Medical Examinations***

The Town may require any employee to undergo a fitness for duty examination to evaluate the employee's ability to perform the duties of their assigned position whenever an employee's performance suggests the need for such an examination. The Town also may require an employee to undergo a medical examination pursuant to the FMLA, or as permitted by other law and policy.

### ***Smoke-Free Workplace***

In accordance with Connecticut State law and Town Policy, smoking is not permitted in any Town building or on Town property. The Town's "No Smoking Policy" also includes any Town vehicles.

### ***Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace***

In accordance with the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act, and as part of the Town's commitment to maintain a safe, healthy, and efficient work environment, we must make sure to minimize hazards at our worksites resulting from the use of drugs and alcohol. Any employee who abuses drugs or alcohol, or who comes to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol presents a safety risk to his or her fellow employees, and limits our ability to provide quality service.

### Assistance For Those Who Voluntarily Seek Help

The Town maintains a policy of non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation with respect to recovering addicts and alcoholics, and those having a medical history reflecting treatment for substance abuse conditions. We encourage employees to seek assistance before their drug and/or alcohol use renders them unable to perform their essential job functions or jeopardizes the health and safety of themselves, or others. We will attempt to assist our employees through referrals to rehabilitation, appropriate leaves of absence, and other measures, to the extent that these measures do not impose an undue hardship upon our organization, and/or do not jeopardize the employee's health and safety, or the health and safety of co-workers or others.

### Illegal Drugs and Alcohol

Employees are prohibited from reporting to work or working while under the influence of illegal or unauthorized drugs or alcohol. The unlawful use, consumption, possession, manufacture, distribution, purchase, sale or offer of sale, transfer, storage, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol by any employee, while on Town property, while on duty, or while operating a vehicle or machine leased or owned by the organization is strictly prohibited. Further, no employee may be under the influence of any illegal drug or alcohol while in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating a vehicle or equipment owned or leased by the organization. These prohibitions extend to an employee's personal vehicle located on Town property or in any vehicle engaged in Town business.

Any employee who is convicted of violating any laws regarding the use of illegal drugs or alcohol must promptly (within five (5) calendar days), provide written notice of the conviction to the First Selectman. In addition, employees must notify the First Selectman if they are charged with a violation of any criminal law involving the use of illegal drugs or alcohol within three (3) calendar days of being charged with such an offense.

### Legal Drugs

Legal drugs (over-the-counter and prescription drugs) are to be used only in the manner, combination, and quantity as prescribed or directed by the employee's physician. If the employee knows or has reason to believe that his/her motor coordination skills, physical or mental ability, and/or regular work activities could be impaired while taking legal drugs, the employee shall immediately notify his or her supervisor that he or she is taking a drug which may cause such impairment to their work performance, along with the nature of the impairment. The employee should not disclose the medication he or she is taking. The Town may ask for a medical certification from the employee's treating physician regarding the employee's ability to safely and efficiently perform his or her job duties with or without any work restrictions. The Town will make a determination whether

reasonable accommodation can be made, including if the employee's job assignment should temporarily change during treatment. Employees must keep all prescribed medicine in its original container, which identifies the drug, date of prescription, and prescribing doctor.

Any employee who violates this policy or who voluntarily seeks assistance may be required, in connection with or in lieu of disciplinary actions, to participate in and successfully complete Town-approved drug and/or alcohol assistance or rehabilitation program as a condition of continued employment.

For more specific information, please see the Town's *Drug and Alcohol Policy*.

## **SECTION VII**

### **ENDING YOUR EMPLOYMENT WITH THE TOWN**

#### ***Resignation/Retirement***

Non-exempt employees who decide to resign or retire from employment are required to provide their supervisors with a minimum of two weeks' notice. Exempt employees are requested to provide a minimum of thirty (30) days' notice of resignation whenever possible. This notice allows the Town to plan an orderly transition of duties with less interruption to operations.

#### ***Termination/Layoff***

If it becomes necessary for the Town to terminate the employment of an employee involuntarily, depending on the reason for termination, notice will be given in writing as to the date of an involuntary termination of employment. Prior disciplinary actions and conferences with supervisors may inform employees that termination of employment could result from failure to correct unacceptable behavior or performance.

If termination of employment is based on business reasons such as reorganization or reduction in work force (layoff), notice will be given as permitted by circumstances and/or as required by law and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

#### ***Final Compensation and Benefits***

Employees who are involuntarily terminated or laid off will receive their final paycheck in accordance with state law. Employees who resign or retire will receive their final paycheck on the regularly-scheduled payday.

Each employee who separates from employment will be provided with information about extension of health insurance benefits under COBRA, information concerning the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), eligibility for continuation of benefits, applicable retirement/pension information, information about conversion of life insurance policies, sick and/or vacation payout, and unemployment benefits information.

### *Return of Property*

On or before their last workday, exiting employees must return all Town property in their possession, including:

- keys, key cards and badges;
- files, computer disks, and any other Town business-related information or records, whether in printed or computer format;
- Any Town equipment such as vehicles, cameras, laptops, and cellphones.

### *Our Exit Interview Process*

We will ask employees who resign or retire to participate in exit interviews. These interviews are voluntary and are conducted to obtain employees' honest opinions and evaluation of their work experiences as part of our ongoing effort to improve the Town and its workplace.

### *Rehire Eligibility*

Former employees may be considered for rehire provided that the rehire is being made to a position in which the former employee successfully worked. In addition, employees are eligible for rehire only if they resigned in good standing or were laid off from a job. In no event will an employee be rehired who was terminated for misconduct, poor performance, violating any Town policy or as a result of the imposition of disciplinary measures.

## Acknowledgement

I acknowledge my receipt of the Town of Old Saybrook's Employee Handbook. I understand that this Handbook is intended to serve as a guide to the Town's Human Resources and Personnel practices and policies and not as a contract of employment for any length of time. I understand that the policies, rules and benefits described in the Handbook are subject to change at any time, subject to any legal restrictions.

I understand that, should the content of this Employee Handbook be changed in any way, the Town may require an additional signature from me to indicate that I am aware of and understand any new policies, procedures, practices or conditions of employment.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and have received a copy of the Handbook.

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Name of Employee

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Position

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Employee's Signature

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Date

Please return signed Acknowledgement to the Selectman's Office.