

NOVEMBER 20, 2025

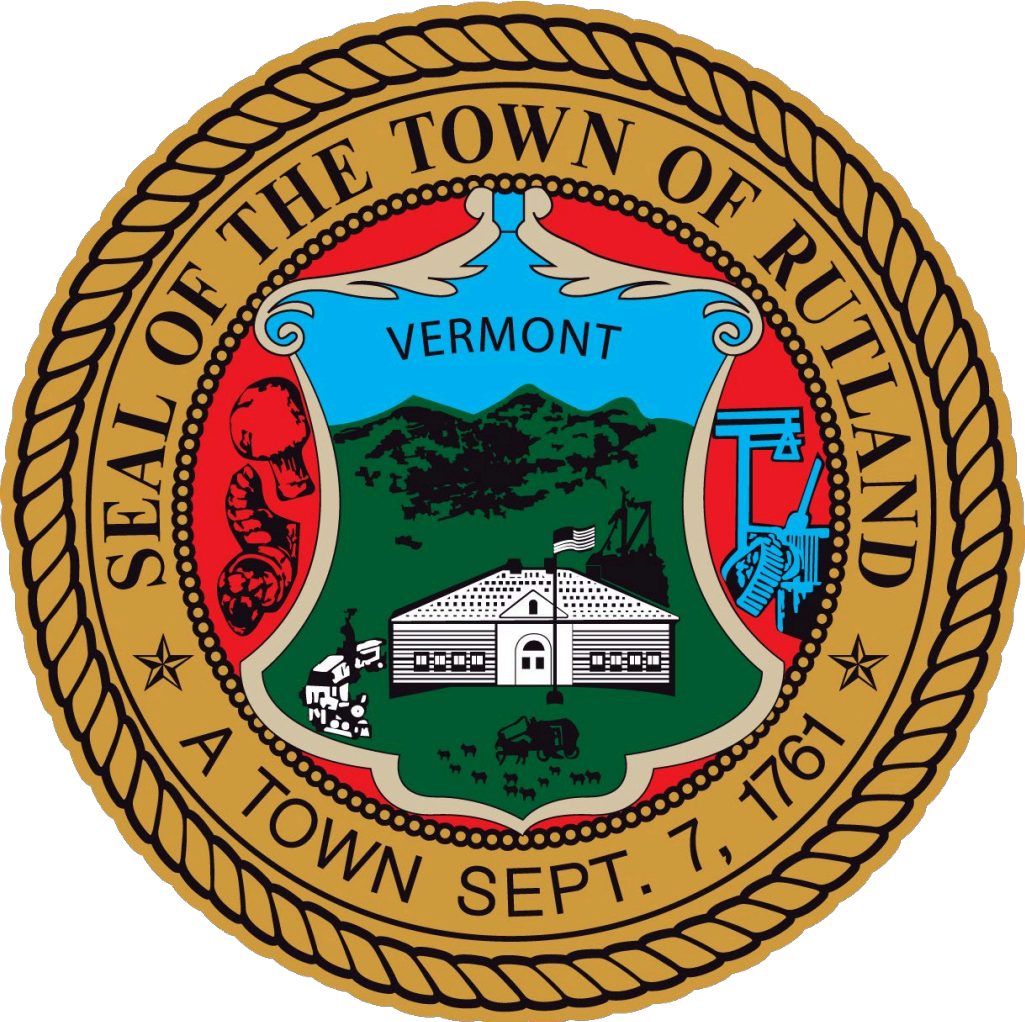


Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
PURPOSE	4
PERSONS COVERED	4
EMPLOYMENT	5
NOTICE OF EMPLOYMENT-AT-WILL	5
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER & ACCOMMODATIONS	5
FAMILY MEMBER EMPLOYMENT	5
EMPLOYEE YEARS OF SERVICE EMPLOYEE TENURE.....	6
BENEFITS.....	7
<i>BENEFITS-AT-A-GLANCE</i>	7
MEDICAL INSURANCE	7
OPT OUT CHOICE.....	7
DENTAL INSURANCE.....	8
MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT PLAN.....	8
VACATION.....	8
SICK LEAVE	10
PAID HOLIDAYS.....	11
COMMUNICATION.....	12
EMPLOYMENT POSTINGS.....	12
CHANGE IN STATUS.....	12
PROBLEM RESOLUTION.....	12
COMPENSATION	13
EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS.....	13
OVERTIME - HOURLY	14
COMP TIME - HOURLY	14
PAY PERIODS AND CHECK DISTRIBUTION	14
HONESTY AND CONDUCT	15
DISCIPLINE.....	15
BEHAVIOR.....	15
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	16
USE OF TOWN COMPUTER SYSTEM	17
GIFTS, GRATUITIES, AND BUSINESS COURTESIES	19
HARASSMENT	19
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT.....	21
POLITICAL ACTIVITY	21
PUBLIC RECORDS.....	21
REPORTING FRAUD & MISCONDUCT	22
REPRESENTING THE TOWN OF RUTLAND	22
SECURITY AWARENESS & ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.....	22
SOCIAL MEDIA	23
USE OF TOWN EQUIPMENT	23
WHILE AT WORK.....	24
ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY.....	24
FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS.....	24
HOURS OF OPERATION & WORK SCHEDULES.....	24
PERSONAL APPEARANCE & DEMEANOR.....	24
TIMEKEEPING.....	25

TELEPHONE	25
EXPENSE POLICY.....	25
TRAVELING ON TOWN OF RUTLAND BUSINESS	25
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT	26
ORIENTATION PERIOD	26
LEAVES OF ABSENCE	27
POLICY STATEMENT	27
BEREAVEMENT LEAVE.....	27
CRIME VICTIM LEAVE.....	27
VERMONT PARENTAL AND FAMILY LEAVE (VPFL).....	28
VERMONT SHORT TERM FAMILY LEAVE (“VSFL”)	30
MILITARY AND RESERVE TRAINING LEAVE	30
JURY DUTY	31
LEAVE OF ABSENCE - OTHER.....	31
TIME OFF FOR VOTING	32
VOLUNTEER SERVICE	32
SAFETY.....	33
GENERAL SAFETY	33
ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS – OFF THE JOB	33
ACCIDENTS /INJURIES– ON-THE-JOB	33
ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.....	34
HOUSEKEEPING AND FIRE SAFETY	34
INFECTION CONTROL.....	34
SECURITY	35
USE OF TOBACCO.....	35
WORKPLACE SECURITY	35
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE.....	35
LEAVING THE TOWN’S EMPLOY.....	36

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

All employees are considered representatives of the Town and, as such, are expected to conduct themselves courteously, helpfully, and respectfully in all their interactions with the public, other employees, and town officials. Under the conditions of employment, employees are expected to conduct themselves and perform their job assignments maturely and professionally, reflecting favorably on the employee and the Town of Rutland.

This Personnel Policy is written to inform employees about standard Town of Rutland personnel guidelines and procedures. The Selectboard reserves the right to change, suspend, revoke, terminate, or supersede policies or benefits described in this personnel policy, with or without notice, and in any manner that the Town believes to be in our best interest. **This Personnel Policy replaces any prior policies or personnel policies provided to employees, regardless of when or under what circumstances it was previously provided.**

PERSONS COVERED

Except by separate written agreement, elected officers and their statutory assistants, members of Town boards and commissions, volunteers, and persons who provide the Town with services on a contract basis are **not** covered by this Policy.

This handbook contains information related to employees whose status is designated as full-time, part-time, and contingent.

EMPLOYMENT

NOTICE OF EMPLOYMENT-AT-WILL

The Town of Rutland is an “employment-at-will” employer, which means that employees have the right to resign at any time, for any reason, and, under the same circumstances, the Town may initiate a separation of employment with the employee with or without prior notice or reason. Nothing in this personnel policy constitutes the terms of an employment contract.

All Town employees covered by this Policy Manual shall sign the Rutland Town Personnel Policy Acknowledgement form. A copy of the signed acknowledgment form shall be placed in the employee’s personnel file.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER & ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the policy and intent of the Town of Rutland to provide equal opportunity to everyone and to prohibit discrimination because of race, color, religion, age, national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, place of birth, physical or mental condition, veteran status, disability, HIV status, pregnancy, health coverage status, genetic information, crime victims status, or any other protected category under state or federal law.

The Town of Rutland will work with employees to provide any entitled reasonable accommodation. Do not expect that the Town of Rutland will know of the need for an accommodation unless the employee asks for it. Please remember that the Town of Rutland may provide an accommodation that is reasonable though not the employee’s preference.

FAMILY MEMBER EMPLOYMENT

In a small town such as ours it may be in the Town's best interest to hire a close relative of an existing employee or official for a position. When such hiring will result in a close relative supervising or evaluating another close relative, an alternate process for supervision and evaluation will be used. To avoid a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, the hiring, discipline, termination, or decisions concerning compensation of a close relative will be made by the Selectboard without the participation of any Selectboard member who may be a close relative. In the event that a disciplinary process requires an investigation, such investigation will be conducted by the Selectboard or its designee, who shall likewise not be a close relative of the employee involved.

A close relative includes a spouse, civil union partner, romantic co-habitant, parent, stepparent, grandparent, child, stepchild, grandchild, sibling, aunt or uncle, niece or nephew, parent-in-law, and sibling-in-law.

When the appearance of a conflict of interest arises the Selectboard will have the authority under this policy to investigate and take such action as will be in the best interest of the Town.

EMPLOYEE YEARS OF SERVICE | EMPLOYEE TENURE

An employee's date of hire, including the first day of the orientation period, will determine their years of service.

Years of service are immediately lost upon termination of employment. If the Town of Rutland rehires an employee at a later date, then tenure will be normally based on the rehire date. However, if an employee is re-hired within one (1) year of their employment termination, the original date of hire will be restored if the employee remains with the Town of Rutland for at least one (1) year after they return.

Years of service dates shall be used to determine vacation eligibility per policy.

In the event an employee is on layoff due to lack of work, the employee shall not lose accumulated tenure and shall continue to accumulate tenure while on layoff for a period of up to six (6) months. If an employee is laid off and refuses to return to work when a position is offered, then accrued tenure is lost. If an employee is not called back to work for a period of one (1) year, then employment will be terminated, and all tenure shall be lost.

In all cases, seniority and other considerations such as special skills, training, ability, and prior performance record will also be taken into consideration at the sole discretion of the Town of Rutland to determine any layoff or promotion.

BENEFITS

BENEFITS-AT-A-GLANCE

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Regular employees working 30 hours or more are eligible for medical coverage. The Town pays 100% of the premium. Employees are eligible to enroll on the first of the month following their date of hire.

OPT OUT CHOICE

Regular employees working 30 hours or more per week and who have medical coverage through a source other than the Town's plan are eligible for the opt-out choice. The Town offers opt-out in order to recognize the needs of our diverse workforce by providing maximum flexibility in health care choices available to employees and their families. Opting out applies only to medical insurance, not dental insurance coverage.

This alternative allows an employee who is covered under a medical plan other than the Town's to "opt-out" of health insurance coverage and receive a cash payment in lieu of medical benefits. Employees choosing opt-out will receive one-half (1/2) the value of the insurance premium otherwise payable by the Town, prorated and payable per pay period and subject to ordinary income taxes. The employee shall be eligible for payment based on the alternate insurance package for which the employee is determined to be eligible. For example, an employee who enrolls in an alternate family plan shall be paid one-half of the town family plan rate. Participants in the opt-out program must sign a release and show proof of medical benefits through a source other than the Town. This proof must show reasonable evidence that the employee and their expected tax family have minimum essential coverage other than individual market coverage and other than Medicare coverage during the plan year. Proof of medical benefits must be updated annually. This benefit is available to one member of a family only if they are covered by the same medical benefits policy.

With this choice, an employee would opt-out for themselves and their eligible dependents. For employees with dependent coverage, opt-out is for employee and family, there is no other choice. Medical benefits through the Town will be made available to opt-out participants should they lose their coverage provided by another source at any time. Enrollment in the Town's insurance program is available only during the month of November or as determined by law or regulation.

An employee who opts out of health benefits remains eligible for all other insurance programs.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Regular full-time employees are eligible for dental coverage. The first of the month following one (1) month of employment. The Town pays 100% of the premium.

The Town of Rutland Selectboard reserves the sole right to change insurance carriers or to add, delete, or amend insurance benefit programs at its sole discretion. The Town also reserves the right to change the amount or percentage of its contribution to the cost of any group health insurance program. Employees will be provided with advance notice of any change in the contribution rate.

MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT PLAN

All regular employees will participate in the Vermont Municipal Employee's Retirement System (VMERS) as determined by the Selectboard.

VMERS	
Group B	Group D Effective 7/1/2025
All Others	Police Department

VACATION

ELIGIBILITY

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for the following vacation schedule. Employees working less than 40 hours a week and at least 30 hours will receive vacation on a prorated basis. Vacation is awarded on the employee's hire date and based on the fiscal year. Employees are eligible to request vacation after successfully completing their Orientation Period.

RATE OF PAY

Vacation pay is computed at the employee's base rate. The combination of hours worked and vacation cannot exceed the number of working hours in a workweek.

SCHEDULE

The schedule below reflects additional vacation time after the employee's anniversary occurs. Employees may not request time in advance of their actual qualifying anniversary.

Employees who have had a change in their status will accrue at the new rate according to the time that they have been in that status category. After a break in service of 90 days, the accrual of service years will start again.

YEARS OF SERVICE	# OF DAYS	EQUIVALENT TO
Date of Hire - 1 year	5 days	40 hours
2 - 5 years	10 days	80 hours
5 - 10 years	15 days	120 hours
10 – 15 years	20 days	160 hours
15+ years	25 days	200 hours

SCHEDULING VACATION

Every effort is made to accommodate an employee’s request for time off. However, there may be instances where it may not be possible due to workload and scheduling considerations. All requests must be submitted to the employee’s supervisor.

SCHEDULING TIME OFF	
Less that 1 week	10 Days in Advance
1 Week or more	30 Days in Advance

BLACKOUT DATES	
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT	
Winter Months	November - April

Thank you for understanding that we are unable to consider time-off requests during this time unless there are extenuating circumstances.

CARRYOVER/PAYOUT

Unused vacation time will be lost at the end of each fiscal year. The Town does not pay out earned, unused vacation time at the end of the year.

VACATION FOR EMPLOYEES LEAVING THE TOWN OF RUTLAND

Employees who have worked more than 12 months and leave the Town of Rutland for reasons such as retirement, resignation or layoff will receive payment for vacation earned but not taken.

If an employee fails to give proper notice of two weeks or more, or if employment is terminated involuntarily other than layoff, the unused portion of vacation may be forfeited and not paid.

SICK LEAVE

ELIGIBILITY

Full-time and part-time employees are eligible for the following sick leave schedule. Employees working less than 40 hours a week and an average of 18 hours per week or more will receive sick leave on a prorated basis in accordance with the Vermont Earned Sick Leave statute. A lump sum of sick leave will be awarded on the employee's date of hire. A lump sum of sick leave will be awarded each year on July 1st.

RATE OF PAY

Sick leave pay is computed at the employee's base rate. The combination of hours worked and sick leave cannot exceed the number of working hours in a workweek.

SCHEDULE

YEARS OF SERVICE	# OF DAYS	EQUIVALENT TO
Date of Hire +	10 days	80 hours

CARRY OVER/PAYOUT

A maximum of 20 sick leave days may be carried over from one year to another, with a cap of 30 sick leave days available in a given year. The Town of Rutland does not allow employees to cash out their sick leave.

VERMONT'S PAID SICK LEAVE – The Town of Rutland's sick leave policy already includes and provides eligible employees with Vermont Paid Sick Leave required by Vermont law. The Town does not always ask why employees are using sick leave, this is an employee's choice. It is the employee's responsibility to monitor, use, and retain sufficient sick leave to use as paid sick leave when and if necessary during the course of the year.

Examples of reasons an employee may use his/her sick leave for Vermont's paid sick leave purposes include:

- (1) the employee's own illness or injury,
- (2) to obtain professional diagnostic, preventive, routine, or therapeutic health care,
- (3) to care for a sick or injured parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, including helping that individual obtain diagnostic, preventive, routine, or therapeutic health treatment, or accompanying your parent, grandparent, spouse or parent-in-law to an appointment related to his/her long-term care,
- (4) to arrange for social or legal services (or obtaining medical care or counseling for your own or your parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking or who is relocating as the result of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Any questions regarding the terms of this section or Vermont's paid sick leave entitlements should be directed to the Treasurer.

SICK LEAVE FOR EMPLOYEES LEAVING THE TOWN’S EMPLOY

Employees who have worked more than 12 months and leave employment with the Town for reasons such as retirement, resignation or layoff will receive payment of 50% for sick leave earned, but not taken. If all sick leave is used prior to end of employment, the Town will not require the employee to reimburse the Town.

If an employee fails to give proper notice of two weeks or more, or if employment is terminated involuntarily other than layoff, the unused portion of sick time may be forfeited and not paid.

PAID HOLIDAYS

The Town of Rutland observes 14 paid holidays each year and compensates full-time employees when holidays fall on a regularly scheduled workday at their regular rate of pay. Part-time and temporary employees are not eligible for holiday pay.

HOLIDAYS		
New Year’s Day	Independence Day	*Day after Thanksgiving
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Labor Day	Day before or after Christmas Day
President’s Day	Indigenous People	Christmas Day
Town Meeting Day	Veteran’s Day	Employee’s Birthday OR Juneteenth
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day	

*In lieu of Bennington Battle Day

- 1) Holiday Schedules:
 - a) If the holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed the following Monday.
- 2) Holiday Leave Pay:
 - a) Employees will receive holiday leave pay for 8 hours on workday on which the holiday falls, at the employee’s regular rate of pay. Employees working a schedule of more than 8 hours on a holiday may use vacation time to make up the difference between the 8 paid holiday hours and the total time of their shift.
 - b) Holiday leave not worked by an employee will not be included in calculating overtime.
- 3) Eligibility for Holiday Leave Pay:
 - a) Hourly employees must work their scheduled shift the day before and the day after the holiday.
 - b) Employees on a scheduled vacation, jury duty, or bereavement leave on a day that a holiday falls will also be eligible for the holiday.
 - c) Pay for Working on a Holiday: Hourly employees required to work on a holiday will have a choice of being paid at a rate of one and ½ times their regular rate of pay or taking a floating holiday. Floating holidays will be at the department head's discretion and must be approved in advance. Floating holidays do carry over into the next fiscal year and must be used in that fiscal year, or they will be lost.

COMMUNICATION

EMPLOYMENT POSTINGS

Designated areas at each Town facility are provided to communicate important information to employees and fulfill state and federal posting requirements and other information such as press releases, job postings, organizational announcements, benefits and practices explanations, and the Town's rules of conduct. The Town will establish and maintain these areas for legally required information, health and safety information, and personnel information.

Bulletin boards must not contain any information other than what they are intended.

Any designated area's postings that are altered or tampered with will be considered vandalism of the Town's property and be subject to disciplinary measures.

CHANGE IN STATUS

Each employee is responsible for keeping the Town informed in the event of a change of the following: current address, telephone number, marital status, and other vital information that may affect benefits, emergency notice, and other personnel matters. An Employee Information Contact form and other appropriate documents must be completed and submitted to the Treasurer at time of hire and updated as changes occur.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION

It is the intent of the Town to provide employees with a method of seeking resolution to problems and questions by utilizing the existing management channels in the organization.

Employees are encouraged to first address the issue with the person or person(s) with whom there is a problem. If the employee does not feel comfortable doing this or if attempts to resolve the problem have not been successful, employees with a question or problem they are unable to resolve should contact their immediate supervisor first. Supervisors are encouraged to arrange for a private discussion without interruptions, to listen carefully to the employee's problem and ask questions to clarify it, to consult with the Selectboard to obtain information or advice, and to get back to the employee with a response as promised.

If the employee feels the problem is unresolved through discussion with their supervisor they should request a meeting with their department head. If the problem still exists an employee may pursue their issue to the Selectboard.

COMPENSATION

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

All employees are designated as either hourly or salary under state and federal wage and hour laws. The following is intended to help employees understand employment classifications, and employee employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. The right to terminate the employment-at-will relationship at any time is retained by both the employee and the Town of Rutland.

Hourly employees are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are NOT exempt from the law's requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime.

Salary employees are generally managers or professional, administrative, or technical staff who ARE exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Regular, full-time: Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work the Town of Rutland's full-time schedule of 40 hours per week. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefits program.

Regular, part-time: Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week but 30 or more per week. Regular, part-time employees are eligible for some of the benefits offered by the Town of Rutland subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.

Temporary, full-time: Employees who are hired as interim replacements to supplement the workforce temporarily or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work the Town of Rutland's full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.

Temporary, part-time: Employees who are hired as interim replacements to supplement the workforce temporarily or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work less than the Town of Rutland's full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.

Temporary workers are not eligible for the Town of Rutland benefits unless specifically stated otherwise in the Town of Rutland policy or are deemed eligible according to plan documents.

Seasonal: Seasonal employees are considered temporary employees. Seasonal employees are hired for a specified period of time (generally June through September) and may be hired on a full-time or part-time basis. They receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and worker's compensation insurance).

OVERTIME - HOURLY

An employee's supervisor must approve all overtime in advance. Hourly employees are paid at time-and-a-half for actual hours worked over 40 hours in a workweek. Paid holiday hours, PTO, military, or bereavement hours do not count toward the calculation of overtime.

There are occasions when the demands of the Town of Rutland may require employees to work overtime. Failure to work overtime when needed and requested may be considered in an employee's performance evaluation.

In accordance with the FLSA exemption for recreation facilities, seasonal employees working in the Recreation Department are not eligible for overtime.

COMP TIME - HOURLY

Regular employees who are entitled to be paid approved overtime may instead request comp time off at the applicable rate. Comp time is earned at a rate of one-and one-half hours for each hour worked in excess of forty hours actually worked in any workweek.

For more information, please refer to Rutland Town's Compensatory Time (Comp Time) Policy.

PAY PERIODS AND CHECK DISTRIBUTION

The biweekly pay period begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. Pay is issued by check or direct deposit directly into the employee's bank account. Errors in overpayment or underpayment or questions about an employee's check must be brought to their supervisor's attention immediately.

Employees are encouraged to receive their pay by direct deposit. Employees may set up a direct deposit using the paper direct deposit form. Contact the Town Clerk/Treasurer for a copy of the direct deposit form. This form should be completed and sent to the Town Clerk/Treasurer for processing.

Employee paychecks or paystubs will only be released to someone else with prior written authorization from the employee.

HONESTY AND CONDUCT

DISCIPLINE

The Town of Rutland does not have a policy of progressive discipline or requiring discipline prior to any termination. Each event, incident, violation of policy or procedure, concern with behavior or performance, or any other matter pertaining to an employee's employment is considered by the Town of Rutland on an individual and case-by-case basis. The Town of Rutland, in its sole discretion, will consider what conduct merits discipline and in its sole discretion will determine whatever form of discipline it believes might be appropriate or necessary under each individual circumstance, with this to include but not be limited to counseling, warning, suspension or termination with or without prior notice or discipline.

BEHAVIOR

It is the Town's policy that certain rules and regulations regarding employee behavior and/or performance are necessary for efficient business operations and for the benefit and safety of all employees. Conduct that interferes with operations, discredits or reflects poorly on the Town of Rutland, or is inappropriate or offensive to citizens, customers, co-workers, visitors, and suppliers will not be tolerated.

Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a positive manner in order to promote the best interests of the Town of Rutland by:

- Treating all citizens, customers, co-workers, visitors, and suppliers in a courteous manner;
- Refraining from behavior that is offensive and undesirable;
- Reporting suspicious, unethical, or illegal conduct of co-workers, customers, or suppliers;
- Complying with all safety and security regulations.

The following are examples of prohibited conduct, and individuals engaged in it will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate discharge. This list is for example only and is not meant to be all-inclusive:

- Fighting, assaulting, or arguing with a co-worker or customer;
- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, non-prescribed drugs, or illegal drugs, or narcotics, or selling, using, or distributing or possessing alcohol or illegal drugs, including marijuana or narcotics on the Town of Rutland property (employees taking prescribed drugs that may affect their job must advise their supervisor);
- Falsifying or altering any Town of Rutland record or report, such as an employment application, medical report, production record, time record, expense account, shipping or receiving record;
- Stealing, destroying, defacing, or misusing The Town of Rutland property or the property of others (this includes using The Town of Rutland property for personal use without The Town of Rutland permission);
- Using profanity or abusive language;
- Violation of any Town of Rutland policy or directive;

- Insubordination;
- Conduct on or off the Town of Rutland time or property which reflects poorly upon the Town of Rutland;
- Violation of safety rules or directives;
- Unauthorized, unethical, or inappropriate use of the Town of Rutland hardware or software, e-mail, or the Internet;
- Sleeping during working hours, inattention to duty, or incompetency;
- Disclosure of confidential, non-public information.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes the framework within which the Town of Rutland wishes to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Employees should contact their supervisor or the department head for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest means a direct or indirect personal or financial interest of an employee or a person or group closely tied to the employee, including a close relative, household member, business associate, or employer or employee. A close relative includes a spouse, civil union partner, romantic co-habitant, parent, stepparent, grandparent, child, stepchild, grandchild, sibling, aunt or uncle, niece or nephew, parent-in-law, and sibling-in-law.

Every employee of the Town shall carry out their job in a way that avoids conflicts of interest so that the public trust will be preserved. All decisions made by Town employees shall be made based on the best interest of the community at large rather than the interests of any particular individual or employee.

An employee shall not participate in any official action if the employee has a conflict of interest in the matter under consideration. An employee shall not personally, or through any member of their household, business associate, employer, or employee, represent, appear for, or negotiate in a private capacity on behalf of any person or organization in a cause, proceeding, application, or other matter pending before the Town.

An employee shall not use resources not available to the general public, including but not limited to Town staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities for private gain or personal purposes.

As per state law, there is a separate conflict of interest policy that applies to elected officials.

USE OF TOWN COMPUTER SYSTEM

For purposes of this Policy, "computer system" means all computers and devices and any related hardware, equipment, components, or software, including, but not limited to, host computers, file servers, workstation terminals, laptops, tablets, smartphones, internal or external communication networks, the world wide web (www), the Internet, commercial online services, bulletin board systems, backup systems, and the internal and external e-mail systems accessed via the Town's computer equipment.

These systems are Town property. Any information stored and all messages composed, sent, or received on or through this system are, and remain the property of the Town. They are not the private property of the individual and employees should not have any expectation of privacy. The Town may periodically review the use of these systems with or without notice to employees.

- To the furthest extent possible, all electronic communications regarding Town business should be conducted via official Town computer systems.
- A Town employee should avoid conducting Town business using their personal computer, device, or account unless authorized by the Town. The Town computer system is to be used by employees for the purpose of conducting Town business. Occasional, brief, and appropriate personal use of the Town computer system is permitted, provided it is consistent with this Policy and does not interfere with an employee's job duties and responsibilities.
- Employees should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality regarding anything created, sent, or received on the Town computer system. The Town may monitor at any time its computer system without warning or any specific notice to employees, including any and all computer transactions, communications, and transmissions for any reason including, but not limited to, ensuring compliance with this Policy and evaluating the use of its computer system. All files, documents, data, and other electronic messages created, received, or stored on the Town computer system are open to review and regulation by the Town and may be subject to the provisions of Vermont's Public Records Law.
- Employees may not introduce software from any outside source on the Town's computer system without prior written authorization from the Selectboard or their designee. Employees may be held responsible for any damages caused by using unauthorized software or viruses they introduce into the Town computer system.
- Employees who have a confidential password to access the Town's computer system should be aware that this does not mean the computer system is for personal confidential communication, nor does it suggest that the computer system is the property of that person.
- Employees who have a confidential password to access the Town's computer system or to access any Town-sponsored computer networks or software-as-a-service shall provide access to the Town Administrator to the Selectboard upon request.

Transmission of electronic messages on the Town computer system shall be treated with the same degree of propriety, professionalism, and confidentiality as written correspondence. The following are examples of prohibited uses of the Town computer system:

- Communications that in any way may be construed by others as disruptive, offensive, abusive, discriminatory, harassing, or threatening;
- Communications of sexually explicit images or messages;
- Transmission of chain letters or solicitations for personal gain, commercial or investment ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-job-related solicitations during or after work hours;
- Access to Internet resources, including websites and news groups, that are inappropriate in a business setting;
- Unauthorized disclosures. Unauthorized disclosures include disclosures of non-public information, unless the disclosure is authorized by law; and the dissemination of confidential, proprietary, or privileged information.
- Any other use that may compromise the integrity of the Town and its business in any way.

Nothing in this Policy will be interpreted or applied in a manner that interferes with employees' rights to organize, form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their choosing to the extent allowed by law, or to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of addressing the terms and conditions of employment.

1. The electronic communications system shall not be used to send copyrighted materials, trade secrets, any proprietary information, or similar materials without prior authorization.
2. The confidentiality of any message should not be assumed. Even when a message is erased, it is still possible to retrieve and read that message. The use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality.
3. Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read any e-mail messages that are not sent to them.
4. Employees must use extreme caution when opening e-mail attachments received from unknown senders that may contain viruses, e-mail bombs, or Trojan horse code.
5. Employees are prohibited from accessing files or retrieving any stored information unless authorized to do so. Employees are prohibited from attempting to gain access to another employee's messages without their permission.
6. Any employee who discovers a violation of this policy should notify their supervisor or the department head.
7. No employee shall create, institute or change a password for any communication or other computer use without first notifying the Town Administrator to the Selectboard and providing the designated Town supervisor[s] with the password.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

An employee who violates any part of this policy or uses the electronic communication systems or business equipment for improper purposes shall be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination. Reporting to criminal authorities will take place when potential criminal activities are discovered, including, but not limited to, any offensive material involving minors. The Town has a zero-tolerance policy for any actions that may create a hostile work environment.

GIFTS, GRATUITIES, AND BUSINESS COURTESIES

Employees should avoid any actions that create a perception that favorable treatment of outside entities by the Town was sought, received or given in exchange for personal or business courtesies. Business courtesies include gifts, gratuities, meals, refreshments, entertainment or other benefits from persons or companies with whom the Town does or may do business.

Employees shall not directly or indirectly ask, demand, exact, solicit, accept, or receive a gift, gratuity, act, or promise beneficial to that individual or another, which could influence any action or inaction associated with their official duties on behalf of the Town, or create the appearance of impropriety in connection with any actions or inactions associated with their official duties on behalf of the town.

ACCEPTING BUSINESS COURTESIES

Employees should not feel any entitlement to accept and keep a business courtesy and must never give the impression that the acceptance of a courtesy will lead to a new or the renewal of an existing business contract or preferential treatment by the Town of any kind.

Let common sense and business ethics prevail. However, when in doubt, it is best for employees to politely refuse the gift or courtesy and seek clarification from their supervisor.

HARASSMENT

The Town is firmly committed to prohibiting discrimination throughout the employment process against individuals because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, religion, national origin, ancestry, and place of birth, physical or mental condition, or against qualified individuals with disabilities or any other legally protected status.

Our policy is that all employees are entitled to a workplace free of discrimination, including harassment, based on any of the above factors. We will not tolerate such conduct in the workplace. If an employee believes that they have been subjected to such discrimination or harassment, the reporting procedure outlined below should be followed. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including separation of employment.

The Town also prohibits sexual harassment of its employees. Sexual harassment is unlawful under state and federal statute. We are committed to providing a workplace free from this unlawful conduct. Every supervisor is responsible for promptly responding to or reporting any complaint or suspected acts of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that includes unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, physical, written, auditory, or visual conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a component of the basis for work-related decisions affecting that individual; or
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment need not be severe or pervasive in order to be unlawful pursuant to Vermont law.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances.
- Suggestive or lewd remarks.
- Unwanted hugs, touches, or kisses.
- Requests for sexual favors.
- Pornographic posters, cartoons or drawings.
- Unwelcome sexual jokes and banter.
- Using whether or not a staff member submits or rejects unwelcome advances or requests (including sexual advances or requests for favors) as a basis for employment decisions affecting a staff member, term or condition of employment.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING COMPLAINTS AND RETALIATION

We are committed to taking action when we learn of potential sexual or other harassment and when we learn of potential retaliation for reporting sexual or other harassment. Retaliation against an employee for reporting sexual or other harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a complaint of sexual or other harassment is unlawful. It is a violation of this policy for any employee who learns of the investigation or complaint to take any retaliatory action that affects the working environment of any person involved in the complaint or investigation. If employees believe they are being retaliated against, they should follow the complaint procedure outlined below.

Employees should refer any complaints or charges of discrimination or harassment or potential retaliation for reporting these complaints or charges to their immediate supervisor first, but if the employee feels a member of the Selectboard or the police department might also be helpful, they are encouraged to contact them, too. Supervisors or the Town Treasurer/Clerk can also provide employees with a copy of this policy.

**The name of the individual to contact is found on your copy
of the Harassment Policy and on the Labor Law Posters.**

If employees report harassment, they may be requested to place their report in writing. All employees are expected to cooperate in any investigation and to keep their participation confidential from all other employees. The Town will take all necessary steps to ensure the matter is promptly investigated and addressed.

If employees have been found to harass another staff member, they will be subject to disciplinary action, ranging from a verbal warning up to (and including) termination. Other consequences may include damages and other relief for the victim, civil penalties of up to \$10,000 per violation, and/or criminal penalties.

Employees are expected to cooperate with all investigations. Failure to cooperate may result in discipline.

Although employees are encouraged to file their complaint of sexual harassment through our complaint procedure, the following agencies also process complaints of sexual harassment:

Vermont Attorney General's Office, 109 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602, tel: (888- 745-9195 (Toll Free VT) or 802-828-3657; ago.civilrights@vermont.gov.

If employees work for an employer with at least 15 employees they can also contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, JFK Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203 (617-565-3196).

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

The primary occupation of all regular full-time employees shall be with the Town. Employees may not engage in any outside business activities during their normal working hours. Employees are prohibited from undertaking outside employment that interferes with their job performance or constitutes a conflict of interest, as defined in this Policy. If an employee has a concern about whether outside employment might present a conflict of interest, they are encouraged to check with their supervisor and/or the Selectboard in advance.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Employees may not use their official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the nomination or election of any candidate for public office or demand or solicit from any individual direct or indirect participation in any political party, political organization, or support of any political candidate.

This Personnel Policy is not to be construed to prevent employees from becoming or continuing to be members of any political party or organization, from attending political party or organization meetings or events, or from expressing their view on political matters, so long as:

1. these views are clearly articulated as being those of the individual and not of the Town,
2. these activities do not interfere with the individual's ability to effectively perform their duties and
3. these take place or are expressed during non-working hours.

This Personnel Policy is not to be construed from prohibiting, restraining, or in any manner limiting an individual's right to vote with complete freedom in any election.

Employees are prohibited from using Town facilities, equipment, or resources for political purposes and from pursuing political activities while working.

PUBLIC RECORDS

Any written or recorded information that is produced or acquired by a Town employee in the course of Town business is a public record, subject to Vermont's Public Records Law, and may be covered by the State of Vermont's retention rules and disposition schedules for municipal records. Although the Town discourages the use of personal computers, devices, or accounts to conduct Town business (Use of Town Computer System), the use of a personal computer, device, or account does not prevent an otherwise public record from being subject to public inspection and copying. In the uncommon event that an employee uses their personal computer, device, or account to conduct Town business, the record created, sent, or received should be forwarded by the employee to the employee's Town

computer system, or otherwise captured and retained as a Town record. All employees are required to respond in the manner prescribed by Vermont's Public Records Act regardless of where a Town public record may be stored. All employees must provide any Town public records stored in their personal computers, devices, or accounts that are responsive to a public records request.

REPORTING FRAUD & MISCONDUCT

It is expected that should an employee witness or become aware of acts of fraud, misconduct, harassment, or inappropriate behavior of any kind, it will be reported it immediately. Failure to report inappropriate behavior can lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

REPRESENTING THE TOWN OF RUTLAND

All employees are considered representatives of the Town and, as such, are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous, helpful, and respectful manner in all their interactions with the public, other employees, and town officials.

All employees are expected to faithfully execute the duties and responsibilities of their position to the best of their ability.

SECURITY AWARENESS & ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

This policy applies to all software and business equipment owned or leased by the Town of Rutland. The Town-owned software and business equipment includes but is not limited to, fax machines, computers, laptops, printers, scanners, the Town of Rutland's e-mail system, the Internet, copy machines, hand-held communication devices, telephones, video, and photographic equipment.

SECURITY OF PROPRIETARY & CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The Town has established the following policy and practices regarding the security of proprietary and confidential information.

1. Keep passwords secure, and do not share accounts. Authorized users are responsible for the security of their passwords and accounts.
2. All PCs, laptops, and workstations must be secured with a password-protected screensaver.
3. Employees must secure their workstations when the host is unattended.
4. Because information contained on portable computers is especially vulnerable, laptops and hand-held devices must be protected in accordance with these security standards. When traveling for business, special care must be exercised.
5. All business equipment employees use that are connected to the Town of Rutland Internet/the Town of Rutland Network-related systems, whether owned by the employee or the Town, shall be continually executing approved virus-scanning software with current virus database.

SOCIAL MEDIA

This section applies to employees using social media in their personal, non-official capacity. Personal or non-official use of social media means day-to-day use of social media by employees that is unrelated to their official work duties. Personal use of social media is discouraged during work hours.

When employees are participating in social networking, they are representing themselves, personally, and not the Town. It is not our intention to restrict an employee's ability to have an online presence and to mandate what can and cannot be said. We are providing employees with a Town policy and set of guidelines for appropriate online conduct, so employees can avoid the misuse of this communication medium.

- Employees must not use their town email account or password in conjunction with a personal social media platform.
- Do not post any financial, confidential, sensitive or proprietary information about the Town or any of our supervisors, co-workers, residents, customers, and other persons or entities associated with or doing business with the Town.
- Employees should not use their personal social media to make official statements on behalf of the Town. When posting content or commenting on Town business in their personal capacity, employees must use a disclaimer that establishes that their posted content or comments represent their own opinions and do not represent those of the Town.
- Social media sites are not the forum for venting personal complaints about supervisors, co-workers, residents, or the Town. Such statements could be subject to discipline just the same as if they were made verbally.

USE OF TOWN EQUIPMENT

Except as provided in Use of Town Computer Equipment, the use of Town equipment or property for personal use is strictly prohibited. Employees should have no expectation of privacy regarding anything stored in or on Town-owned property or Town-owned equipment, including but not limited to desks, filing cabinets, lockers, and vehicles. Employees should expect that such areas may be searched at any time to retrieve work-related materials or investigate suspected workplace rules violations.

WHILE AT WORK

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

All employees are expected to be in attendance during their regular work hours, which their supervisor determines. Employees are required to personally notify their supervisor or designated contact if they are going to be late for work or if they are unable to work.

Attendance is an important element in every performance appraisal. Repeated unplanned absences and frequent lateness will negatively affect an employee's pay increases, future at the Town of Rutland, and will be cause for appropriate disciplinary action.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Under certain conditions and subject to the approval of their supervisor, employees may work alternative hours and/or locations. For full details, please discuss possible options with your supervisor.

HOURS OF OPERATION & WORK SCHEDULES

Daily schedules are based on work requirements as determined by department heads. The Town and the Town's department heads determine work, breaks, meal breaks, and other schedules to meet the municipality's needs.

All Town employees are required to be available for work in the case of an emergency, weather-related or otherwise.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE & DEMEANOR

Employee clothing and footwear should be clean, tatter-free, and unoffensive while offering protection from the hazards of the particular area of work. Clothes should fit height and weight and reveal no more than the skin on an employee's head, neck, arms, and hands. During the warmer months, add to that the employee's legs and feet. Jeans and sneakers are acceptable when in good repair and conducive to face-to-face employee and customer interaction.

Employees who have any questions about the above guidelines should speak with their department manager.

POLICE

The Town will provide basic uniforms, duty gear, and firearms to police officers who are regular employees. Any purchase of uniforms, duty gear or firearms beyond the basics that are provided by the Town will be at the discretion of the Selectboard.

TIMEKEEPING

The Town provides a standardized timesheet that employees use to record their hours worked per pay period and vacation, sick, or other authorized leave.

Employees must check their timesheet for accuracy. At the end of the employee's last scheduled shift of the pay period, employees must verify their times for accuracy and that the information includes any approved time off. When the employee agrees that the data on the timesheet is complete and accurate, they should sign and date it.

If employees do not submit a timesheet, they will receive a printed copy to sign, indicating the employee's agreement with the entries and hours they are to be paid.

TELEPHONE

Use of personal cell phones should be restricted to necessary personal needs. Supervisors may restrict use if appropriate for the employee's role or if it becomes a distraction. The Town of Rutland phones may be used during break times for local calls on non-business matters or for necessary personal business reasons. The Town reserves the right to inspect the cell phones of employees using their personal devices for Town business.

EXPENSE POLICY

All job-related travel and expenses that employees expect to have reimbursed by the Town must be approved in writing by their supervisor *in advance*.

- **Travel:** The Town reimburses employees for travel and job-related expenses. Each traveler is expected to find the most cost-effective and reasonable means of travel.
- **Meals:** Meals are reimbursed only when traveling on official Town of Rutland business.
- **Authorization:** Department heads must authorize expenses in advance.
- **Travel Charge Disputes:** If a disagreement occurs with a hotel, transportation agency, restaurant, or other service provider, employees should make every effort to reach a reasonable settlement to the dispute and inform their supervisor.
- **Documentation:** All transactions when traveling on official Town of Rutland business must be properly documented for business purposes.

TRAVELING ON TOWN OF RUTLAND BUSINESS

It is critical that employees obey all applicable state and local traffic laws while operating a Town of Rutland vehicle or a personal vehicle on Town of Rutland-related business. This includes speed limits, seat belts, mobile electronic devices, etc. Use of cell phones while driving any vehicle for work-related reasons must comply with the law of the state in which the employee is driving. Texting while driving is prohibited. The Town of Rutland reserves the right to seek reimbursement for any damages, suits, fines or otherwise incurred as a result of a violation of this policy.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

ORIENTATION PERIOD

A three (3) month orientation period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. The Town of Rutland uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Completion of the orientation period does not alter the right of either the employee or the Town of Rutland to end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the orientation period, with or without cause or advance notice.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

POLICY STATEMENT

A leave of absence (LOA) is defined as an unpaid approved absence from work for a specified period of time for medical, parental, military or personal reasons. The reason for the leave request and eligibility requirements will define the leave that best meets the circumstances.

The Town of Rutland provides for five different types of Leaves of Absence:

- Bereavement Leave
- Crime Victim Leave
- Jury Duty
- Military Leave of Absence
- Vermont Parental and Family Leave (VPFL)
- Vermont Short Term Family Leave (VSFL)

VPFL leave may include leave for medical or personal reasons for yourself or a family member, bereavement leave, safe leave, or military service-related leave. If an employee's personal leave qualifies for VPFL or certain other legally obligated military leaves, then leaves will run simultaneously up to the statutory maximum.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Up to three (3) days of paid leave will be granted to full-time employees to attend a funeral or grieve the loss of any of the following members of the employee's family: spouse, civil union partner, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, step-parents and step-children, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law or son-in-law. Full-time employees will be paid at their regular rate of pay for eight hours per day of leave.

Part-time employees are not eligible for this benefit.

Paid bereavement leave does not accrue and thus, when not used, is not carried forward into the next year nor is it compensated upon separation of employment.

CRIME VICTIM LEAVE

In accordance with 21 V.S.A. § 472c, eligible employees who are crime victims may be entitled to take unpaid leave for the purpose of attending a deposition or court proceeding related to:

- a criminal proceeding when the employee has a legal right or obligation to appear at the proceeding;
- a relief from abuse, neglect, or exploitation hearing when the employee is the plaintiff; or
- hearings concerning an order against stalking or sexual assault, when the employee seeks the order as plaintiff.

A "crime victim" is a person who has:

- obtained a relief from abuse order against a family or household member;
- obtained a court order against stalking or sexual assault;
- obtained a court order against abuse of a vulnerable adult; or
- sustained physical, emotional or financial injury as the direct result of the commission or attempted commission of a crime or act of delinquency and is identified as a crime victim in

an affidavit filed by law enforcement official with a prosecuting attorney. This includes the victim's child, foster child, parent, spouse, stepchild or ward of the victim who lives with the victim, or a parent of the victim's spouse, provided that the individual is not identified in the affidavit as the defendant.

At the option of the employee, accrued sick leave, vacation leave, or any other accrued paid leave may be used.

VERMONT PARENTAL AND FAMILY LEAVE (VPFL)

Eligible employees may receive leave as described in the Vermont Parental and Family Leave Act (VPFLA). This State law will determine employee eligibility, the qualifying reasons for such leave, and the length of leave.

The Town reserves the right to designate any qualifying leave of absence granted under this Policy as leave under VPFLA. A request for leave must be made to the employee's supervisor.

On occasion, an employee may find it necessary to be out of work due to a personal illness or to care for a family member who has a serious health condition (as defined by the VPFL standards).

Vermont expanded access to unpaid leave under the Parental and Family Leave Act 21 V.S.A. §470 – 472a. The State law will determine employee eligibility, the qualifying reasons for such leave, and the length of leave.

Eligible employees may take the following types of unpaid, job-protected leave:

- Parental Leave
- Safe Leave
- Bereavement
- Family Leave
- Qualifying Exigency Leave
- Short-Term Family Leave

Employees must provide reasonable notice for request for leave by submitting a written request for leave to the Town Treasurer, preferably at least 30 days in advance when the need for leave is foreseeable. In emergencies, employees should notify the Town Treasurer as soon as possible. Documentation may be required to verify the reason for leave.

Vermont Parental Leave, under this policy, is unpaid but job-protected. However, some bereavement leave will be paid in accordance with the Town's Bereavement Policy. Employees may use accrued paid time off during their leave. Health benefits will continue during the leave period under the same terms and conditions as if the employee were actively working.

The Town reserves the right to designate any qualifying leave of absence granted under this Policy as leave under VPFL. For the purposes of determining the 12-month period in which an employee may be entitled to Vermont Parental and Family Leave, the Town will use a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses such leave.

When applicable, Vacation Time, Sick Time, Worker's Compensation, and Town-Offered Bereavement Leave will run concurrently.

Under certain circumstances, leave may be taken intermittently by taking leave in separate blocks of time or by reducing the usual number of work hours per work week or work day.

For more information, please speak with the Town Treasurer.

Please keep in mind the following when considering certain leaves.

Parental leave is for the employee's pregnancy, the employee's recovery from childbirth or miscarriage, birth of the employee's child and to care for or bond with the child within one year after the child's birth, or the initial placement of a child age 18 or younger with the employee for adoption, foster care, or to care for or bond with the child within one year after the child's birth

Family leave is for your own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member. "Serious illness" means an accident, disease, or physical or mental condition that poses imminent danger of death; requires inpatient care in a hospital; or requires continuing in-home care under the direction of a physician. In cases of serious illness of the employee or a family member, the Company may require certification from a physician to verify the condition and the amount and necessity for the leave requested.

Military leave related matters pertain to certain deployments of a family member, the events related and preparing for the deployment and addressing matters during and at the conclusion of deployment.

Bereavement leave is up to 2 weeks within the year of the family member passing but no more than five days can be taken consecutively. Such leave can be for administration or settlement of the family member's estate.

Safe leave applies to you or a family member who is a victim or alleged victim of domestic violence, assault or stalking and is seeking the leave for medical care counseling, therapy, social or legal services, to recover from injuries, to participate in safety planning including relocation or changing housing, to seek legal or law enforcement or judicial assistance or other related matters.

The term "family member" is broadly defined and includes not just immediate family but in-laws, step-family, persons for whom you are guardian or are your legal ward, and persons for whom you serve as their parent if under 18 or for whom you care.

VERMONT SHORT TERM FAMILY LEAVE (“VSFL”)

In accordance with 21 V.S.A. § 472a, eligible employees may be entitled to take unpaid leave not to exceed four hours in any 30-day period and not to exceed 24 hours in any 12-month period for the following purposes:

- To participate in preschool or school activities directly related to the academic educational advancement of the employee’s child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee, such as a parent-teacher conference;
- To attend or accompany the employee’s child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee or the employee's parent, spouse or parent-in-law to routine medical or dental appointments;
- To accompany the employee’s parent, spouse or parent-in-law to other appointments for professional services related to their care and well-being; or
- To respond to a medical emergency of the employee’s child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee or the employee's parent, spouse or parent-in-law.

The Town may require that leave (including accrued paid leave) be taken in a minimum of two-hour segments. At the option of the employee, accrued paid leave may be used. Before taking leave under this section, an employee shall make a reasonable attempt to schedule appointments outside of regular work hours. An employee shall provide the Town with the earliest possible notice of the intent to take short-term family leave, but in no case later than seven days before leave is to be taken, except in an emergency where the required seven-day notice could have a significant adverse impact on the family member of the employee.

ELIGIBILITY

Employees who have worked an average of 30 hours per week and have been employed for at least 12 months are eligible under the provisions of Vermont Parental and Family Leave (“VPFL”).

MILITARY AND RESERVE TRAINING LEAVE

The Town will comply with the requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. §§ 4303 et seq., and 21 V.S.A. §§ 491 et seq.

An employee who leaves her/his position to enter military service, for annual two-week training, or is otherwise called to duty, shall be carried on the rolls in a military leave status and upon her/his discharge shall be entitled to be reinstated to her/his former position or a position equally acceptable to the employee for which that employee is qualified. There shall be no compensation for military leave time. Military leave shall not be used to compute vacation or sick leave. At the option of the employee, any paid leave accrued prior to the commencement of the leave may be used.

Extended leaves of absence, generally up to 26 weeks, may be available for eligible employees called to or returning from active duty, and employees who suffer injury while engaged in active duty.

JURY DUTY

The Town will compensate employees for their service as jurors or subpoenaed non-expert witnesses.

The Town will compensate the employee at the employee's regular rate of pay up to eight hours per day. In accordance with 21 V.S.A. § 499, employees will otherwise be considered in the service of the Town for purposes of determining seniority, benefits, credit towards vacations, sick leave, and other rights, privileges, and benefits of employment.

When Town employees are called to serve as a witness in a court proceeding due to their status as an employee of the Town, the Town will compensate the employee at their regular rate of pay. The

PROCEDURES

- Employees should notify their supervisor as soon as possible so that arrangements for coverage during their absence may be made if needed.
- If jury duty service causes an employee to lose time from regularly scheduled work, the employee will be paid their regular hourly rate at straight time for hours lost. For purposes of calculating overtime, jury duty hours will not be counted as hours worked.
- Employees who serve a full day on jury duty are not required to report to work on that day but may do so if they so desire and have received permission from their supervisor.
- Employees who serve a partial day (less than four (4) hours) on jury duty or who are temporarily excused from court are expected to work at their regularly scheduled starting time or upon their release from court if their shift has already commenced. A Time Off Form must be filled out and given to their supervisor.
- In the event that the Town's needs would cause undue hardship in releasing an employee summoned for jury duty, the employee's supervisor should contact the department head and Treasurer/Town Clerk.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE - OTHER

The Town may consider requests for an unpaid Leave of Absence for up to 30 days for employees who have successfully completed their Orientation Period and are employed on a full-time basis. A leave of absence will not be granted for more than a period of 30 days. However, the leave may be renewed for additional 30-day periods if medically necessary and granted by the Town in its discretion. Leaves may be renewed, at the Selectboard's discretion, for up to a maximum of three (3) months. An employee may be required to provide a doctor's note stating they are able to return to work at full duty.

An approved Leave of Absence represents a period away from work during which employees are guaranteed the right to be reemployed in a position of at least equal status and be paid for which they are qualified, provided such a position exists. There is no guarantee that the position an employee left to take a personal leave of absence (not VPFL) will go unfilled or be available when the employee is ready to return to work. Subject to applicable law, if no such position exists, the employee will be reconsidered for employment in openings as they occur.

While the Town of Rutland recognizes the need for employees to be away from work for compelling reasons, employees must also realize that their present position and schedule cannot always be held open for them until their return.

PROCEDURES

All Leave of Absence requests must be presented in writing.

Subject to law, the Town reserves the right to refuse an employee's request to extend a personal leave of absence for vacation, sick or any other excused absence.

If a leave of absence without pay is granted, the employee may, at the Town's sole discretion, continue the employee's group health plan coverage by paying the required premium in accordance with the payment schedule established by the Town. All other benefits such as vacation, sick, and holidays will be suspended and not accrue for any leave greater than 30 days. An employee's seniority date or date of hire will not be affected by the Leave of Absence.

TIME OFF FOR VOTING

All employees should be able to vote either before or after regularly assigned work hours. However, when this is not possible due to work schedules, employees will receive up to three hours of unpaid time off during the workday to vote. Vacation time may be used for this time off. A request must be made at least seven days prior to the date requested.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

The Town encourages participation in civic emergency preparedness activities such as volunteer fire department, rescue squads, and police duties.

While the Town encourages employees to actively participate in civic functions which protect life and property in the surrounding areas, employees must realize that Town operations have to continue.

Employees excused from work to participate in such activities will not be paid for the time lost from their job while performing these civic responsibilities.

Employees may be excused for up to 40 hours of unpaid time off from work per year to perform these civic responsibilities.

The employee, while off the clock, performing a civic function is deemed not to be performing Town of Rutland business.

PROCEDURE

Employees who are active members of a volunteer rescue or fire organization will report their membership to their supervisor. Employees who are requested for volunteer emergency service during work hours will notify their supervisor that they must leave and report back to the supervisor when they return.

SAFETY

GENERAL SAFETY

An employee's safety on the job is of the greatest importance. Every precaution is taken to provide safe equipment, machinery and a safe work environment. Preventing accidents is a responsibility for which all employees must take personal ownership.

The nature of the work, location, and department govern safety rules. If an employee observes an unsafe act or condition in the workplace, it is the employee's responsibility to make sure that the supervisor is made aware of the issue, and an Employer First Report of Injury is submitted immediately. The Town of Rutland feels so strongly about safety that violating our stated safety rules or failing to report an incident will result in appropriate disciplinary action, including immediate termination.

ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS – OFF THE JOB

It is the employee's responsibility to inform their direct supervisor in the event that they experience an accident or illness occurring away from work, which may result in an extended absence from work. If applicable, the Treasurer/Town Clerk will coordinate with the employee to complete appropriate VT Family Leave documentation.

Once the employee is out of work, it will be the employee's responsibility to telephone their direct supervisor weekly and report the current status of the illness/injury. If the illness/injury is long-term, the direct supervisor may use his/her best judgment on how often a call should occur. Employees injured off the job or absent with illness may be required to provide a return-to-work approval from their health care provider.

ACCIDENTS /INJURIES– ON-THE-JOB

The Town's employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance. This insurance provides coverage in the event of a work-related injury. Employees **MUST** report all work-related injuries to their supervisor immediately, regardless of how minor.

Failure to report such injuries may result in a delay in or loss of workers' compensation benefits. An Employer First Report of Injury must be completed by the Town of Rutland within 24 hours, and filed with the appropriate carrier or State authority.

Supervisors will assist injured employees to receive appropriate medical attention for any injury.

All employees are expected to fully cooperate with the worker compensation process, if or when applicable.

TRANSITIONAL WORK

The Town of Rutland retains the right, if it chooses, to have an employee injured on the job engage in transitional duty work, even temporary, to have the employee return to work. Employees are expected to cooperate with any such request.

Adherence to the prescribed limitations is the responsibility of the injured employee. Concerns are to be discussed with the supervisor. Violations of prescribed limitations will result in disciplinary measures.

LENGTH OF ABSENCE AND RETURN TO WORK

Employees out of work for a work-related injury may or may not be kept on active employment status or have their position held open for them, all subject to requirements under the laws.

REQUIREMENTS OF EMPLOYEE WHILE OUT FROM WORK

Employees are required to call their supervisor immediately if there is a change in their status and ability to work. Failure to do this could jeopardize their insurance coverage.

BENEFITS

An employee out of work due to an on-the-job injury will retain all benefits, and the Town of Rutland will cover the employer's portion of the cost of those benefits.

ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The Town intends to maintain a drug-free workplace and workforce. The use of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription drugs are not tolerated in the workplace or at work-related events.

Town employees are prohibited from working or presenting themselves for work while under the influence or severe aftereffects of illegal drugs, controlled substances, and/or alcohol. This Policy is designed to promote our goal of providing a safe, healthy, and productive work environment.

In addition to this Policy, employees who operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) for the Town are also subject to the provisions of the Town's CMV Drug and Alcohol Policy.

HOUSEKEEPING AND FIRE SAFETY

Please maintain a clean work environment. All work areas must be kept clean, neat, and orderly. Fire prevention is an important responsibility. Report all hazards and practice the following safety measures: keep aisles clear and work areas free of trash; know where exits are located and make sure signs are visible; and know the fire evacuation plan.

INFECTION CONTROL

All employees should actively take steps necessary to reduce the transmission of infectious disease while on the job, including such measures as frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer. The Town of Rutland also asks employees to stay at home when they are ill. The Town of Rutland may step up our infection control protocols during cold and flu season, and when other serious viruses call for increased diligence with infection control.

SECURITY

Employees must safeguard door access codes and keys and never let an unauthorized person use them to gain access to a building or locked interior spaces. Employees must return any keys to their supervisor when employment ends.

USE OF TOBACCO

In recognition of the hazards that tobacco and vape use poses to the health of employees, and in accordance with 18 V.S.A. §§ 1421 *et seq.* and §§ 1741 *et seq.*, the Town hereby prohibits employees' use of tobacco and vape products in any form, in all publicly owned buildings; offices and enclosed areas; in all Town vehicles; on publicly-owned property; except in designated smoking areas. Employees are required to follow the smoking policy when conducting Town business on non-Town property.

Tobacco products include cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, and chewing tobacco (loose or in a pouch).

Employees who fail to adhere to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, immediate termination of employment.

WORKPLACE SECURITY

The Town of Rutland reserves the right to inspect all packages and containers and to search every location and item on the Town premises. No employee has the right to expect privacy, either within any Town property or in any package or other container (including personal luggage items) on the premises. All offices, desks, files, computers, lockers, etc., are the property of the Town, and authorized personnel shall have access at any time without any notice whatsoever. The Town of Rutland shall have unrestricted access to all computers on the Town's premises, and personal data storage is not permitted. Internet use shall be limited to proper Town of Rutland business. No employee has any right to privacy in any data stored on Town computers.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The Town believes that the safety and security of its employees is paramount. Therefore, the Town has a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to acts or threats of violence in the workplace. Substantiated or witnessed acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, that:

- involve or affect the Town of Rutland, or
- occur on the Town of Rutland property, or
- occur in the conduct of the Town of Rutland business off the Town of Rutland property

will not be tolerated and will result in immediate separation of employment.

This prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in the Town of Rutland operations, including, but not limited to, the Town of Rutland employees, contract workers, temporary employees, and anyone else conducting the Town of Rutland business on or off the Town of Rutland property. Retaliation or harassment of an employee who has reported workplace violence will not be tolerated and may result in immediate separation of employment.

LEAVING THE TOWN'S EMPLOY

The Town of Rutland is an **at-will** employer. Employees have the right to resign at any time for any reason. Likewise, the Town of Rutland may initiate a separation of employment with employees with or without prior notice or reason.

If an employee decides to resign from their position, the Town asks the employee to notify their supervisor as soon as possible. Advance notice of at least two weeks' working notice is requested to help prepare for the employee's departure. The Town reserves the right to pay the notice period in lieu of having to work or to not pay an employee for days not worked during the notice period. If an employee fails to give proper notice, or if employment is terminated involuntarily other than layoff, the unused portion of vacation may be forfeited and not paid.

If an employee's employment is terminated or the employee is laid off, any pay due will be issued within 72 hours of separation from the Town of Rutland.

EXIT INTERVIEW

Employees who have resigned or retired may be asked by their supervisor to complete an exit interview before leaving the Town. The Treasurer/Town Clerk will also provide information regarding any rights to convert insurance coverage and any other eligible benefits. On or before the employee's last day, the employee must turn in any Town property in their possession, such as keys, fobs, credit cards, handbook, employee ID cards, etc. must be turned in.

LIMITED REFERENCE REQUESTS

Unless otherwise required by law, the Town's response to reference requests will contain only factual data such as verification of position-held status, work location, and dates of employment. Employees requesting a written letter of recommendation will be required to sign an Employee Consent to Provide a Post-Employment Reference form.

References for the Police Department will be provided in accordance with State Law.

ADDRESS CHANGES FOR SEPARATED EMPLOYEES

Separated employees must forward any address changes within the first year after separation with the Town for tax information purposes.