

Town of Plainfield, NH

Personnel Policy Handbook

For all full- and part-time employees and elected officials



Adopted December 2, 2020

This document supersedes all personnel policies previously established



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1.0 Welcome

1.1 Welcome by Selectboard and Town Administrator

Welcome! You have just joined a dedicated municipal team for the Town of Plainfield. We hope that your employment with the Town of Plainfield will be rewarding and challenging. We take pride in our employees as well as in the services we provide.

The Town complies with all federal, state, and local employment laws, and this Handbook generally reflects those laws. The employment policies and/or benefits summaries in this Handbook are written for all employees.

Please take the time to read this Handbook carefully. Sign the acknowledgment at the end to show that you have read, understood, and agree to the contents of this Handbook, which sets out the basic rules and guidelines concerning your employment. This Handbook supersedes any previously issued handbooks or policy statements dealing with the subjects discussed herein. The Town reserves the right to interpret, modify, or supplement the provisions of this Handbook at any time. Neither this Handbook nor any other communication by a management representative or other parties, whether oral or written, is intended in any way to create a contract of employment. Please understand that no employee handbook can address every situation in the workplace.

If you have questions about your employment or any provisions in this Handbook, contact the Town Administrator.

We wish you success in your employment here at the Town of Plainfield!

Robert W. Taylor, Chair

Eric R. Brann

Ron C. Eberhardt

Stephen Halleran

Selectboard

Town Administrator

Town of Plainfield



2.0 Introduction and General Provisions

2.1 About the Town

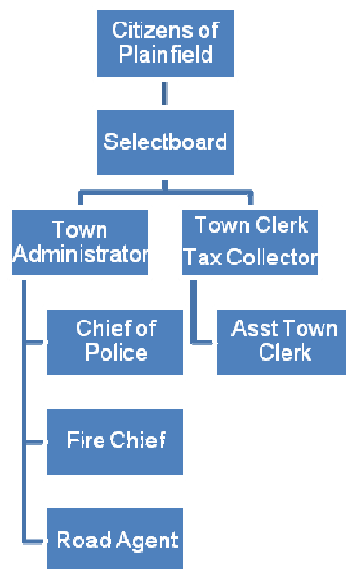
Plainfield was chartered in 1761. It developed into an agricultural community that flourished in the 19th and 20th centuries and grew to encompass Plainfield Village, Meriden Village, and East Plainfield. It has become a residential community that values its agricultural heritage and its rural character. In addition, Plainfield residents proudly support outstanding educational opportunities for our children, the preservation of our historic buildings and our natural resources, and the participatory government that centers on our annual Town Meeting. For more historical information, please ask to see a copy of the town history, [Choice White Pines and Good Land: History of Plainfield and Meriden, NH](#), or refer to the Plainfield Historical Society website www.phsnh.org.

2.2 Town Facilities

The Town of Plainfield (the “Town”) maintains several buildings for use by employees and residents. These include the Town Offices (located in the Meriden Town Hall), Town Highway Garage, Plainfield Town Hall, Meriden and Plainfield Fire Department buildings, and the Town gravel pit/garage. The Board of Trustees of the Plainfield Libraries oversee the maintenance of the Meriden and Philip Read Memorial Libraries.

2.3 Organization

Plainfield town operations follow a chain of command that begins with the registered voters of the Town who elect the Selectboard and town officials. The Selectboard acts as the governing body and appoints a Town Administrator to oversee day-to-day operations of the Town and to implement their policies. The Chief or Police, Fire Chief, Road Agent report to the Selectboard even though day-to-day oversight is by the Town Administrator.





2.4 At-Will Employment

Your employment with the Town of Plainfield is on an "at-will" basis. This means your employment may be terminated at any time, with or without notice, and with or without cause. Likewise, we respect your right to leave the Town employment at any time, with or without notice, and with or without cause. (See Addendum for Police Chief Exception)

Nothing in this Handbook or any other Town document should be understood as creating a contract, guaranteed or continued employment, a right to termination only "for cause," or any other guarantee of continued benefits or employment. Only the Selectboard has the authority to make promises or negotiate about guaranteed or continued employment, and any such promises are only effective if placed in writing and signed by the Selectboard.



3.0 Fair Treatment of Employees

3.1 EEO Statement and Non-harassment Policy

3.11 Equal Opportunity Statement

The Town of Plainfield is committed to the principles of equal employment. We are committed to complying with all federal and state laws providing equal employment opportunities, as well as all other employment laws and regulations. It is the Town's intent to maintain a work environment that is free of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation based on age, race, color, marital status, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), crime victim status, veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal or state law. The Town is dedicated to the fulfillment of this policy in regard to all aspects of employment, including but not limited to recruiting, hiring, placement, transfer, training, promotion, rates of pay, and other compensation, termination, and all other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

The Town will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all allegations of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or any violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy in a confidential manner. If necessary, the Town will take appropriate disciplinary action. The Town prohibits retaliation against employees who provide information regarding, complain about, or assisting in the investigation of any complaint of discrimination or violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

We are all responsible for upholding this policy. You may discuss questions regarding equal employment opportunity with your Department Head, the Town Administrator, or a member of the Selectboard.

3.12 Policy Against Workplace Harassment

The Town of Plainfield has a strict policy against all types of workplace harassment, including sexual harassment and other forms of workplace harassment based upon an individual's age, race, color, marital status, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), crime victim status, veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal or state law. All forms of harassment of, or by, employees, vendors, visitors, and the public are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.



3.13 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

While it is not possible to identify every act that constitutes or may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of sexual harassment:

- Unwelcome requests for sexual favors.
- Lewd or derogatory comments or jokes.
- Comments regarding sexual behavior or the body of another.
- Sexual innuendo and other vocal activity such as catcalls or whistles.
- Obscene letters, notes, emails, invitations, photographs, cartoons, articles, or other written or pictorial materials of a sexual nature.
- Repeated requests for dates after being informed that interest is unwelcome.
- Retaliating against another for refusing a sexual advance or reporting an incident of possible sexual harassment to the Town or any government agency.
- Offering or providing favors or employment benefits such as promotions, favorable evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, etc., in exchange for sexual favors; and
- Any unwanted physical touching or assaults or blocking or impeding movements.

3.14 Other Harassment

Other workplace harassment is verbal or physical conduct that insults or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of the individual's age, race, color, marital status, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), crime victim status, veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal or state law.

Again, while it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute forms of workplace harassment, the following are some examples:

- The use of disparaging or abusive words or phrases, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to the above protected categories.
- Written or graphic material that insults, stereotypes, or shows aversion or hostility toward an individual or group because of one of the above protected categories and is placed on walls, bulletin boards, email, voicemail, or elsewhere on Town premises, or circulated in the workplace; and
- A display of symbols, slogans, or items that are associated with hate or intolerance toward any select group.



3.15 Reporting Discrimination and Harassment

An employee who feels they have been a victim of sexual or other unlawful harassment, discrimination, or who has observed such harassment or discrimination affecting another person should report such incident in accordance with the following procedures. All complaints will be reviewed promptly, appropriately, and as discreetly as possible.

1. If you feel that you have witnessed or have been subjected to any form of discrimination or harassment, immediately notify the Town Administrator at 603-469-3201. The Town Administrator is available to discuss any questions or concerns employees may have and provide them with information about the Town's policy on harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination as well as the complaint policy. If you feel uncomfortable going to the Town Administrator or the Town Administrator is involved, you may go to the Selectboard Chair.
2. The Town will promptly and discreetly review every reported incident. Disclosure of complaints will be limited to those with a need to know. There may be instances when, depending upon the nature of the allegations, an alleged harasser will be suspended, with pay, pending an investigation. Suspension pending investigation should not be considered a conclusion of wrongdoing.
3. Once the review is complete, the Town will to the extent possible communicate the results of the review with the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct.
4. Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Town will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct and, where appropriate, will impose disciplinary action.

The Town encourages all employees to follow the above procedure with any concern. However, if an employee feels uncomfortable with the above procedure or is dissatisfied with the resolution of their concern, he or she may also file a complaint by writing or calling the following agencies:

- New Hampshire Human Rights Commission, 2 Industrial Park Drive, Concord, NH 03301, (603) 271-2767 (voice), 1-800-735-2964 (TTY).
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office, JFK Federal Building, 4th Floor, Room 475, Boston, MA 02203, (617) 565-3200 (voice), (617) 565-3204 (TTY), (844) 234-5122 (ASL Video).

The Town prohibits retaliation against an employee who, based on a reasonable belief, provides information about, complains, or assists in the investigation of any complaint of harassment or discrimination.

As necessary, the Town may monitor any incident of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation to assure the inappropriate behavior has stopped.



3.2 Americans with Disability Act

The Town of Plainfield complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and any other applicable federal, state, or local fair employment practices law, and is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities, including disabilities related to pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions. Consistent with this commitment, the Town will provide a reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified individuals where appropriate to allow the individual to perform the essential functions of the job, unless doing so would create an undue hardship on the Town.

If you feel you need an accommodation because of your disability, it is your responsibility to notify your Department Head. You may be asked to include relevant information such as:

- A description of the proposed accommodation.
- The reason you need an accommodation.
- How the accommodation will help you perform the essential functions of your job.

After receiving your request, the Town will engage in an interactive dialogue with you to determine the precise limitations of your disability and explore potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations. Where appropriate, we may need your permission to obtain additional information from your medical provider. All medical information received by the Town in connection with a request for accommodation will be treated as confidential.

The Town encourages you to suggest specific reasonable accommodations that you believe would allow you to perform your job. However, the Town is not required to make the specific accommodation requested by you and may provide an alternative accommodation, to the extent any reasonable accommodation can be made without imposing an undue hardship on the Town.

If leave is provided as a reasonable accommodation, such leave will run concurrently with any other leave where permitted by state and federal law.

The Town will not discriminate or retaliate against employees for requesting an accommodation.

3.3 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Recognizing that people are the Town’s most valuable asset, the Town of Plainfield is committed to cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion. The sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, abilities, and talent that our employees and elected officials invest in their work represents a significant part of our culture and reputation. We embrace our differences and the characteristics that make each individual unique.

We encourage a greater understanding and respect for diversity and inclusion. All employees always have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect.



Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action.

4.0 Code of Ethics

4.1 Guiding Principles

The Town of Plainfield conducts business honestly and ethically. We strive to improve the quality of our services and operations and maintain a reputation for honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, integrity, trust, and sound judgment. Our elected officials, employees, and appointed committees are expected to adhere to high standards of business and personal integrity as a representation of our business practices, at all times consistent with their duty of loyalty to the Town.

We expect that elected officials and employees will not knowingly misrepresent the Town and will not speak on behalf of the Town unless specifically authorized. The confidentiality of non-public information such as minutes of non-public sessions and employee personnel information may only be disseminated with approval by the Selectboard.

Violation of any part of the Code of Ethics may result in discipline. The degree of discipline imposed may be influenced by the existence of voluntary disclosure of any ethical violation and whether or not the violator cooperated in any subsequent investigation.

4.2 Acceptance of Gifts

Employees should not accept or receive any gift, favor, loan, or anything of value from any person whose interests are or might reasonably have the appearance of impropriety. Any gifts with a value of \$100 or more must be reported to the Town Administrator or the Selectboard for approval before accepting.

4.3 Conflicts of Interest

The Town of Plainfield is concerned with conflicts of interest that create the appearance of, actual, or potential job-related concerns, especially in the areas of confidentiality, citizen and employee relations, safety, security, and morale. If there is any actual or potential conflict of interest between you and a supplier, distributor, or contractor to the Town, you must disclose it to the Selectboard. If an actual or potential conflict of interest is determined to exist, the Town will take such steps as it deems necessary to reduce or eliminate this conflict.

Generally, the Town will not employ friends or relatives in circumstances where the appearance of, actual, or potential conflicts may arise that could compromise supervision, safety, confidentiality, security, and morale. It is your obligation to inform the Town Administrator or Selectboard of any such potential conflict so they can determine how best to respond to the situation. Exceptions to hiring friends or relatives may be made with the approval of the Selectboard. A failure to report a relationship may be considered a violation of this policy and subject to discipline.



4.4 Confidentiality

As a condition of employment, the Town's employees are required to protect the confidentiality of Town non-public and confidential information related to the Town. Access to this information should be limited and should not be used for personal benefit, disclosed, or released without prior authorization from the Selectboard. The exception to this is information that is covered under the New Hampshire Right to Know laws.

If you have information that leads you to suspect employees are sharing such information in violation of this policy, you are required to inform the Selectboard.

4.5 Open Door/Conflict Resolution Policy

The Town of Plainfield strives to provide an enjoyable, productive, legal, and ethical work environment. To this end, we want you to bring any problems, concerns, or complaints you have about the workplace to the attention of your Department Head, the Town Administrator, and, if necessary, to the Selectboard. To help manage conflict resolution, we have instituted the following problem-solving procedure:

If you believe there is inappropriate conduct or activity on the part of the Town, management, its employees, vendors, or any other persons or entities related to the Town, bring your concerns to the attention of your Department Head at a time and place that will allow the person to properly listen to your concern. Most problems can be resolved informally through dialogue between you and your immediate Department Head. If you have already brought this matter to the attention of your Department Head before and do not believe you have received a sufficient response, or if you believe that person is the source of the problem, present your concerns to Town Administrator or Selectboard. Describe the problem, those persons involved in the problem, efforts you have made to resolve the problem, and any suggested solutions you may have.

Please see the Addendum for different procedures for the Police Department.



5.0 New Hire Information and Employment Classifications

5.1 Employee Classifications

Elected Municipal Officials

The town clerk, treasurer, Selectboard, moderator, supervisors of the checklist, and any positions elected by the citizens are considered Elected Municipal Officials in accordance with RSA 41:2. Elected Municipal officials must take an oath of office, be a U.S. Citizen, and live in the Town of Plainfield. At Town Meeting, the voters determine the compensation for municipal officials as part of the annual budget. The Town Clerk receives compensation and receives benefits as voted upon by the Selectboard.

Municipal Employees

If you are employed by the Town, you are considered a municipal employee. The exceptions are (a) those who are elected, (b) those appointed by the Selectboard (e.g. health officer), (c) those whose duties imply confidential relationship to the Town, and (d) those who are temporary, seasonal, or on-call. Municipal employees are hired based upon the job description and qualifications. They do not have to live in the Town of Plainfield.

Regular Full-time Employees

Regular full-time employees are those who have completed their introductory period and are regularly scheduled to work 36 or more hours per week. Unless stated otherwise or specifically permitted by law, all the benefits provided to employees of the Town of Plainfield are for regular full-time employees only. This includes vacation, holiday pay, health insurance, and other benefits coverage.

Regular Part-time Employees

All employees who work fewer than 36 hours per week are considered regular part-time. Part-time employees are not eligible for Town of Plainfield benefits unless specified otherwise in this Handbook, in the benefit plan summaries, or specifically permitted by law.

Temporary Employees

Temporary employees are hired for a specific period or specific work project. The Town of Plainfield reserves the right to extend the duration of temporary employment where necessary. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits unless specified otherwise in this Handbook or in the benefit plan summaries, or specifically permitted by law.

Appointees by the Selectboard

Certain positions are appointed by the Selectboard. Examples of this are the Tax Collector, Health Officer, Fire Chief, and the Recreation Director. The criteria for the positions are set by the Selectboard. Appointees are not eligible for benefits unless specified otherwise in this Handbook or specifically permitted by law.



5.2 Job Descriptions

The Town of Plainfield attempts to maintain a job description for each position. If you do not have a current copy of your job description, you should request one from your Department Head or the Town Administrator.

Job descriptions serve as an outline only. Due to Town needs, you may be required to perform job duties that are not within your written job description. Furthermore, the Town may have to revise, add to, or delete from your job duties per Town needs. On occasion, the Town may need to revise job descriptions with or without advance notice to employees.

If you have any questions regarding your job description or the scope of your duties, please speak with your Department Head.

5.3 New Hires and Introductory Periods

The first three months of your employment are considered an introductory period. During this period, you will become familiar with the Town of Plainfield and your job responsibilities, and your supervisor will have the opportunity to monitor your performance and make any necessary adjustments in your job description or responsibilities. Your introductory period with the Town can be shortened or lengthened as deemed appropriate by the Selectboard. In the case of the Police Department, the introductory period can be up to a year. Completion of this introductory period does not imply guaranteed or continued employment. Nothing that occurs during or after this period should be construed to change the nature of the "at-will" employment relationship.

At the end of the introductory period, your performance will be evaluated by the Department Head and/or Selectboard.

5.4 Training Program

In most cases, and for most departments, training employees is done on an individual basis by the Department Head. Even if you have had previous experience in the specified functions of your job duties, it is necessary for you to learn the Town of Plainfield specific procedures, as well as the responsibilities of the specific position. If you ever feel you require additional training, consult your Department Head.

Regular full-time hourly and salaried employees, with their Department Head's pre-approval, may attend job-related seminars or workshops during the workday. The costs of the seminar or workshop will be paid by the Town. You will be compensated for hours spent going to, attending, and returning from, seminars or workshops.

Please see the Addendum for more information for our Police Department.



5.5 Recruitment, Application, and Appointment

When a vacancy occurs, the Town Administrator notifies the Selectboard. The Selectboard will determine if and when the position is to be filled. The Town Administrator is responsible for posting the position announcements, advertising (newspaper, website, social media), receiving applications, interviewing, and recommending a candidate to the Selectboard. When a new position is requested, the Town Administrator will do a written justification and job description and present the recommendation to the Selectboard.

Recommendations for new hires are made by the Town Administrator to the Selectboard. The Selectboard has the final decision, determines pay rate at the time of offer of employment, and confirms hours. Offers of employment are contingent on a background, reference check, and/or motor vehicle, and reference check. In some positions, a drug and alcohol test may be required.

Application for employment must be completed on the appropriate form or in the requested format.

When recruiting or hiring, the Town of Plainfield does not discriminate on age, race, color, marital status, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, genetic, crime victim status, veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal and state laws.

Some positions, such as the Town Clerk and Tax Collector, must be residents of the Town of Plainfield.

The Addendum has specific requirements for the Police Department.



6.0 Compensation and Hours of Work

6.1 Establishing Your Wages

At the Town of Plainfield, pay depends on a wide range of factors, including pay surveys, individual effort, town appropriations, and compensation ranges. If you have any questions about your compensation, including matters such as paid time off, overtime, benefits, or paycheck deductions, speak with the Town Administrator.

6.2 Pay Classifications

Exempt

Exempt employees are not covered by the overtime rules of the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”). Exempt employees are paid a weekly salary and are not eligible for overtime pay. If you have a question regarding whether you are exempt or non-exempt, contact the Town Administrator for clarification.

Non-Exempt

Non-Exempt employees are covered by the provisions of the FLSA. Non-exempt employees are normally paid on an hourly basis and are eligible for overtime pay as defined in this Handbook. Any overtime must be pre-approved by your Department Head.

Elected Officials

Elected officials are paid based on the appropriation made at Town Meeting. Pay may be made on an hourly basis or a fixed fee for the position. These officials are paid through the Town of Plainfield payroll system.

Paid Appointees by the Selectboard

Certain positions are appointed by the Selectboard and are compensated. Examples of this are the Health Officer and the Recreation Director. The Selectboard establishes their annual compensation and the frequency of payment. These appointees are paid through the Town of Plainfield payroll system.

6.3 Pay Period

The Town of Plainfield’s standard pay period is weekly for all employees. The pay period is Sunday to Saturday each week. Pay day is Thursday. If a pay day falls on a holiday, you will be paid on the preceding workday. Special provisions may be required from time to time if a holiday falls on a pay day.

Review your paycheck for accuracy. If you find an issue, report it to your Department Head immediately.



6.4 Recording Time

The Town of Plainfield is required by applicable federal and state laws to keep accurate records of hours worked by certain employees. To ensure that the Town has complete and accurate time records and that employees are paid for all hours worked, nonexempt employees are required to record all working time using Town time sheets. Exempt employees may also be required to track days off. Your Department Head will provide you with specific instructions.

You must accurately record all of your time to ensure you are paid for all hours worked, and must follow established Town procedures for recording your hours worked. Time must be recorded as follows:

- Immediately upon starting your shift.
- Before and after your meal period if an unpaid meal period.
- Immediately after finishing work for the day.
- Immediately before and after any other time away from work.

Time sheets are to be turned in to your Department Head for approval at the end of the pay period each week.

You should sign in on your timesheet no more than five minutes ahead of your start time and sign out no later than five minutes after your end time.

Notify the Town Administrator or Town Clerk of any pay discrepancies, unrecorded or mis-recorded work hours, or any involuntarily missed meal periods.

Falsifying time entries is strictly prohibited. Falsifying time entries includes working "off the clock." If you falsify your own time records, the time records of co-workers, or if you work off the clock, you will be subject to disciplinary action. Immediately report to the Town Administrator any employee, supervisor, or Department Head who falsifies your time entries or encourages or requires you to falsify your time entries or work off the clock.

6.5 Overtime

If you are non-exempt, you may qualify for overtime pay. All overtime must be approved in advance, in writing, by your Department Head.

At certain times The Town of Plainfield may require you to work overtime. Your supervisor will attempt to give as much notice as possible. However, advance notice may not always be possible. Failure to work overtime when requested or working unauthorized overtime may result in discipline.

Unless otherwise required or exempted by law, overtime pay of one and one-half times your regular rate of pay is paid for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. Holidays, vacation days, sick leave, and other excused days **count as time worked** for computing overtime.



6.6 Compensatory Time Off

New Hampshire state law and the FLSA permit a public employer to provide compensatory time off (“comp time”) in lieu of monetary overtime pay, at a rate of one and one-half hours of compensatory time off for each hour of overtime worked, up to certain limits.

Therefore, the Town may allow compensatory time off in place of overtime pay for a **non-exempt employee** who makes such a request. You may accumulate compensatory time in lieu of overtime pay and must mark “comp time” on the timesheet. If you do not indicate “comp time” on the timesheet, then you will receive overtime pay. The accumulated compensatory time will be reflected on your pay stub. Any compensatory time used will be subtracted from that balance. Compensatory time may be used only with pre-approval from your Department Head.

Under state law, the Town of Plainfield cannot require the use of compensatory time within a certain period of time. Public safety employees may accrue no more than 480 hours of compensatory time for 320 hours of actual time worked. All other employees may accrue no more than 240 hours of compensatory time for 160 hours of actual time worked. An employee who accrues more than the limit will be paid overtime at one and one half the rate of pay on the designated pay day. A non-exempt employee who leaves employment will be paid for any accumulated compensatory time at their current regular rate at the time of departure.

6.7 Call Back

If you are an hourly, full-time employee and are called back to work without prior notice on the same day after once leaving work or before the next regular starting time, you shall be compensated at one and one-half times your normal hourly rate for the hours worked and shall be guaranteed a minimum of not less than (3) hours pay. If a second call back occurs within three hours of a first, no additional wages will be paid. See addendum for specific police department policy.

6.8 On-Call/Pager Pay

If you are designated as an on-call employee, you must be available to report to work on relatively short notice outside of the regularly scheduled workday. An employee who is on-call must respond within a reasonable time, as determined by your Department Head. If you do not respond within a reasonable period of time and have no valid reason, it may be considered an unexcused absence and you will not receive compensation for that scheduled work time, and it may be subject to disciplinary action. On-call compensation, which will be paid for any period you are on on-call and not working, will be determined by the Selectboard.



6.9 Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, or states of emergencies declared by the government can disrupt Town operation. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require closing a work facility for non-essential personnel. Such closings will be determined by the Town Administrator or Department Head.

When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be paid according to your regular schedule and pay rate. Time off in these circumstances is not considered in calculating overtime pay. In addition, some departments may be required to work in the event of a Town emergency. Employees who are required to work during an emergency will be paid at their regular rate of pay and will receive overtime pay for time worked over 40 hours per week.

In cases where an emergency closing has not been authorized, if you fail to report for work or decide to leave early, you will not be paid for the time off unless you use accrued vacation time for the absence.

6.10 Reporting Time Pay

The Town of Plainfield provides reporting time pay to nonexempt employees in accordance with applicable law. If you report to work at the request of the Town and you are not needed to work, you will be paid for a minimum of two (2) hours at your regular rate.

Speak with your Department Head for more information regarding reporting time pay.

6.11 Direct Deposit

The Town of Plainfield encourages all employees to enroll in direct deposit. If you would like to take advantage of direct deposit, ask the Town Administrator or Town Clerk for a form. Typically, direct deposit of your pay takes place within 30 calendar days after you submit your completed form.

If you have selected direct deposit, a written explanation of your deductions will be given to you on paydays described in the preceding sections in lieu of a check.

6.12 Paycheck Deductions

The Town of Plainfield is required by law to make certain deductions from your pay each pay period. This includes income and unemployment taxes, Federal Insurance Contributions Act ("FICA") contributions (Social Security and Medicare), and any other deductions required under law or by court order for wage garnishments. The amount of your tax deductions will depend on your earnings and the information you list on your federal Form W-4 and applicable state (i.e. Vermont) withholding form. You may also authorize voluntary deductions from your paycheck, including contributions for insurance premiums, retirement plans, spending accounts, or other services. Your deductions will be reflected in your wage statement.





The Town will not make deductions to your pay that are prohibited by federal or state law. If you have any questions about deductions from your pay, contact the Town Administrator. You will be reimbursed in full for any isolated, inadvertent, or improper deductions, as defined by law. If an error is found, you will receive an immediate adjustment, which will be paid no later than your next regular payday.

6.13 Meal and Rest Periods Policy

The Town of Plainfield strives to provide a safe and healthy work environment and complies with all federal and state regulations regarding meal and rest periods. The Town will provide you an unpaid meal break of at least 30 minutes if you work more than five consecutive hours. The Town requests that you accurately observe and record meal periods. If you know in advance that you may not be able to take your scheduled meal period, let your Department Head know. In addition, notify your Department Head as soon as possible if you were unable to take a meal or rest period.

You may receive one ten (10) minute paid rest break for each four (4) hour period of continuous work. In some circumstances it may be necessary to stagger or forego breaks depending on the needs of the department. The Department Head will establish the schedule for breaks. Daily breaks cannot be accumulated and used on other days or broken up into smaller increments to be used during the day. These paid breaks should not be used during the first or last ten minutes of your scheduled shift.

Check with your Department Head regarding procedures and schedules for rest and meal breaks. Also notify your Department Head if you are regularly unable to take a meal or rest period away for your workspace.

6.14 Accommodations for Nursing Mothers

The Town of Plainfield will provide nursing mothers reasonable unpaid break time to express milk for their infant child(ren) for up to one year following the child's birth. If you are nursing, you will be provided with a space, other than a restroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public. Expressed milk can be stored in Town refrigerators or in a personal cooler. Sufficiently mark or label your milk to avoid confusion for other employees who may share the refrigerator.

Break time should, if possible, be taken concurrently with any other break time already provided. If you are non-exempt, clock out for any time taken that does not run concurrently with normally scheduled paid rest periods, and such time will be paid in accordance with federal law.

You are encouraged to discuss the length and frequency of these breaks with your Department Head.

No provision of this policy applies, or will be enforced, if it conflicts with or is superseded by any requirement or prohibition contained in a federal and state law or regulation.



6.15 Expenses

The Town may pay or reimburse you for valid expenses necessary for a legitimate purpose when attending out of town meetings, trainings, buying supplies, or other expenses related to your position. The Town Administrator will provide you information on the policy and procedure for submitting an expense report and mileage reimbursement.



7.0 Benefits

7.1 Health Insurance

The Town of Plainfield offers group health insurance benefits to all eligible employees and their eligible dependents who work 36 or more hours per week, beginning on the first of the month following employment. Health plan benefits are described in detail in the Summary Plan Description (SPD), which may be obtained from the Town Administrator. Each year the Selectboard reviews the contribution that the Town will make toward insurance. Please refer to the Summary Plan Description (SPD or Plan Booklet) provided by the Town Administrator for specifics or more information.

Benefits may be canceled or changed at the discretion of the Town, unless otherwise prohibited by law.

If you or a dependent become ineligible for benefits due to a change in work hours, a life event, or you leave employment with the Town, you may have the right to continue your health benefits under federal or state law. In such event, the Town will provide you with information about your rights to continue your benefits coverage.

7.2 COBRA

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act ("COBRA") provides the opportunity for eligible Town of Plainfield employees and their beneficiaries to continue health insurance coverage under the Town health plan when a "qualifying event" could result in the loss of eligibility. Qualifying events include resignation, termination of employment, death of an employee, reduction in hours, leave of absence, divorce or legal separation, entitlement to Medicare, or where a dependent child no longer meets eligibility requirements.

Contact the Town Administrator to learn more about your COBRA rights.

7.3 New Hampshire Retirement Plan

If you work full-time (36 or more hours), you are required to participate in the New Hampshire Retirement System, immediately upon hire. Currently the plan deducts 7% of gross pay from your paycheck. The Town also contributes for you to the plan. At the time you leave the Town's employment, your share of the money may either be returned or held in the retirement system until you reach retirement age.

As with your insurance benefits, refer to the Summary Plan Description (SPD) provided by the Town Administrator for more information. This benefit is mandated by NH RSA 100-A.



7.4 Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Town of Plainfield recognizes that managing work and life can be difficult. When you need extra support, you have resources at the CIGNA Employee Assistance Program (“EAP”) to assist and guide you toward the best solution. **This benefit is for all employees and their family members/dependent whether or not they are on the health insurance plan.**

The EAP provides CONFIDENTIAL services 24/7, 365 days a year to all employees and their family members/dependents.

The EAP provides confidential access to professional counseling services for help with personal concerns that may impact job performance. These concerns may include, but are not limited to, health, marital, family, financial, legal, emotional, alcohol abuse, and drug use. The EAP can help assess the problem, offer guidance, and provide a referral to quality care.

Voluntary participation in the EAP will not have any effect on your employment. You can contact the EAP directly. Any information about your contact, participation, or any recommended treatment is confidential and will not be disclosed to the Town.

EAP services are available to eligible participants without charge for up to three visits. The cost of referrals to treatment or rehabilitation is your responsibility if it is not completely covered by insurance.

EAP services can be initiated by contacting the EAP service provider, CIGNA EAP at 1-877-622-4327, or the website www.mycigna.com. Employer ID: SCHOOLCARE.

7.5 Years of Service Recognition

You will receive a one-time payment of one extra week’s pay at your current rate of pay in the final paycheck of the calendar year in which you celebrate ten years of continuous employment with the Town. For each subsequent block of ten years completed, you will be given a similar one-time payment of one extra week’s pay at your current rate.

7.6 Unemployment Compensation Insurance Policy

Unemployment compensation insurance is paid for by The Town of Plainfield and provides temporary income for employees who have lost their job under certain circumstances. Your eligibility for unemployment compensation will partly be determined by the reason(s) for your separation from the Town.



7.7 Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy

Workers' compensation is a no-fault system designed to provide benefits to all employees for work-related injuries. Workers' compensation insurance coverage is paid for by employers and governed by state law. The workers' compensation system provides for coverage of medical treatment and expenses, occupational disability leave, and rehabilitation services, as well as payment for lost wages due to work related injuries. If you are injured on the job while working at The Town of Plainfield, no matter how slightly, you are to report the incident immediately to your Department Head. Consistent with applicable state law, failure to report an injury within a reasonable period of time could jeopardize your claim for benefits.

To receive workers' compensation benefits, notify your Department Head or the Town Administrator immediately of your claim. If your injury is the result of an on-the-job accident, you must fill out an accident report. You will be required to submit a medical release before you can return to work.

7.8 Uniforms

The Town will provide you uniforms if you are considered a uniformed employee. The types, quantities, and ancillary equipment provided will be determined by the Department Head. See the Uniform Policy, available from your Department Head, for more detail.

7.9 Safety Shoes

The Town of Plainfield provides an annual voucher for up to \$200 for the purchase of safety shoes for full-time employees in the Highway Department. Please see the Safety Shoe Voucher Program, available from your Department Head for more detail.



8.0 Time Away from Work

8.1 Vacation Policy

The Town of Plainfield provides regular full-time employees with paid vacation.

Eligibility

All regular full-time employees working 36 or more hours per week are eligible to receive vacation time after three months of employment.

Calculations to your Vacation Account

Vacation is calculated according to your work anniversary year.

Years Completed	Days per year	Monthly Hour Accumulation (40 hours)	Monthly Day Accumulation (Less than 40 hours)
0-5 th Anniversary	10	6.67 hrs./month	.83 hours/day
5-10	15	10 hrs./month	1.25 hours per day
10 or more	20	13.28 hrs./month	1.66 hours per day

You may accrue vacation time up to a maximum of 30 days or 240 hours.

Once you reach the maximum accrual amount, you will not accrue any additional vacation until you use some of your accrued vacation and the amount falls below the maximum accrual amount. You will not receive retroactive credit for any period of time in which you did not accrue vacation because you accrued the maximum amount.

Leave Usage and Requests for Leave

The Town encourages you to use your vacation time. You are eligible to begin using vacation upon completion of your introductory period.

You must request vacation from your Department Head as far in advance as possible, but at least two (2) weeks in advance. The Town will generally grant requests for vacation when possible, taking Town needs into consideration. When multiple employees request the same time off, seniority may determine priority in scheduling vacation times.

You must take vacation in increments of at least 4 of hours.



Vacation time is considered hours worked for the calculation of overtime.

During a Leave of Absence

The Town may require you to use any unused vacation during disability, Workers' Compensation, FMLA leave, or any other leave of absence, where permissible under state and federal law.

You will not accrue vacation during unpaid leaves of absence, or other periods of inactive service, unless vacation accrual is required by applicable federal or state law.

Carryover

Unused vacation can be carried over to the following year, up to the maximum aggregate limit of thirty (30) vacation days or 240 hours. At no time will your accumulated vacation time exceed more than thirty (30) days or 240 hours.

Separation of Employment

Upon separation of employment for any reason, you will be paid for earned but unused vacation time at your current rate of pay.

8.2 Sick Leave

The Town of Plainfield allows regular full-time employees who have completed their introductory period to receive fifteen (15) sick days per calendar year (1.25 days per month). Notify your Department Head as soon as possible if you need to take sick time. There may be occasions, such as sudden illness, when you cannot notify your Department Head in advance. In those situations, provide notification of your circumstances as soon as possible. You may also be required to provide medical documentation to your Department Head if your absence exceeds three (3) consecutive work days.

You may use sick leave benefits for dental or doctor visits or to care for immediate family members who are sick. You may be required to use available sick leave during family and medical leave, disability leave, or other leave.

Sick time may be carried over from year to year. Sick time accumulation is capped at a total of 60 days.

Upon separation of employment, either voluntary or otherwise, accumulated but unused sick time will not be paid out.

If due to illness or injury, you are placed on Worker's Compensation, the difference between the Workers' Compensation weekly payments and your current full-time compensation may be charged to sick time. If there is no accumulated sick time, the difference may come out of vacation time at your discretion. If no vacation or sick time is accumulated or the employee does not wish to utilize it, the difference will not be compensated by the Town of Plainfield.

Sick leave is considered hours worked for the calculation of overtime.



8.3 Holidays

The Town of Plainfield offers the following paid holidays each year:

New Year's Day	Columbus/ Indigenous Peoples Day
Civil Rights Day	Veteran's Day
Presidents' Day	Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Friday after Thanksgiving
July 4 th	Christmas
Labor Day	

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

Holiday pay is your regular rate of pay and is given provided you are on an active pay status for the workdays directly before and after the holiday.

If you are required to work on a holiday, you will receive the paid holiday and receive time and one-half (overtime) for the hours worked.

If a holiday falls on your regular day off, you will receive the holiday pay in addition to your actual hours worked during the pay period.

Holidays are counted as hours worked in the calculation of overtime.

8.4 Bereavement Leave

The Town of Plainfield recognizes the importance of taking leave when there is a death in the family. The Town will provide bereavement leave as follows:

All regular full-time employees who have completed 90 days of service are eligible for three (3) days of paid bereavement leave for the death of an immediate family member. For purposes of this policy, ***immediate family member*** includes the following and applies both to the family of the employee and the employee's spouse: child (including foster child and stepchild), spouse, sister, brother, parents (including foster parents and stepparents), grandparents. Extenuating circumstances will be handled at the discretion of the Department Head after consultation with the Town Administrator.

You may use accrued but unused vacation/sick leave time if additional time is needed.

You must provide notice of your need for bereavement leave as soon as possible.

Approved bereavement leave is considered hours worked in the calculation of overtime.



8.5 Personal Leave of Absence

The Town of Plainfield recognizes that you may need time off from work in special circumstances that other leave policies may not address. In such cases, you may request a personal leave of absence from the Town Administrator. All full-time or part-time employees employed for at least one (1) year are eligible to apply for an unpaid personal leave of absence.

- There is no job protection during an unpaid personal leave of absence.
- You will be required to use all available paid leave balances prior to taking an unpaid personal leave of absence.
- Sick leave, vacation time, seniority, or other benefits will not accrue during an unpaid personal leave of absence. Holidays that occur during an unpaid personal leave of absence will not be paid.
- If you are granted a personal leave of absence, reinstatement to your position or any position is not guaranteed.
- You are responsible for payment of your portion of the insurance premium while on personal leave.
- If you fail to return to work after an unpaid leave of absence, you will be considered to have resigned your employment.
- While on an unpaid leave of absence, you may not work or be gainfully employed either for yourself or others unless express, written permission to perform such outside work has been granted by the Town.

8.6 Military Leave (USERRA)

The Town of Plainfield complies with applicable federal and state law regarding military leave and re-employment rights. An unpaid military leave of absence will be granted to members of the uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (“USERRA”; with amendments) and all applicable state law. You must submit documentation of the need for leave to the Town Administrator. When returning from military leave of absence, you will be reinstated to your previous position or a similar position, in accordance with state and federal law. You must notify the Town Administrator of your intent to return to employment based on requirements of the law. For more information regarding status, compensation, benefits, and reinstatement upon return from military leave, contact the Town Administrator.

8.7 Crime Victim Leave Policy

The Town of Plainfield will permit you to take unpaid leave to participate in investigations, or court or other related legal proceedings, under the following circumstances:

1. Where you are the victim of a crime or attempted crime.
2. Where your immediate family member is a victim of a crime or attempted crime and is a minor.
3. Where your immediate family member is a victim of homicide.



Immediate family member means your father, mother, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, spouse, grandparent, or legal guardian; or any person involved in an intimate relationship with you and residing in the same household.

If you need to take crime victim leave, notify your Department Head and make scheduling arrangements. The Town may request documentation supporting your need for leave.

Leave under this policy will be unpaid; however, exempt employees will be paid as required by law. You may choose to use vacation for any unpaid leave.

The Town will not retaliate against employees who request or take leave in accordance with this policy.

8.8 Jury Duty Leave

The Town of Plainfield encourages employees to fulfill their civic duties related to jury duty. If you are summoned for jury duty, notify your Department Head as soon as possible to make scheduling arrangements.

Exempt employees will receive their normal salary less payments received for serving as a juror. Nonexempt employees will be compensated for the difference between their regular pay for the day and the pay for jury duty.

The Town reserves the right to require employees to provide proof of jury duty service to the extent authorized by law.

The Town will not retaliate against employees who request or take leave in accordance with this policy.

8.9 Pregnancy Disability Leave Policy

If you are unable to perform the essential functions of your job due to a temporary physical disability resulting from pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, the Town of Plainfield will permit you to take a leave of absence without pay for the period of your disability. If you are also eligible for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), such leave will run concurrently.

Upon return to work, you will be reinstated to your original job or to a comparable position unless Town necessity makes doing so impossible or unreasonable.

The Town will not retaliate against employees who request or take leave in accordance with this policy.

8.10 Voting Leave

If your work schedule prevents you from voting on Election Day, The Town of Plainfield will allow you a reasonable time off to vote. If you are required to be at work for the entire polling period or are in transit to or from work during this entire period, you may apply to vote via absentee ballot.





9.0 Standards of Conduct, Performance and Discipline

9.1 Standards of Conduct

The Town of Plainfield wishes to create a work environment that promotes job satisfaction, respect, responsibility, integrity, and values employees. We all share in the responsibility of improving the quality of our work environment. By deciding to work here, you agree to follow the Town's standards.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of inappropriate conduct, that could result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment. This policy is not intended to limit the Town's right to discipline or discharge employees for any reason permitted by law.

Examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Violation of the policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook.
- Possessing, using, distributing, selling, or negotiating the sale of illegal drugs or other controlled substances.
- Being under the influence of alcohol during working hours on Town property (including in Town vehicles), or on Town business.
- Inaccurate reporting of the hours worked by you or any other employees.
- Providing knowingly inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information when speaking on behalf of the Town or in the preparation of any employment-related documents including, but not limited to, job applications, personnel files, employment review documents, Town communications, or expense records.
- Taking or destroying Town property.
- Fighting with, or harassment of any fellow employee, vendor, or resident.
- Disclosure of Town confidential, non-public information (e.g. police records/reports, non-public information, personnel records, etc.).
- Refusal or failure to follow directions or to perform a requested or required job task.
- Refusal or failure to follow safety rules and procedures.
- Excessive tardiness or absences.
- Smoking in non-designated areas.
- Working unauthorized overtime.
- Solicitation of fellow employees on Town premises during working hours.
- Failure to dress according to Town policy.
- Use of obscene or harassing language in the workplace.
- Engaging in outside employment that interferes with your ability to perform your job with the Town.
- Lending keys to Town property to unauthorized persons.
- Any other conduct deemed inappropriate by the Town.

Nothing in this policy modifies the at-will employment status. You may be terminated at any time, without or without notice, and with or without reason.



9.2 Performance Appraisals and Performance Improvement Process

The Town of Plainfield will make efforts to periodically review an employee's work performance. The performance review process will take place annually around the anniversary of your hire date, or more frequently if needed. You may specifically request that your Department Head assist you in developing a performance improvement plan at any time.

The performance improvement process is a means for increasing the quality and value of your work performance. Your initiative, effort, attitude, job knowledge, and other factors will be addressed. A positive job performance review does not guarantee a pay raise or continued employment. Pay raises and promotions are based on numerous factors, only one of which is job performance. There is no guarantee, and you should have no expectation that you will receive any type of performance improvement plan before being terminated.

9.3 Pay Raises

Depending on approval of the annual Town Budget and other factors, efforts will be made to give pay raises. The Town may also make individual pay raises based on merit or due to a change of job position. The Town may also postpone an increase at its discretion. The Town will not consider any protected status under the law when making pay decisions.

9.4 Promotions

To match you with the job for which you are best suited and to meet the needs of the Town of Plainfield, you may be reassigned from your current job. It is our policy to promote from within only when the most qualified candidate is available. Promotions are made on an equal opportunity basis according to employees possessing the needed skills, education, experience, and other qualifications that are required for the job.

9.5 Disciplinary Action

The type of disciplinary action taken will vary with each situation and may include the following: oral or written reprimand, suspension, or termination. The choice of what discipline to apply in any particular case is solely the Town's. Consistent with New Hampshire law, employees who are exempt from overtime laws will not be suspended without pay for disciplinary purposes for periods less than a full workweek, unless the infraction involves a violation of safety rules of major significance.

Depending on the type of infraction, the Department Head, in consultation with the Town Administrator and/or Selectboard, will determine the disciplinary measure that is appropriate. Any such disciplinary action will be documented and placed in the personnel file.

See Addendum for specific information regarding the Police Department.



10.0 General Policies

10.1 Use of Town Technology

The Selectboard and/or the Town Administrator governs the use of all Information Technology (“IT”) resources and communications systems owned by or available at the Town, and all use of such resources and systems when accessed using your own devices, including but not limited to:

- Email systems and accounts.
- Internet access.
- Telephones and voicemail systems, including wired and mobile phones, smartphones, and pagers.
- Printers, photocopiers, and scanners.
- Fax machines, e-fax systems, and modems.
- All other associated computer, network, and communications systems, hardware, peripherals, and software, including network key fobs and other devices.
- All physical security systems and devices, including access keys, key cards, and fobs.

General Provisions

IT resources and communications systems are to be used for Town purposes only unless otherwise permitted under applicable law.

All content maintained in or on IT resources and communications systems are the property of the Town. Therefore, you should have no expectation of privacy in any message, file, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post, conversation, or any other kind or form of information or communication transmitted, received, accessed, printed, stored, or recorded on Town electronic information and communications systems. In addition, you must understand the New Hampshire Right to Know laws and what is considered public information.

The Town reserves the right to monitor, intercept, and/or review all data transmitted, received, or downloaded over Town IT resources and communications systems in accordance with applicable law. Any individual who is given access to the system is hereby given notice that the Town will exercise this right periodically, without prior notice and without prior consent.

The interests of the Town in monitoring and intercepting data include, but are not limited to: protection of Town confidential or sensitive information; managing the use of the computer system; and/or assisting employees in the management of electronic data during periods of absence.

You should not interpret the use of password protection as creating a right or expectation of privacy, nor should you have a right or expectation of privacy regarding the receipt, transmission, or storage of data on Town IT resources and communications systems.



Do not use Town IT resources and communications systems for any matter that you would like to be kept private or confidential.



Violations

If violation of this policy involves potential illegal conduct, the Town will also advise law enforcement officials.

Exceptions

The use and access to the internet and equipment in criminal investigations are exempt from this policy.

10.2 Computer Security

Software programs purchased and provided by The Town of Plainfield are to be used only for creating, researching, and processing materials for Town use. By using Town hardware, software, and networking systems, you assume personal responsibility for their use and agree to comply with this policy and other applicable Town policies, as well as state and federal laws and regulations.

All software acquired for or on behalf of the Town or contract personnel on behalf of the Town, is and will be deemed Town property. It is the policy of the Town to respect all computer software rights and to adhere to the terms of all software licenses to which the Town is a party. The Town Administrator is responsible for enforcing these guidelines.

When leaving your desk or computer, you are expected to lock the screen so that no one can go into your personal computer. You should use complex passwords or phrases when signing in.

The Town uses security and virus protection software to protect its files, email, internet, and website. However, the first line of defense is you. Be cautious of emails from people you do not know (particularly with attachments) or visiting sites that may put the Town at risk. Also be extremely cautious with web links in email messages. Many emails are sent "spoofing" a real person in an effort to get access to money or files.

10.3 Social Media Policy

The Town of Plainfield recognizes the Internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information using a wide variety of social media. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with its certain responsibilities. To minimize risk to the Town, you are expected to follow the guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all employees who work for the Town.



Guidelines

For purposes of this policy, **social media** includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether associated or affiliated with the Town, as well as any other form of electronic communication such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

The Town's Code of Ethics, Standards of Conduct, principles, guidelines, and policies apply to online activities just as they apply to other areas of work. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you communicate on social media. You may be personally responsible for any litigation that may arise should you make unlawful defamatory, slanderous, or libelous statements against any resident, Department Head, Selectboard member, or employees of the Town.

Know and Follow the Rules

Ensure that your postings are consistent with these guidelines. Postings that include unlawful discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or other unlawful conduct will not be tolerated.

Be Respectful

The Town cannot mandate respectful and courteous activity by employees on social media during non-working time. If you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video, or audio that reasonably could be viewed as unlawful, slanderous, threatening, or that might constitute unlawful harassment. Examples of such conduct might include defamatory or slanderous posts meant to harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, age, national origin, religion, veteran status, or any other status or class protected by law or Town policy. Your personal posts and social media activity should not in any way reflect upon or refer to the Town.

Maintain Accuracy and Confidentiality

When posting information:

- Maintain confidentiality related to the Town.
- Do not create a link from your personal blog, website, or other social networking site to a Town website that identifies you as speaking on behalf of the Town.
- Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for the Town unless designated to do so. If the Town is a subject of the content you are creating, do not represent yourself as speaking on behalf of the Town. Make it clear in your social media activity that you are speaking on your own behalf.
- Respect copyright, trademark, third-party rights, and similar laws and use such protected information in compliance with applicable legal standards.



Using Social Media at Work

Do not use social media while on work time, unless it is work related and specifically authorized by your Department Head, the Selectboard, or Town Administrator.

Media Contacts

Direct all media inquiries for official Town responses to the Town Administrator and/or Selectboard unless you are authorized to speak on behalf of the Town.

Retaliation and Your Rights

Retaliation or any other negative action is prohibited against anyone who, based on a reasonable belief, reports a possible deviation from this policy or cooperates in an investigation. Those who retaliate against others for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation may be subject to disciplinary action.

Nothing in this policy is designed to interfere with, restrain, or prevent employees from communications regarding wages, hours, or any other terms and conditions of employment, or to restrain employees in exercising any other right protected by law. All employees have the right to engage in or refrain from such activities.

Exceptions

The use and access to social media in criminal investigations are exempt from this policy.

10.4 Town-Provided Cell Phone/Mobile Device Policy

The Town of Plainfield may issue certain employees a Town cell phone/mobile device for work-related communications and/or operations. If you operate a vehicle during your employment, you may not use any cell phone/mobile device or other communication device while driving unless the device is equipped or configured with a "hands-free" listening/speaking option, and you in fact utilize the hands-free device.

The Town owns and remains entitled to all cell phone/mobile devices issued to employees, including all passwords controlling access to them. You may not change those passwords without permission. At the time of employment separation, all such equipment and passwords must be returned to the Town in operable condition.

10.5 Personal Cell Phone/Mobile Device Use

While the Town of Plainfield permits employees to bring personal cell phones and other mobile devices (i.e. smart phones, tablets, laptops) into the workplace, you must not allow the use of such devices to interfere with your job duties or impact workplace safety and health.

If you are operating a vehicle as part of your job duties or while on the clock, you may only use an electronic device in hands-free mode while driving.



10.6 Personal Appearance

Your personal appearance reflects on the reputation, integrity, and public image of the Town of Plainfield. You are expected to maintain personal hygiene habits that are generally accepted in the community, including clean clothing, good grooming and personal hygiene, and appropriate attire for the workplace and the work being performed. This may include wearing uniforms or protective safety clothing and equipment, depending upon the job. Use common sense and good judgment in determining what to wear to work.

Fragrant products, including but not limited to perfumes, colognes, and scented body lotions or hair products, should be used in moderation out of concern for others with sensitivities or allergies.

Failure to comply with the personal appearance standards may result in being sent home to groom or change clothes.

10.7 Personal Data Changes

It is your obligation to provide the Town of Plainfield with your current contact information, including current mailing address and telephone number. Inform the Town of any changes to your marital or tax withholding status. Failure to do so may result in loss of benefits or delayed receipt of W-2 and other mailings. To make changes to this information, contact the Town Administrator.

10.8 Security

All employees are responsible for helping to make the Town of Plainfield a secure work environment. Upon leaving work, lock all desks, lockers, and doors protecting valuable or sensitive material in your work area and report any lost or stolen keys, passes, or similar devices to your Department Head immediately. Refrain from discussing specifics regarding Town security systems, alarms, passwords, etc. with those outside of the Town.

Immediately advise your Department Head of any known or potential security risks and/or suspicious conduct of employees or residents of the Town. Safety and security are the responsibility of all employees and we rely on you to help us keep our premises secure.

10.9 Third Party Disclosures

From time to time, the Town of Plainfield may become involved in news stories or potential or actual legal proceedings of various kinds. When that happens, lawyers, former employees, newspapers, law enforcement agencies, and other outside persons may contact our employees to obtain information about the incident or the actual or potential lawsuit.

If you receive such a contact, you should not speak on behalf of the Town and should refer any call requesting the position of the Town to the Town Administrator. If you have any questions about this policy or are not certain what to do when such a contact is made, contact the Town Administrator



10.10 Workplace Privacy and Right to Inspect

The Town of Plainfield property, including but not limited to lockers, phones, computers, tablets, desks, work place areas, vehicles, or machinery, remains under the control of the Town and is subject to inspection at any time, without notice to any employees, and without their presence.

You should have no expectation of privacy in any of these areas. We assume no responsibility for the loss of, or damage to, your property maintained on Town premises including that kept in lockers and desks.

10.11 Access to Personnel and Medical Records Files

The Town of Plainfield maintains separate medical records files and personnel files for all employees. Files containing medical records are stored separate and apart from any Town-related records in a safe, locked, and inaccessible location. The medical file is the repository for sensitive and confidential information related to an individual's health, health benefits, health-related leave and/or accommodations, and benefits selections and coverage. Medical records are kept confidential in compliance with applicable laws and access is on a "need-to-know" basis only.

Department Heads, the Town Administrator, and the Selectboard may have access to your personnel file, excluding your medical file, for possible employment-related decisions. If you wish to review your personnel or medical records file, you must give the Town reasonable notice. Inspection must occur in the presence of a Town representative.

All requests by an outside party for information contained in your personnel file will be directed to the Town Administrator, who is the only person authorized to give out such information.

10.12 Nonsmoking Policy

The Town of Plainfield is concerned about the effect that smoking and secondhand smoke inhalation can have on its employees, citizens, and visitors. The Town prohibits discrimination against employees based on their off-premises, off-duty tobacco usage.

Smoking is not permitted inside any Town facilities. There are designated outside smoking areas at certain town properties.

10.13 Attendance

If you know ahead of time that you will be absent or late, provide as much advance notice to your Department Head as possible.

The Town of Plainfield reserves the right to apply unused vacation, sick time, or other paid time off to unauthorized absences. Absences resulting from approved leave, vacation, or legal requirements are exceptions to the policy.



10.14 Outside Employment

Outside employment sometimes may create a conflict of interest or affect the quality or value of your work performance or availability at the Town of Plainfield. Notify the Town Administrator of outside employment to assure that there is no conflict or concern. The Town recognizes that you may seek additional employment during off hours, but in all cases expects that any outside employment will not affect your attendance, job performance, productivity, work hours, or scheduling, or would otherwise adversely affect your ability to effectively perform your duties or in any way create a conflict of interest.

10.15 Criminal Activity/Arrests

The Town of Plainfield will report all criminal activity in accordance with applicable law. Involvement in criminal activity while employed by the Town, whether on or off Town property, is strictly prohibited. The exception to this is undercover work done by the Police Department.



11.0 Safety and Loss Prevention

11.1 Drug and Alcohol Policy

The Town of Plainfield is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive work environment. Consistent with this commitment, it is the intent of the Town to maintain a drug and alcohol-free workplace. Being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs (as classified under federal and state laws), or other impairing substances while on the job may pose a serious health and safety risk to others and will not be tolerated.

Prohibited Conduct

The Town expressly prohibits employees from engaging in the following activities when they are on duty, conducting Town business, or on Town premises (whether they are working):

- The use, abuse, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription medication that is not prescribed to the individual, or other impairing substances.
- The possession, sale, purchase, transfer, or transit of any illegal or unauthorized drug, including prescription medication that is not prescribed to the individual, or drug-related paraphernalia.
- The illegal use or abuse of prescription drugs.

While the use of marijuana has been legalized under some state laws for medicinal and/or recreational uses, it remains an illegal drug under federal law. The Town does not discriminate against employees solely on the basis of their lawful off-duty use of marijuana. You may not consume or be under the influence of marijuana while on duty, including while on call, or at work.

Nothing in this policy is meant to prohibit your appropriate use of over-the-counter medication or other medication that is legally prescribed under both federal and state law, as long as it does not impair your job performance or safety or the safety of others. If you take over-the-counter medication or other medication that is legally prescribed under both federal and state law to treat a disability, inform your Department Head if you believe the medication may impair your job performance, safety, or the safety of others, or if you believe you need a reasonable accommodation before reporting to work while under the influence of that medication.

Treatment

The Town may assist you in seeking treatment or rehabilitation for drug or alcohol dependency. In such cases, the Town may consider continuing your employment as long as concerns regarding safety, health, production, communication, or other work-related matters are adequately addressed. The Town may also require you to obtain a medical clearance, random testing, and a "one-strike" rule as a condition of continued employment.



Reasonable Suspicion

If you display any signs or symptoms of drug or alcohol use while on the job or during the performance of your duties, you will be confronted by your Department Head or the Town Administrator. You will be asked to explain your condition. A drug and/or alcohol test may be required if the explanation is not satisfactory.

Return to Work

If you were suspended due to a positive test and been given the opportunity to retain employment, you may be required to show that you have accomplished the following:

- Passed a subsequent drug test at personal expense
- Provided evidence of the completion of an approved substance abuse program
- Agreed to all post-return random follow-up testing

If you have a CDL license, you will be subject to pre-employment drug and alcohol screening, random testing, periodic testing, and post-accident testing governed by the US DOT regulations including follow-up testing at your expense.

Any employee working for the Police Department and testing positive for marijuana will be terminated per the NH Police Standards and Training.

11.2 General Safety Policy

It is the responsibility of all Town of Plainfield employees to maintain a healthy and safe work environment. Report all safety hazards and occupational illnesses or injuries to your Department Head, the Town Administrator, or a member of the Joint Loss Safety Committee as soon as reasonably possible and complete an occupational illness or injury form as needed.

11.3 Policy Against Workplace Violence

As the safety and security of employees, vendors, contractors, and the general public are in the best interests of The Town of Plainfield, we are committed to working with our employees to provide a work environment free from violence, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior.

Zero Tolerance Policy

The Town has a zero-tolerance policy regarding workplace violence and will not tolerate acts or threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior, either physical or verbal, that occurs in the workplace or other areas. This applies to management, co-workers, employees, and non-employees such as contractors, customers, and visitors.

Workplace violence can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm, damage to property, or any intentional behavior that may cause a person to feel threatened.



Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Physically injuring another person.
- Threatening to injure a person or damage property by any means, including verbal, written, direct, indirect, or electronic means.
- Taking any action to place a person in reasonable fear of imminent harm or offensive contact.
- Possessing, brandishing, or using a firearm on Town property or while performing Town business except as permitted by state law.
- Violating a restraining order, order of protection, injunction against harassment, or other court order.

Note: In carrying out their duties, police officers are exempt from the above.

Reporting Incidents of Violence

Report to your Department Head or Town Administrator any behavior that compromises the Town's ability to maintain a safe work environment. All reports will be timely investigated and kept confidential to the extent possible. You are expected to cooperate in any investigation of workplace violence. See Addendum regarding reporting for the Police Department.

Violations

Violating this policy may subject an employee to criminal charges as well as discipline.

Retaliation

Victims and witnesses of workplace violence will not be retaliated against in any manner.

If you initiate, participate, are involved in retaliation, or obstruct an investigation into conduct prohibited by this policy, you may be subject to discipline

If you believe you have been wrongfully retaliated against, immediately report the matter to the Town Administrator or the Selectboard.

11.4 Seatbelts

Seatbelts are required to be worn in all Town vehicles and on any Town-related travel.



12.0 Conclusion of Employment

12.1 Abandonment

If you fail to show up for work or fail to call in with an acceptable reason for the absence for a period of three (3) consecutively scheduled work days, you will be considered to have abandoned your job and voluntarily resigned from the Town of Plainfield.

12.2 Resignation

The Town of Plainfield hopes that your employment with the Town will be a mutually rewarding experience; however, the Town acknowledges that varying circumstances can cause you to resign employment. The Town intends to handle any resignation in a professional manner with minimal disruption to the workplace.

Notice

The Town requests that you provide a minimum of two (2) weeks' notice of your resignation. If you are a Department Head, you are requested to provide a minimum of four (4) weeks' notice. Provide a written resignation letter to your Department Head/Town Administrator/Selectboard. The Town reserves the right to provide you with pay in lieu of working during the notice period.

Final Pay

The Town will pay separated employees in accordance with applicable laws and other sections of this Handbook.

Notify the Town if your address changes during the calendar year in which resignation occurs to ensure tax information is sent to the correct address.

Return of Property

Return all Town property at the time of separation, such as uniforms, cellphones, keys, tools, laptops, credit cards, and identification cards.

12.3 Retirement

Employees should access the NH Retirement System website to find out more about their retirement benefits and options.

Notice of Retirement

Regular employees are required to give the Town ninety (90) days written notice upon deciding to retire. Department heads are required to give six (6) months written notice upon the decision to retire in order for the Town to be able to recruit and train a replacement.



Retirement Incentive

If an employee is qualified to receive a NH Retirement System benefit, has over 10 years of continuous service, and has given the required notice to the Selectboard, the following sick leave reimbursement will apply at retirement:

1. 10-14 years of service – 40% of pay for up to 480 hours of accumulated, unused sick time.
2. 15-19 years of service – 50% of pay for up to 480 hours of accumulated, unused sick time.
3. 20-24 years of service – 60% of pay for up to 480 hours of accumulated, unused sick time.
4. 25-29 years of service – 70% of pay for up to 480 hours of accumulated, unused sick time.
5. 30-34 years of service – 80% of pay for up to 480 hours of accumulated, unused sick time.
6. 35-39 years of service – 90% of pay for up to 480 hours of accumulated, unused sick time.
7. Over 40 years of service – 100% of pay for up to 480 hours of accumulated, unused sick time.

In addition, at retirement per the criteria of the NHRS, if an employee retires and is currently participating in the Town of Plainfield health insurance plan, they will be allowed to remain on the group insurance plan entirely at their own expense until they enroll in another employer health insurance plan or Medicare.

Any exceptions to the above retirement incentive must be discussed and approved by the Selectboard.

12.4 Exit Interview

You may be asked to participate in an exit interview when your employment ends. The purpose of the exit interview is to provide management with greater insight into your decision to leave employment; identify any trends requiring attention or opportunities for improvement; and to assist the Town in developing effective recruitment and retention strategies. Your cooperation in the exit interview process is appreciated.

12.5 Post-Employment References

The Town of Plainfield's policy is to confirm dates of employment and job title only. You should submit or forward any requests for employment verification to the Town Administrator.

VIOLATION OF ONE OR MORE POLICIES IN THIS HANDBOOK MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT.





Acknowledgment of Receipt and Understanding

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Town of Plainfield Employee Handbook (“Handbook”) and that I have read it, understand it, and agree to comply with it. I understand that the Town has the maximum discretion permitted by law to interpret, administer, change, modify, or delete the rules, regulations, procedures, and benefits contained in the Handbook at any time with or without notice. No statement or representation by a Department Head, the Town Administrator, or any other employee, whether oral or written, can supplement or modify this Handbook. Changes can only be made if approved in writing by the Selectboard of the Town. I also understand that any delay or failure by the Town to enforce any rule, regulation, or procedure contained in the Handbook does not constitute a waiver on behalf of the Town or affect the right of the Town to enforce such rule, regulation, or procedure in the future.

This Handbook supersedes any previous handbook or policy statements, whether written or oral, issued by The Town of Plainfield. This Handbook is an attempt to keep you informed of the terms and conditions of your employment, including the Town of Plainfield policies and procedures. The Handbook is not an employment contract. The Town reserves the right to revise, add, or delete from this Handbook at any time and with or without notice as the Town determines to be in Town’s best interest, except the policy concerning at-will employment. When changes are made to the policies and guidelines contained herein, The Town will endeavor to communicate them in a timely fashion, typically in a written supplement to the Handbook or in a posting on Town bulletin boards.

I understand that neither this Handbook nor any other communication by a management representative or a member of the Selectboard, whether oral or written, is intended in any way to create a contract of employment. I further understand that, unless I have a written employment agreement signed by an authorized Town representative, I am employed "at-will" and nothing contained in this Handbook modifies my "at-will" employment status. This means I may be terminated at any time, without any notice or for any lawful reason. I understand what this means and have had an opportunity to ask any questions I have about my employment status or other policy. This Handbook supersedes any previous handbook or policy statements, whether written or oral, issued by The Town of Plainfield.

VIOLATION OF ONE OR MORE POLICIES IN THIS HANDBOOK MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT.

If I have any questions about the content or interpretation of this handbook, I will contact the Town Administrator.

Signature

Date

Print Name





ADDENDUM RELATED TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

P0.1 Powers of the Police Chief and Dismissal

The Police Chief is appointed and hired by the Selectboard. The Chief has the authority to direct and control all employees of their department in their normal course of duty and shall be responsible for the efficient and economical use of all department equipment. The Chief shall be subject to suspension without pay or dismissal only for cause, and after they have been presented with a written specification of the reason(s). Upon such suspension or dismissal, the Police Chief shall be entitled to a hearing, on the merits and reasonableness of the action, in superior court of Sullivan County, provided that they petition the clerk of the superior court for such a hearing within 45 days of their suspension or dismissal. The court shall have the power to affirm, modify, or negate such suspension or dismissal, based upon its findings. (RSA 105:2 - A)

P4.5 Complaint Policy for the Police Department

While the Town has an Open-Door Complaint policy, the police department is under a structured, para-military chain of command. Concerns are to be brought to the attention of the Police Chief in writing. The complaint will be reviewed, and a response given to the employee in writing. If the employee wishes to appeal the decision of the Police Chief, the complaint can be brought to the Selectboard. The decision of the Selectboard is final.

P5.3 Introductory Period for Police Officers

Officers' introductory period may be up to one year due to the training requirements.

P5.4 Training for Police Officers

Training for law enforcement is critical. Each sworn officer must have 20 hours of annual training and in addition, training in first aid, CPR, and firearms. All training must meet the NH Police Standards & Training requirements and be sworn in an affidavit to the Academy.

P5.5 Employment Requirements for Police Officers

Officers must complete a physical agility test, polygraph test, psychological tests, and background checks as required by NH Police Standards. Job offers are contingent on an officer obtaining full or part-time Police Officer Certification by the NH Police Standards and Training Council. All officers must be approved and appointed by the Selectboard.

P6.7 Call Back Pay for Police Officers

If you are an hourly, full-time employee and are called back to work without prior notice on the same day after once leaving work or before the next regular starting time, you shall be compensated at one and one-half times your normal hourly rate for the hours worked and shall



be guaranteed (3) hours pay. If a second call back occurs within three hours of a first, no additional wages will be paid.

P6.8 On Call Pay for Police Officers

Officers receive two hours of regular hourly pay for being on call for eight hours. This is in addition to any pay for time worked when called in to work.

P11.3 Reporting Incidents of Violence

In reporting incidents of violence, police officers have the duty to report. During investigations, the Miranda or Garrity warnings must be read before being questioned by investigators.

We are committed to complying with all federal and state laws (RSA 105) and directives as they apply to police officers and police departments.

For more information on the Police Department, see Manual for the Police Department - Town of Plainfield.