

INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE

The purpose for these policies and procedures is to provide a uniform system of personnel administration throughout the city.

II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In the event of any conflict between these policies and any City ordinance, City Charter, State or Federal law, the terms and conditions of that ordinance, charter, rule or law shall prevail. In the event of any conflict between these policies and procedures and any internal departmental rules, the personnel policies and procedures shall prevail. In the event of the amendment of any ordinance, rule or law incorporated in this document or upon which these provisions rely, these policies shall be deemed amended in conformance with those changes.

The issuance of this manual does not constitute a contract between the City and its employees.

A. OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that recruitment, selection, placement, promotion, retention and separation of City employees are based upon employee's qualifications and fitness, and are in compliance with Federal and State laws;

- To promote communication between Department Directors, supervisors and employees; and
- To ensure, protect and clarify the rights and responsibilities of employees.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Manager has the general authority and responsibility to control all departments and divisions that may be created by the City Commission/HWWS Utility Board of Trustees and to supervise and direct all employees of the City. The exceptions to this authority are matters reserved to the City Commission by Charter provisions. The Manager may delegate authority and/or assign responsibility for personnel management as necessary.

The Human Resources Director shall advise and support management in all areas, including employee-management relations; introductory and career development; classification; compensation; benefits; retirement programs; and morale.

Department Directors are responsible for enforcing these policies and for cooperating with the Human Resources Director and his/her designee(s) on all matters pertinent to their organizational units. All employees have a responsibility and role in the implementation of these policies and procedures.

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C. APPLICABILITY

These policies and procedures apply to all City employees including the Waterworks System, except in the following circumstances:

- When policies and procedures are inconsistent with the proper application of the Local Government Code Chapter 143 of the State Firemen's and Policemen's Civil Service Law and standard operating procedures.
- When specific appointment and removal power is vested in the City Commission/HWWS Utility Board of Trustees by the City Charter for the position of Manager.
- For elected officials, members of appointed boards or commissions, persons employed under contract to supply professional and technical services, and personnel appointed to serve without pay.

D. DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS

These policies and procedures will be distributed to all City employees.

E. MANUAL REVISION AND MAINTENANCE

The Human Resources Department is delegated the responsibility for developing, administering, interpreting and maintaining these policies and procedures. The Manager may make non-substantive changes or amendments to these policies and proce-

dures as deemed necessary for clarification and make exceptions when in the best interest of the City.

All employees are responsible for updating the personnel policy manual in their custody.

Copies of new and revised policies and procedures will be given to each department.

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The general provisions include at-will, equal employment opportunity, and personnel file provisions.

A. AT WILL PROVISIONS

All employees of the City of Harlingen, except for those covered by Civil Service, are at-will employees and have no expectation of continued employment, promotion or any other personnel benefit including but not limited to, sick leave, vacation leave, compensatory time, group health and life insurance except as required by federal and state law.

B. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Equal employment opportunity shall be assured in the City service and affirmative action provided in its administration. Discrimination against any person in recruitment, examination, appointment, introductory period, promotion, retention, discipline, or any other aspect of personnel administra-

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tion because of race, color, age, sex, national origin, religion or disability is prohibited.

Discrimination on the basis of age, sex, or physical disability is prohibited, except where specific age, sex or physical requirements are a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to the proper and efficient operation of the City.

C. PERSONNEL FILES

The Human Resources Department shall maintain the official personnel files for all employees.

It is important that accurate, current records be maintained for benefits and employment purposes. Therefore, all employees are required to notify Human Resources immediately if there is any change in relevant personal or employment information such as changes in address, phone numbers, marital status, emergency contact, insurance beneficiary, number of dependents or legal name.

All information contained in the employee's personnel file is the property of the City and is not available for review by anyone other than the employee, his or her supervisor, Department Director, City Manager, City Attorney and their staff, and the Human Resources department and as otherwise required by law. Employees may examine their personnel files; however, these documents may not be removed from the City's premises or photocopied without the specific authorization of the Human Resources Director.

If an employee believes that information in their personnel file is incorrect, he/she can request to place a written statement of disagreement in the file.

The City of Harlingen considers falsification of personnel records to be a serious offense, and upon discovery can lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.