



Town of Freedom Personnel Handbook
Approved - September 8, 2026

Table of Contents

<i>ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>DEFINITIONS/EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>GENERAL PROVISIONS.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>EMPLOYEE LEAVE BENEFITS.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HEALTH INSURANCE, RETIREMENT, DISABILITY.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>ON THE JOB.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>COMPUTER SECURITY POLICY.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>EMPLOYEE SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICIES.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>APPENDICES.....</i>	<i>20</i>

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to provide all employees of the Town of Freedom a consistent and clear outline of personnel policies and expectations. This Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior policies, procedures, and practices of the Town.

The policies outlined in this Handbook may require change from time to time. The Freedom Select Board reserves the right to change, revise, or eliminate any of the policies, procedures, or benefits described in this Handbook at any time, in its sole discretion. If and when provisions are changed, employees will receive an updated version. The Select Board also retains the right to make decisions involving personnel as needed in order to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to personnel and the Town.

In general, it is important to the Town of Freedom that all persons hired by the Town work in a respectful and harmonious environment. This will lead to greater productivity and fulfillment within the workplace. This Handbook is designed to cultivate a positive, professional, and enjoyable work environment.

This Handbook is not, and should not be construed as, an expressed or implied contract and does not modify any existing status of any Town personnel nor does it guarantee any fixed terms and conditions of work and/or benefits.

For the purposes of this document, the term “personnel” includes all individuals on the payroll of the town, whether as an employee or an elected or appointed official. Further classifications of employees are given in the following sections. **Personnel may be subject to a criminal records check.** Some positions may also require passing a physical, a check of their driving history, and passing unannounced, random, drug tests. A separate **Town of Freedom Volunteer Handbook** is being developed for volunteers serving on Town Boards and Committees.

DEFINITIONS/EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

I. DEFINITIONS/EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

A. APPOINTING AUTHORITY –The Select Board is the appointing authority.

B. APPOINTED–For purposes of this manual, **appointed refers to positions that are** hired by the Select Board, and voted by the majority of the Select Board. Appointments to volunteer positions are covered by the Select Board Policy - [Town Board and Committee Vacancies and Appointments Policy](#).

C. ELECTED OFFICIALS - Freedom’s elected officials are individuals who were listed on a legal ballot and elected by majority vote during a duly-scheduled election for position(s) within Town government.

D. EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS –At the time you are hired, you are classified as a full-time, part-time, or temporary employee and are informed whether you qualify for

overtime pay. If you are unsure which job classification pertains to you, please ask your Department Head or the Select Board.

- a. **FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES**—Individuals who work 32 hours per week or more.
 - b. **PART-TIME EMPLOYEES**—Individuals who, on average, work fewer than 32 hours per week are considered to be part-time employees.
 - c. **TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES**—Individuals who are hired for a specific period of time for the completion of a specific project. Seasonal employees, those hired to work for twenty-six (26) weeks or less, are considered to be temporary employees.
- E. **NON-EXEMPT AND EXEMPT EMPLOYEES** - All employees will be classified as either “exempt” or “non-exempt.” Exempt employees are paid on a salary basis and their duties and responsibilities allow them to be considered exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”). Therefore, these employees are not eligible to receive overtime pay. Non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay in accordance with the FLSA.

FLSA does not apply to elected or appointed personnel. Upon hiring, employees are told whether they are classified as exempt or non-exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA. If you have questions about whether you are classified as exempt or non-exempt under the FLSA, please contact the Town Treasurer.
- F. **FIRE FIGHTERS** - Fire fighters are volunteers and therefore are not eligible for benefits described in this Handbook, except where noted or to the extent required by State or Federal
- G. **SICK TIME (PTO SICK)**: Paid time off available to all employees for the specific purpose of attending to medical needs of employees or their household members.
- H. **VACATION (PTO VACATION)**: Paid time off that is earned per hours worked and according to years of service.
- I. **SUPERVISORS** - The person or persons who issue day-to-day tasks and have oversight of specific personnel.
- J. **WORKPLACE**—means not only the Town’s buildings, facilities and properties, but also any remote job site to which you may be assigned to work and any vehicle you may be traveling in or using for the Town’s business.
- K. **WORK WEEK**: Sunday through midnight the following Saturday.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

II. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Select Board of the Town of Freedom declares their intent that the Town will pursue a policy of non-discrimination in personnel practices, including: recruiting, hiring, opportunities for transfer and promotion, conditions or privileges of employment, as well as compensation and benefits. Such practices or procedures shall not favor or penalize any person because of race, creed, color, sex, marital status, national origin, age, physical handicap, where these are not found to be bona fide occupational qualifications. The Town recognizes its responsibility to enhance the purposes set forth in the Maine Human Rights Act as well as Federal statutes which may apply as a result of its Federal grant activities.

B. THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”) and the Maine Human Rights Act (Title 5 Chapter 337), the Town prohibits any form of discrimination in [hiring](#) or in any terms and conditions of employment against individuals with physical or mental disabilities. We will make every effort to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified individuals with disabilities in the application process, and in performing essential job functions, so as to afford enjoyment of the same benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by employees without disabilities.

Please notify the Select Board if, because of a disability, you require an accommodation to perform the essential functions of your job. You may be asked to provide medical information regarding your disability and possible accommodations, and we expect that you will engage in this interactive process in good faith so that we may determine eligibility for accommodation and identify reasonable accommodations. We will maintain all medical information in a confidential manner in accordance with the ADA, and will provide reasonable accommodations as required by law. The Town may decline to provide accommodations to individuals who are not qualified within the meaning of the law, and may also decline to provide accommodations that are not reasonable or that cause an undue hardship.

C. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All personnel are required to comply with our standards of conduct, which are intended to promote consistency, harmony, and satisfaction for both personnel and the Town in a job well done. We expect all personnel will be considerate of each other and their job in the following ways:

- Come to work on time and work through your shift without extended breaks or lunch periods.
- Be considerate. Treat others with honesty and respect, the way you would want them to treat you.
- Apply yourself to your work to the best of your ability.
- Come to work ready to work, i.e. well rested and free of intoxicants.
- Respect the property of others, whether Town property or personal property.

See also [Section IV - “On The Job”](#) for more guidance on personnel expectations.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

III. TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

A. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The Selectboard develops, approves and updates Job Descriptions for all positions as needed, including the qualifications for the named position. Job Descriptions are used during the hiring process to identify the duties and requirements of the position and are also utilized in the **Annual Performance Evaluation**.

Each employee will receive a job description identifying the nature of their work, job responsibilities, position requirements, and the training/experience required. The job description will identify any physical requirements for the position (for example, the employee must be able to lift up to 50 pounds).

Over time, the qualifications required for any specific position may change. No changes to position qualifications or job descriptions will take effect without formal review and approval by the Select Board to ensure fairness, consistency, and alignment with organizational needs.

B. SUPERVISION, TRAINING, ASSIGNMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Each position will have a supervisor named. The supervisor, with oversight by the Select Board, may set the qualifications required for each employee position.

Specific employee assignments are the responsibility of the supervisor. Assignments must be related to the employee's job description. Each employee is expected to perform the duties assigned. Training will be provided, in a reasonable and financially responsible manner, to ensure that the current employee in the position remains qualified to perform the duties of the role.

C. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All non-elected employees are subject to a **3-month probationary period** when hired. The probationary period provides employees the opportunity to become acquainted with the job and to learn all necessary skills.

At the end of the first 3-months, the supervisor is responsible for checking to see that the probationary employee:

- is learning the duties of the job
- is capable of performing all the duties of the position
- shows interpersonal skills, attitude and behavior that aligns with the goals of the position
- follows all laws, rules, and policies.

For the probationary review, the Supervisor must prepare a brief written assessment describing the employee's success in meeting their responsibilities and discuss this assessment with the Employee to allow for dialogue that can improve performance, identify gaps in training and otherwise build rapport for a constructive working relationship. Following this, the Supervisor will make a

recommendation to the Selectboard regarding whether to continue or terminate the employee's position.

If at any time during the probationary period, the employee is not succeeding in the position for any of the reasons stated above, the probationary employee may be terminated without the right to appeal or hearing. Before any action, positive or negative, is taken against an employee, the Select Board must review the action proposed by the Supervisor and approve or deny the proposed action in an Executive Session for personnel matters.

If the employee successfully completes the probationary period, this will be acknowledged by letter from their supervisor, along with any guidance for improvement. There will not be a pay increase at the end of the probationary period.

D. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:

Each employee will have an **Annual Performance Evaluation** by his/her Supervisor, with oversight by the Select Board.

1. All employee evaluations must be completed at the one-year anniversary of the hiring date and every year thereafter.
2. For the annual evaluation, the supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the following factors or others:
 - a) job performance compared to the position's job description
 - b) the employee's attitude and actions while working;
 - c) whether the employee has followed all laws, regulations, and policies in the preceding year's work.
 - d) areas of improvement needed and training needs
 - e) areas in which the employee is working above expectations,
 - f) Pay rate
3. There should be no surprises to the employee in this evaluation. This means that during the course of the year, problems with any of the factors listed above must have been brought to the employee's attention, generally in writing. Ideally, this evaluation aims to promote clear communication between the employee and their supervisor. The evaluation discussion is a two-way conversation in which the employee may also provide feedback.
4. Following the Annual Performance Evaluation meeting, the supervisor will prepare a written **Annual Performance Evaluation Report**, sign it, and share with the employee. All evaluations must be signed by the employee, his/her Supervisor, and at least one Select Board member.
5. The employee's signature on the **Annual Performance Evaluation Report** indicates she or he has seen the evaluation and understands it. The employee's signature does not indicate agreement or disagreement with the content of the evaluation. Once signed, the report will be filed in the employee personnel file. If the employee does not sign the **Annual Performance Evaluation Report** or disagrees with the evaluation, they may request a meeting with the Select Board to discuss.
6. Merit raises will be considered by the Select Board based on these evaluations and be given in the next budget year at the Board's discretion.
7. Cost of Living Adjustment ("COLA") increases will be determined by the Budget Committee.

E. PERSONNEL RECORDS

The Town of Freedom maintains certain records containing job-related information on all employees to ensure compliance with state and federal law and to keep a record of your progress as an employee. You may request to inspect your own personnel file during normal office hours on your own time, and must be arranged through the Select Board and the Clerk. You may read your personnel file, but you may not remove any portion of the file. Upon request, you will be provided with a copy of all or part of your personnel file.

1. If upon inspection of your personnel file, you disagree with any of the information contained in the file, you may submit a written statement explaining your version of the information together with evidence supporting such version. The Town of Freedom will maintain your statement as part of your personnel file and will include the statement in any transmittal of the file to a third party.
2. It is important that your personnel file contains accurate updated information regarding who should be contacted in case of emergency. Please notify the Town Clerk as soon as possible of any changes in your name, address, telephone number, marital status, dependents and/or beneficiaries.

F. PROMOTIONS/ CHANGE OF POSITION

Any **non-elected employee** promoted to a new position or changing to a different position will start that new position in a probationary period. If the employee is changing from part-time to full-time or vice versa, the employee's benefits package will be changed to that included with their new position. The effective date of that change will be the first day worked in the new position.

G. COMPENSATION AND HOURS OF WORK

1. For all elected and non-elected positions, compensation will be determined by the Select Board, with input from the Budget Committee.
2. The Town's work week begins on Sunday at 12:00 a.m. and ends on Saturday at 11:59 p.m. Employee work schedules may vary depending on your job and department. For non-elected employees, Your supervisor or the Select Board will inform you of your expected hours of work. An employee called into work for emergencies will be paid a minimum of three (3) hours at his/her usual hourly rate.
3. Most employees work at a fixed hourly rate. The exception to this is the Department of Public Works. All Dept. of Public Works employees may be paid different hourly rates depending on the job task involved. Hours worked in each task must be recorded to ensure accurate wages. The wage sheets for different tasks must be approved by the Select Board.
4. **Non-exempt employees** will be paid overtime when they work over 40 hours in a week.

H. PAYROLL

1. **Timecards and reporting of hours worked:** Weekly timecards must be submitted by all non-salaried employees on Monday morning for the prior week worked. It is important that employees be very accurate in reporting time worked. This ensures that employees will be paid accurately. Falsification of time records could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment. Furthermore, falsification of time cards could be theft from the Town, and criminal charges may be filed.
2. **Pay Periods:** Employees will be paid biweekly. Employees will be paid for hours worked during the two calendar weeks preceding payday. Pay is disbursed via direct deposit electronic payments.
3. **Payroll Deductions:** Payroll deductions required by state and federal law include federal withholding, social security tax, and wage garnishments as required by law (i.e. child support payments, court-ordered payments, IRS garnishments). If authorized by an eligible employee, the Town will also make payroll deductions for health insurance, savings plans, and voluntary contributions to a retirement plan. These deductions will be itemized on the employee's payroll receipt.
4. **Payroll corrections:** Employees are expected to review their pay stubs (including electronic payments) for errors. If a mistake is found, it should be reported to the employee's Supervisor or the Select Board immediately. Questions and concerns regarding pay and deductions will be investigated and addressed promptly. The Select Board will communicate any errors to the Treasurer. Errors will be corrected either via a corrected check or a check reimbursing the employee for the error, whichever is more practical under the circumstances.

I. Mileage Reimbursement

It is the policy of the Select Board of the Town of Freedom to reimburse town employees for vehicle mileage incurred by the employee when operating his/her own personal vehicle, and when running errands or doing business for the town beyond the town limits. The amount of reimbursement during the course of the year shall not exceed the budget, as approved at the annual town meeting. The rate for reimbursement is determined annually by the State of Maine. Each employee must turn in a mileage slip to the Town Treasurer in order to receive reimbursement.

J. Town Office Key and Code Security

Employees may be given keys or codes to access town properties. Employees will follow the Town Office Key and Code Security Policy in Appendix 1.

EMPLOYEE LEAVE BENEFITS

IV. HOLIDAYS, PAID TIME OFF AND OTHER LEAVE BENEFITS

A. HOLIDAY PAY FOR HOURLY PERSONNEL

1. The following holidays will be paid days off for **full-time** employees (who work 32 hours per week or more) whether an hourly employee or salaried. **The day off will be taken on the holiday.** For hourly employees, the holiday pay is granted only if it is a regular work day. Work required of employees on holidays and authorized by the Select Board in the case of an emergency will be paid time-and-a-half, in addition to the holiday pay.
 - a) New Year's Day
 - b) Martin Luther King Day
 - c) Presidents' Day
 - d) Patriots' Day
 - e) Memorial Day
 - f) Juneteenth
 - g) Independence Day
 - h) Labor Day
 - i) Indigenous People's Day
 - j) Veterans Day
 - k) Thanksgiving Day
 - l) Thanksgiving Friday
 - m) Christmas Day
2. Part-time employees have the option to choose an alternate day to work if they are not eligible for a paid holiday, in order to meet their weekly hours.
3. This notice shall be posted in the Town Garage, Town Office, and on the Town Website on an annual basis at the beginning of each calendar year.

B. VACATION

1. All full time employees shall receive paid vacation time at their pay rate according to the following schedule:
 - a) Years one thru five: forty hours/calendar yr
 - b) Six years plus: eighty hours/calendar yr
2. New employees may not use accrued vacation time until they have been on the job for a minimum of 6 months.
3. Hours accrued may be used anytime but vacation hours do not carry over past the anniversary date of employment. (If 40 hours accrue during year 1 but only 35 hours are used, the remaining 5 hours do not carry over to the new employment year.)
4. Employees will not be paid for vacation time not used in the calendar year.

C. SICK TIME - PAID TIME OFF FOR ILLNESS (PTO/SICK)

1. Paid time off for illness (PTO/SICK) time is intended for use during an illness or attending personal doctor or other personal appointments, or caring for a family member who is ill..
2. All part-time employees of the Town as designated by the Select Board shall earn one hour of PTO/SICK time for every forty hours of work performed. No more than 40 hours of PTO/SICK time earned but not used can be carried forward to the next calendar year. Unused PTO/SICK time over 40 hours at year end will be paid as wages. All full- time employees as designated by the Select Board shall receive fifty-two hours of PTO/SICK time on January 1 of each calendar year. Hours not used by full time employees cannot be carried forward to the next year and are not paid as wages in the next year.

D. PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Effective May 1, Maine Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) came into effect. It is a statewide program that ensures Mainers can take time away from work for life's most critical moments — without losing their income or their job. Eligible workers can apply for up to 12 weeks of paid time to step away for medical, parental, family care, military family, or safe leave.

See Maine Department of Labor for current rules:

<https://www.maine.gov/paidleave/workers/>

Contact the Town Treasurer to determine if you qualify for benefits. Implementation of this program will follow state law and policy.

1. **Eligibility:** Only workers who have met the baseline earnings requirement according to Maine Sept. Of Labor are eligible to apply.
2. **What is covered:**
 - a) **Medical Leave:** For times when a serious health condition keeps you from working.
 - b) **Parental Leave:** Time to bond with a new child.
 - c) **Family Care Leave:** Time to care for a loved one with a serious health condition.
 - d) **Military Family Leave:** Time to prepare for a family member's deployment.
 - e) **Safe Leave:** Time to find safety from abuse or violence.
3. **How to apply:**
 - a) **Talk to your employer** at least 30 days before your leave, unless it is an emergency. Start by having a conversation with your employer, then put your leave request in writing.
 - b) **Submit an application** with Aflac, online or by phone.
 - c) **Aflac will send the required forms** based on why you need leave.
 - d) **Receive approval and partial wage replacement**, so you can focus on what matters.

- e) **Return to your job.** Your position, or an equivalent one, will be protected if you've been employed by your employer for at least 120 consecutive days

Employees will be returned to the same or an equivalent job upon their return to work.

The Town will continue to make the same level of payment for an employee's health insurance premium during the twelve (12)-week leave as it does during the rest of the year. The balance of the health insurance premium must be paid by the employee, either through direct payment to the insurance company, or through the employee's use of paid leave by the Town.

E. MILITARY LEAVE

Employees who serve in the United States armed forces or National Guard (collectively referred to as "uniformed services") will be provided with leaves of absence for such service or training in connection with such service in accordance with the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act ("USERRA").

Military leaves of absence will be unpaid, unless otherwise required by law. You may elect to take part of, or all of, your accrued vacation time during your military leave of absence, but you are not required to do so.

- 1 **Notice of Leave:** An employee needing time away from work for service or training in the uniformed services must notify their Department Head or the Select Board as soon as the employee is aware of the need for leave. An employee's request for leave may include reasonable time off to get personal business in order prior to commencing a deployment. Such pre-military leave absence will be unpaid, unless the service member chooses to use his/her paid time off.
2. **Health Coverage:** If a military leave lasts less than 31 days, the Town and the employee will continue to pay their usual shares of the health insurance premium. The employee's share of health insurance premium may be paid in advance or upon return through payroll deductions. If a military leave lasts 31 days or more, the Town will follow federal and state law governing continuation of coverage.
3. **Paid time off:** . The employee is entitled, under Maine law, to use accrued time off between completion of deployment and return to work for the Town.
4. **Reporting back to work:** Maine law provides specific timeframes to report back after your service ends, depending on how long you were away.
5. **Disability:** If you become disabled during service and cannot perform your previous job, you are entitled to a different job that you can perform with similar seniority, status, and pay.
6. **Protection after re-employment:** You cannot be discharged without cause for up to one year after returning from service.

7. **Reinstatement:** The Town of Freedom will reinstate eligible employees who have returned from deployment promptly, provided the employee was not dishonorably discharged, or discharged for other punitive reasons. Eligibility for reemployment will be determined with reference to USERRA and its implementing regulations, and any State laws that apply. Employees seeking reinstatement may be asked to provide documentation of the timeliness of the reinstatement request, the total time spent on deployment, and/or a statement that the reason for discharge from deployment or service is not disqualifying. Employees cannot waive their reemployment rights before being released from uniformed service.

Disabled Service Members: If a returning employee was disabled or a disability was aggravated during uniformed service, the Town of Freedom will make reasonable accommodations and efforts to help the employee become qualified to perform the duties of his or her reemployment position.

8. **Statement Against Discrimination and Retaliation:** The Town of Freedom will not discriminate in hiring, employment, reemployment, or any benefits of employment against any individual because of that individual's service in the United States uniformed services. The Town also will not tolerate any retaliation against any individuals because of their service in the uniformed services or their engagement in any other activities protected under USERRA.

9. **Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Select Board.**

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HEALTH INSURANCE, RETIREMENT, DISABILITY

V. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - Health Insurance, Retirement, Disability

If any questions arise regarding any of the benefits identified in this Handbook, please refer to the documents and summary plan descriptions from the benefit provider rather than the summaries contained in this Handbook. This Handbook is not contractual in nature and does not guarantee any continuance of benefits.

A. Employee Health Insurance Policy

It is the policy of the Selectmen of the Town of Freedom to share the cost of a health insurance benefit from the Maine Municipal Health Insurance Trust. Benefits will vary based upon the number of hours that the employee works for the Town.

1. For full-time employees (working at least 32 hours per week) and expected to work for 52 weeks or one year, as determined by the Select Board, the Town will pay 80% of the cost of individual insurance. (The Selectboard retains discretion to increase the share of employee health coverage offered).

2. For employees working 24-32 hours per week and expected to work for 52 weeks or one year, as determined by the Select Board, the Town will pay 60% of the cost.
3. Anyone working less than 24 hours per week will not qualify but can buy their insurance through the Maine Municipal Health Insurance Trust at their own cost.
4. The percentage not paid by the Town is the responsibility of the employee and will be deducted from their pay.
5. The Select Board will consult with the underwriter from the Health Insurance Trust and with the Freedom Budget Committee each year to determine which plan will be made available to employees.
6. Family coverage is offered by the Health Insurance Trust, but the Town will not pay for it. Eligible employees may get this family coverage at their own cost.
7. For new employees that are eligible for employee health insurance, these benefits will begin on the first day of the month following the first day of employment. (Ex: If the first date a new employee starts on the job November 20, the first date they will be eligible for their benefits would be December 1.)

B. RETIREMENT PLAN POLICY FOR TOWN EMPLOYEES

1. The Town of Freedom will sponsor a retirement program for its eligible employees under the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Code.
2. The Plan will be a SIMPLE IRA.
3. The Town will match a regular contribution (at least monthly) up to 3% of each employee's compensation. The match will only be made if the employee also contributes at least 3% of his or her eligible compensation. Compensation shall consist of wages and/or salary only and will not include benefits or expense reimbursements. Employees may, at their option, make additional tax deferred contributions subject to the limitations of The Plan.
4. An eligible employee shall be one who:
 - a. Shall have reached the age of 18 years, and
 - b. Is expected to earn at least \$5000 during the current year.

C. SHORT AND LONG-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

The Town of Freedom does not offer short or long-term disability insurance.

D. COBRA

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (“COBRA”) provides eligible employees and their eligible dependents with the opportunity to continue medical and dental insurance for a period of time, at their own expense, if they would otherwise lose coverage due to certain qualifying reasons. Please see the Select Board for more information.

E. WORKERS’ COMPENSATION INSURANCE AND REPORTING WORKPLACE INJURIES

The Town of Freedom maintains a Workmen’s Compensation Policy through the Maine Municipal Association which covers employee on-the-job injuries. We ask for your assistance in alerting the Town to any condition which could contribute to an employee accident. The Town of Freedom expects all employees to follow safety precautions and procedures. All injuries, no matter how small, must be reported to the Select Board within 7 days. The Select Board or Workmen’s Compensation provider has the right to investigate any and all claims. The Workmen’s Compensation insurance provider will make final determination on any and all claims. For more information, contact your Supervisor or the Select Board.

For more information about Workers Compensation Laws visit the state website here:

https://www.maine.gov/wcb/Departments/businessservices/Facts_About_Workers_Comp_FINL_REV_Sept_2019.pdf

F. UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION:

Unemployment benefits are benefits provided by the State of Maine intended as temporary assistance for workers. You must meet certain eligibility conditions to receive unemployment benefits. For more information on Maine Unemployment please visit the Maine Department of Labor website. <https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/>

ON THE JOB

VI. ON THE JOB

A. ATTENDANCE:

Attendance and punctuality are important factors for your success as an employee of the Town. However, the Town is aware that emergencies, illnesses, or pressing personal business that cannot be scheduled outside work hours may arise.

1. If an employee is unable to report to work, or will arrive late, the employee must contact his/her Supervisor or a member of the Select Board. Please give as much time as possible to arrange for someone else to cover the position until the employee arrives. All employees should be aware that excessive absenteeism, lateness, or leaving early may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including

dismissal from employment.

2. Attendance records will be considered when evaluating requests for promotions, transfers, leaves of absence, and approved time off, as well as disciplinary, termination, and layoff decisions.

B. CONFIDENTIALITY:

Information and records relating to Town business, operations, plans, projects, strategies, employees, or citizens may in some cases be confidential. Therefore, employees must treat all matters accordingly. No Town information including documents, notes and records No Town information, including without limitation, documents, notes, files, records, or similar materials may be removed from the Town's Workplace without permission from the Select Board. Confidential information obtained through conversation or discourse may not be repeated without prior approval from the Select Board. Release of such information may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment. If there are any questions, please contact the Select Board for guidance.

C. PERSONAL DRESS CODE:

We expect all employees to come to work with a neat, well-groomed appearance and workplace-appropriate clothing. Any questions concerning the Town's dress code should be directed to your Department Head or the Select Board.

D. INCLEMENT WEATHER:

Employees generally are expected to report to work during inclement weather, even when schools are closed. However, there may be occasions when the Town Offices will be closed due to severe inclement weather. You should contact your Supervisor or the Select Board for information as to whether the Town Offices will be open for business.

1. If the Town's departments are not closed due to severe inclement weather, but you are unable to get to work, then you must call your Supervisor or a Select Board member to explain why you cannot get to work. If you do not come to work because of inclement weather, you must use your earned vacation time or sick days. If your earned benefits have been exhausted, you will not be paid for the time missed, unless otherwise required by law. You have the option to make-up hours lost with approval of your supervisor.
2. If you are an hourly employee and you come to work and the Town closes because of weather, loss of electricity or an emergency beyond our control, you will be paid a minimum of two (2) hours or the time you worked, whichever is greater.

E. MOTOR VEHICLE VIOLATIONS

Employees who operate Town vehicles are required within seventy-two (72) hours to notify their Supervisor or the Select Board if they have been convicted of or plead nolo contendere to any and all motor vehicle violations. If the license of any employee who operates a Town owned vehicle is suspended, revoked, or otherwise restricted, the employee must notify his/her Department Head immediately. No employee is authorized to operate any Town owned vehicle while his/her license is under revocation or suspension. Employees who are required to, but are unable to drive, and/or who fail to comply with this policy, may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

F. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

The Town expects its employees and officials to conform to the highest ethical and legal standards. Employees are required to refrain from engaging in any activities that create an actual conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Examples of conduct and behavior that would violate this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Receiving any gifts or favors in any amount or value from members of the public, or from any Town vendors or suppliers.
2. Attempting to influence Town decisions in a way that would benefit self, family members or friends.
3. Using, directly or indirectly, Town funds, assets, or other resources for personal gain.

Employees with any questions regarding these guidelines are required to discuss them with their Supervisor or the Select Board prior to engaging in any activity or conduct that may violate this policy, as violations may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

COMPUTER SECURITY POLICY

VII. COMPUTER SECURITY POLICY:

The town of Freedom is committed to safe and appropriate use of its computer resources. The Town [Computer Security Policy and Sign-off sheet](#) are found in **Appendix 2**.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICIES

VIII. EMPLOYEE SAFETY AND HEALTH

F. DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICIES

The Town is committed to providing a safe work environment that is free from the effects of drugs and alcohol. The Town has two relevant policies.

The Town of Freedom [Drug and Alcohol Policy](#) defines expectations concerning substance use. All new employees must sign a copy of this policy indicating their agreement with its terms. (See Appendix 3)

The [Alcohol and Drug Testing](#) policy outlines who is subject to Alcohol and Drug testing and consequences for failing a test. (See Appendix 4)

G. SMOKING POLICY

The Town is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and smoke-free work environment for our employees, visitors, and vendors. Consistent with our commitment and state law, we have declared a no smoking policy within Town owned vehicles and 25 feet of Town owned buildings. If an employee fails to comply with these rules, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including potential termination of employment.

H. HARASSMENT POLICY

1. General Information

Harassment and sexual harassment are prohibited by both federal and Maine law. Several laws, including the Maine Human Rights Act (5 M.R.S. §§ 4571-4634), Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e-2000e17), Age Discrimination in Employment Act (29 U.S.C. §§ 621-634), American with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.), and Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (42 U.S.C. § 2000ff) all prohibit several forms of employment discrimination and harassment.

Under both Maine and federal law these include discrimination or harassment that is based upon actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, age, familial status or genetic predisposition. Maine law also protects against harassment based on workers compensation history, whistleblower status or because a person sought or received an order of protection from abuse under Title 19-A. Anti-discrimination laws prohibit harassment against individuals in retaliation for filing a discrimination charge, testifying, or participating in any way in an investigation, proceeding, or lawsuit under these laws; or opposing employment practices that they reasonably believe discriminate against individuals, in violation of these laws.

The Town of Freedom is committed to providing its employees with a safe and respectful work environment. Illegal harassment and sexual harassment are strictly prohibited. This includes harassment based on race or color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, age, familial status, veteran's status, genetic predisposition, whistleblower activity, workers compensation history or receipt of a protection order under Title 19-A.

All employees and officials are expected and required to treat each other professionally and respectfully. Supervisors are responsible for creating and maintaining a work environment free of harassment and discrimination. Supervisory staff are responsible to actively stop or

prevent inappropriate conduct and are required to take immediate and appropriate action whenever becoming aware of such conduct. Corrective action is required regardless of whether a complaint is filed.

2. Complaint Process:

The municipality of Freedom will promptly and fully investigate any issues of harassment, sexual harassment or discrimination in the workplace. Every complaint will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. All employees and officials are required to cooperate fully in any investigation. If warranted, the municipality may take appropriate disciplinary action against any employee or official found to have engaged in harassment, which may include disciplinary action and/or measures to prevent a re-occurrence. Confidentiality will be preserved to the fullest extent possible, consistent with Maine law and our need to respect the rights of all employees involved.

Any municipal employee or official who witnesses, becomes aware of, or is the recipient of, harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy is encouraged and expected to report it to his/her supervisor or to the contact persons listed below. Complaints may be filed by contacting your supervisor or by contacting:

Laura Greeley, Freedom Select Board chair (name/title), via selectboard1@freedomme.org or by phone call to the Town office. Alternatively, an employee or other official may contact the Select Board as a whole via selectboard@freedomme.org or call the Town Office.

3. Maine Human Rights Commission:

Any employee or official that believes that he/she has been the subject of illegal discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment also has the right to file a complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission (MHRC). The MHRC is the state agency responsible for enforcing state employment discrimination laws. In most cases, a complaint must be filed with the MHRC within 300 days of the date of the act of illegal discrimination/harassment.

There is no requirement that an employee utilize the municipality's internal complaint process first, nor is it required that any internal process be exhausted before a MHRC complaint is initiated. For more information on how to file a charge with the MHRC, contact the MHRC at:

51 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0051
Telephone: (207)
624-6290 TTY: Maine
Relay 711 Fax:
207-624-8729.

Additional information is available on the MHRC website at: www.maine.gov/mhrc/index.shtml

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

IX. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

A. Corrective Action:

It is the policy of the Town of Freedom to take corrective action against employees who violate rules, regulations, or standards of conduct, or who endanger the safety of others, or perform in an unsatisfactory manner.

1. Generally, there are four (4) types of disciplinary actions used by the Town: documented verbal warning, written warning, suspension, and dismissal.
2. While the Town will apply the concept of progressive discipline when appropriate, it reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline in any circumstance.
3. In addition, nothing in this policy or Personnel Handbook undermines the at-will nature of the employment relationship, which may be terminated at any time by either party with or without cause, and regardless of whether any prior disciplinary action has been taken.
4. The Town may also place an employee on administrative leave, paid or unpaid, on a temporary basis, as permitted under federal and state law.

B. Voluntary Dispute Resolution Procedure

1. If you feel you have an unresolved dispute, you should present the situation to your supervisor so that the problem can be settled by examination and discussion of the facts. We hope that the supervisor will be able to satisfactorily resolve most matters.
2. If the matter is not resolved by the supervisor within fifteen (15) business days, the Select Board is available to discuss the issue. We urge every employee to follow through rather than be dissatisfied. Any complaint will be investigated and the findings and determination reported back to the employee.
3. Your job will not be adversely affected in any way because you chose to use this procedure.

SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

X. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

A. REQUESTED NOTICE OF DECISION TO TERMINATE EMPLOYMENT

Should you decide to resign from your employment with the Town we ask that you notify your Department Head or the Select Board of your decision in writing at least two (2) weeks in advance of your planned departure date. Your thoughtfulness will be appreciated, and will allow the Town to maintain work schedules and provide important services to the public.

APPENDICES

1. [TOWN OFFICE KEY AND CODE SECURITY POLICY](#) (adopted)
2. [COMPUTER SECURITY POLICY AND SIGN-OFF](#) (adopted 7/1/24)
3. [DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY](#) (Adopted 11/13/23)
4. [DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY](#) (Adopted 11/13/23)



Town of Freedom Employee Policy - approval page

This policy replaces the following policies:

- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Elected Town Official Policy
- PTO-Sick Time and Vacation time for all Town Employees
- Holiday Policy for Elected and Appointed Personnel
- Mileage reimbursement Policy
- Employee Health Insurance Policy
- Retirement Plan Policy for Town Employees

Other policies referenced in the Employee Policy that remain in effect are:

- Town office Key and Code Security Policy
- Computer Security Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Drug testing Policy

Action	Date	Signatories
Adopted		
Revised		



Town of Freedom Employee Policy - approval page

This policy replaces the following policies:

- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Elected Town Official Policy
- PTO-Sick Time and Vacation time for all Town Employees
- Holiday Policy for Elected and Appointed Personnel
- Mileage reimbursement Policy
- Employee Health Insurance Policy
- Retirement Plan Policy for Town Employees

Other policies referenced in the Employee Policy that remain in effect are:

- Town office Key and Code Security Policy
- Computer Security Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Drug testing Policy

Action	Date	Signatories
Adopted	9/8/20	Laura Wicks Laura Cherry My Bli
Revised		