

# **CITY OF FORT VALLEY**

## **PERSONNEL MANUAL**

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Prepared by:  
Middle Georgia Regional Development Center

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## **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

This personnel manual is designed to acquaint you with employment with the city and to provide you with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the manual. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by Fort Valley to benefit employees. Employees should familiarize themselves with the contents of the personnel manual as soon as possible, for it will answer many questions about employment with the City of Fort Valley. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

No personnel manual can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As Fort Valley continues to grow, the need may arise to change policies described in the manual. The city, therefore, reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the manual from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. Employees will, of course, be notified of such changes as they occur.

## EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

The personnel manual describes important information about the City of Fort Valley, and I understand that I should consult with my Departmental Supervisor or Department Head regarding any questions not answered in the manual.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the manual may occur. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the City Council of Fort Valley has the authority to adopt any revisions to the policies in this manual.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this manual is **neither a contract of employment nor a legal document**. I have received the manual, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this manual and any revisions made to it.

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EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

---

DATE

---

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (TYPED OR PRINTED)

## **Introduction**

## 001 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The City of Fort Valley believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers in this area. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their Departmental Supervisors.

Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with Departmental Supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. We believe that the city amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

## 002 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions of the city will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. Except where required or permitted by law, employment practices will not be influenced or affected by an applicant's or employee's race, color, gender, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The City of Fort Valley will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Any employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor or the EEO Officer who shall be the City Clerk or the Acting City Clerk. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## 003 IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE

The City of Fort Valley is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the city within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact their supervisor or the City Clerk. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

#### 004 STATEMENT OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

It is the policy of the City of Fort Valley to foster, maintain, and promote equal employment opportunity. The city shall select employees on the basis of the applicant's qualifications and without regard to age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, or national origin. Qualified individuals with disabilities shall be given equal consideration for all city positions. Furthermore, the city will take steps to reasonably accommodate qualified, disabled individuals when such accommodations will permit the individuals to perform the essential duties of the job and will not result in undue hardship on the city.

#### 005 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EEO POLICY

All personnel responsible for recruitment and employment shall continue to review regularly the implementation of this personnel policy and relevant practices to assure that equal employment opportunity based on reasonable performance related job requirements is being actively observed to the end that no employee or applicant for employment shall suffer discrimination because of age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, or disability. To this end, the City Clerk, or Acting City Clerk, shall serve as the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer.

## **Employment Information**

## 101 NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

This handbook is intended to provide employees with a general understanding of our personnel policies. Employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook because it will answer many common questions concerning employment with the City of Fort Valley.

However, this handbook cannot anticipate every situation or answer every question about employment. It is not an employment contract and is not intended to create contractual obligations of any kind. Neither the employee nor the city is bound to continue the employment relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time.

In order to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, the City of Fort Valley reserves the right to change, revise, or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in this handbook. The only recognized deviations from the stated policies are those authorized by the City Council.

## 102 GENERAL

This personnel manual is designed to relate personnel policies and practices which are consistent with recognized merit principles. Merit principles should be included in formally adopted personnel policies in order to achieve more efficient and effective use of the city's most valuable asset - its employees. The fair and equitable treatment of each city employee through application of merit system principles should help each employee to feel secure and satisfied during his/her employment with the city. Implementation of an equitable personnel administration policy should also enhance employee morale and performance.

The personnel policies outlined herein contain assurance to city employees that appointments, promotions, compensation, and all other personnel decisions will, henceforth, be based on merit principles. The principle of merit holds that all city personnel actions should be based on job performance rather than non-job related factors such as friendship, kinship, or political affiliations. With this concept in mind, the employee, the city, and taxpayers should benefit since personnel decisions will be based on accepted personnel management principles.

The City of Fort Valley assures that the following concepts will be consistently followed in all personnel decisions:

- (1) Recruiting, selecting, and advancing employees for positions will be conducted after considering a given employee's relative ability, knowledge, and those skills required for job performance.
- (2) Compensation will be provided for each position per the city's Compensation and Pay Plan.
- (3) Employees will be retained on the basis of performance or after correction of inadequate performance. Those employees whose inadequate performance cannot be corrected shall be terminated from the city's employment.

All applicants and employees will be treated fairly in all aspects of personnel administration without regard to political affiliation, race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or religious creed and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens.

### 103 APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION

Appointments and promotions to all full-time positions shall be solely on the basis of merit and qualifications for the job, which shall be determined by evaluation of the applicant's:

- (1) Training, education, experience, and physical fitness as it relates to the essential functions and duties of the job and whenever reasonable accommodation cannot be made;
- (2) Oral interview; or
- (3) Whenever practical, an examination or demonstration test.

The city adopts for the Fire Department (Annex A) and Police Department (Annex B) to this section as they exist on January, 1984. The respective Annexes deal with the requirements of each specific department. These Annexes can be found in Appendix A of this manual. Additionally, this personnel manual shall not supercede regulations adopted in the Police Department's Policies and Procedures Manual.

Positions which become vacant shall be filled by qualified applicants. Members of the department in which the vacancy occurs may apply for available positions if they possess the required qualifications. There shall be employee notification through whatever reasonable means of available job openings by Departmental Supervisors to insure that the above policy is implemented.

Each employee will receive an appraisal of his or her work performance by his or her Departmental Supervisor. This performance report will be discussed with the employee at the end of the first six months of service or sooner and at least once a year thereafter. The report is used as a basis for granting permanent status at the end of the employee's first six months as well as for all promotions, transfers, and merit increases.

### 104 MERIT REVIEW

Salary adjustments and/or promotions shall be determined on the basis of merit as confirmed by the performance evaluation. The merit review procedure as contained in Appendix II\* shall serve as the basis for advancing employees in the pay plan when adopted. Criteria used in the employee performance evaluation shall include the following general guidelines:

- (1) Personal Appearance - neatness; grooming cleanliness.
- (2) Dependability - reliability (ability to follow instructions); punctuality; compliance with city rules and regulations.

- (3) Quality of Work - cooperation; thoroughness; initiative; accuracy.
- (4) Leadership - acceptance of responsibility; ability to supervise and direct.
- (5) Judgement - common sense and practicality; adaptability; flexibility; and accuracy of decisions.
- (6) Knowledge of Job - rules, regulations, and procedures; innovativeness to meet job demands.
- (7) Job Performance - thoroughness in performing job-related tasks.
- (8) Temperament and Personal Traits - self control under stress; firm, fair, and impartial; accepts constructive criticism; adjusts well to most situations.

The Departmental Supervisor shall conduct the performance evaluation, and when such evaluation is complete, the Departmental Supervisor shall meet with employees on an individual basis to discuss the evaluation, findings, and recommendations. An employee may appeal in writing a supervisor's evaluation to the City Administrator who shall determine whether or not the performance evaluation is acceptable. The City Administrator's decision may be appealed in writing to the appropriate City Council Committee, and the Committee's decisions and recommendations regarding the evaluation shall be final and conclusive.

#### 105 HIRING OF RELATIVES

The employment of relatives in the same area of an organization may cause serious conflicts and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried into day-to-day working relationships.

Relatives of persons currently employed by the City of Fort Valley on a full-time basis may be hired only if they will not be working directly for or supervising a relative or will not occupy a position in the same line of authority within the organization. This policy applies to any relative, higher or lower in the organization, who has the authority to review employment decisions. City employees cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship.

If the relative relationship is established after employment, the supervisor/department head will recommend who is to be transferred. That decision shall be made within 30 calendar days.

In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or terminated from employment.

For the purposes of this policy, relatives are defined to include spouses, parents, children, brothers, sisters, brothers- and sisters-in-law, fathers- and mothers-in-law, stepparents, stepbrothers, stepsisters, and stepchildren. This policy also applies to individuals who are not legally related but who reside with another employee.

## 106 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees have an obligation to conduct city business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which the city wishes employees to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation.

An actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of the city's day-to-day dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside organizations. However, if an employee has any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that he or she disclose to an officer of the city as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in an organization with which the city does business but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the city.

Any improper transfer of material or disclosure of information, even though it is not apparent that an employee has personally gained by such action, constitutes unacceptable conduct. Any employee who participates in such a practice will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

No employee may accept gifts, gratuities, or loans from any organization, business concern, or individual with whom he or she has official relationships which arose by virtue of employment with the City of Fort Valley. These limitations are not intended to preclude the acceptance of articles of negligible value which are distributed generally nor to prohibit social courtesies which promote good public relations, nor to prevent employees from obtaining loans from regular lending institutions. Nevertheless, it is of great importance that inspectors, contracting officers, and enforcement officers maintain consistent relations of impeccable propriety.

## 107 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees may hold outside jobs as long as they meet the performance standards of their job with the City of Fort Valley. Employees should consider the impact that outside employment may have on their health and physical endurance. All employees are required to get prior approval from their Departmental Supervisor before beginning outside employment. Requests for approval should be submitted to the Departmental Supervisor in writing. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to the city's scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If it is determined that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the city as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with the City of Fort Valley.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the City of Fort Valley for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs.

City employees will not be allowed to wear city uniforms while performing outside work. However, Police Officers may be permitted to wear uniforms when performing non-private security or police-type work.

## **Employment Status and Employee Records**

## 201 EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

All employment with the City of Fort Valley is on an at-will basis and can be terminated at any time by the employer or the employee. No employment with the City of Fort Valley is guaranteed.

- A. Probationary Employee: Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are on probation during the first six (6) months of employment (or one year, in the case of police officers or firemen). During this period, they must demonstrate the ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. All promoted employees are on probation during the first six (6) months in the new position. During this promotion probationary period, they will be required to maintain at least a fully satisfactory work record.
- B. Temporary Full-Time Employee: A person who is appointed for a specified period of time (less than 12 months) and who is scheduled to work forty (40) hours per week. Employees in this category are eligible for all benefits in cases where the initial appointment is for six (6) months or more. Those employees appointed in this class for less than six (6) months are not eligible for any benefits.
- C. Temporary Part-Time Employee: A person who is appointed for a specified period of time (less than 12 months) and who is scheduled to work less than forty (40) hours per week. Employees in this class are **not** eligible for any benefits.
- D. Regular Part-Time Employee: A person who is appointed to serve in a position for an indefinite duration and is regularly scheduled to work less than forty (40) hours per week. Employees in this class are not eligible for any benefits. Employees in this class are not eligible for an additional days pay if they work on a holiday.
- E. Regular Full-Time Employee: A person who is appointed to serve in a position for an indefinite duration and is regularly scheduled to work a minimum of forty (40) hours per work week.
- F. Department Heads: An employee appointed by the City Council to work at the will of the City Council. Department Heads are expected to work a minimum of forty (40) hours per week. The Mayor and the City Council may, at their discretion, negotiate a competitive benefits package, to include annual and sick leave benefits, that differs from those outlined within this manual with newly hired department heads (to include the City Administrator position).
7. Suspended: Suspended employees are those employees who were on full-time status who were suspended from employment for disciplinary reasons or by administrative action. At the end of the period of suspension, employees may return to full-time status only after they have successfully completed a new probationary period or they are returned to full-time status by the city's Personnel Committee.

## 202 PERSONNEL RECORDS MAINTENANCE

Personnel records that are necessary for the proper administration of the personnel system will be maintained by the City of Fort Valley. The city shall maintain in personnel records only information that is relevant to accomplishing personnel administration purposes. At a minimum, the following information on each employee shall be maintained:

- a: name and social security number
- b: employment application
- c: immigration forms
- d: withholding forms
- e: date of original employment or appointment
- f: current position and title
- g: current salary
- h: office to which the employee is currently assigned
- i: performance evaluations
- j: any other documentation related to job performance
- 11. a copy of the employee's current driver's license (to be provided by the employee within thirty (30) days of the beginning of each calendar year.

In compliance with applicable federal and state laws, the City of Fort Valley shall keep medical information for each employee in a separate medical file. Medical information will not be kept in separate personnel files.

## 203 ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES

Fort Valley maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records.

Personnel files are the property of the City of Fort Valley, and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only supervisors and management personnel of the city who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file are allowed to do so. In addition, the City of Fort Valley will comply with all applicable state and federal laws governing access to personnel files.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact the City Clerk. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their own personnel files in the personnel office and in the presence of an individual appointed by the city to maintain the files.

## 204 PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the city of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times.

## 205 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The probationary period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Fort Valley uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, promptness, and other pertinent characteristics. All new and rehired employees work on a probationary basis for the first six months after their date of hire (firemen and police officers must serve a one (1) year probationary period). Employees who are promoted or transferred within Fort Valley must complete a second probationary period of the same length with each reassignment to a new position. Any significant absence will automatically extend a probationary period by the length of the absence.

Regardless of performance, an employee on probation may be dismissed without cause.

If an employee fails to meet required standards or performance, the following policy shall be followed after proper notice is given:

- (1) A probationary employee shall be dismissed;
- (2) A promoted employee may be restored to the position from which he or she was promoted or to a comparable position if available or he or she shall be dismissed after demotion where performance does not improve.

Subject to approval by the City Administrator, any supervisor may extend a probationary period by an additional six-month period if there is reason to believe any employee might benefit from such an extension.

At the end of each employee's six-month probationary period, the Department Head or Departmental Supervisor shall notify the City Administrator in writing that either:

- (a) The employee has successfully completed his or her probationary period and is capable of satisfactorily performing the position's duties and is, henceforth, to be considered a regular employee with all rights and privileges due him or her; or
- (b) The employee has demonstrated an ability to perform the position's duties but the Department Head or supervisor recommends that the City Administrator consider extending the employee's probationary period by six-months because the employee may benefit from such an extension; or
- (c) The employee has not demonstrated ability to perform satisfactorily the position's duties and is to be separated from city employment, or if promoted from another position returned to the previous or a similar classification, if available.

During the initial probationary period, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law, such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security. After becoming regular employees, they may also be eligible for other Fort Valley-provided benefits, subject to the terms and conditions of each benefits program. Employees should read the information for each specific benefits program for the details on eligibility requirements.

Benefits eligibility and employment status are not changed during the secondary probationary period that results from a promotion or transfer within Fort Valley.

#### 206 EMPLOYEE TRAINING

The City of Fort Valley shall endeavor to assist and/or provide employee training and educational opportunities depending upon availability of funds and city business needs. Funds will be made available from the City department budgets annually.

#### 207 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS

The City of Fort Valley relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in Fort Valley's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

#### 208 MOTOR VEHICLE RECORD POLICY (ADDED 11/2017)

Vehicle operations can create substantial risk for our organization. A best practice for reducing vehicle risk is to ensure that only drivers with safe driving records are permitted to operate vehicles on organization business.

The following constitutes our MVR policy:

- All drivers and potential drivers must give consent for the City to obtain their MVR.
- All drivers must have a valid driver's license with the proper class and appropriate endorsements for the vehicles they are operating.
- Drivers must not drive if their license has been suspended or revoked.
- Drivers must report all accidents, moving violations and license suspensions to their immediately.

Prospective employees will be required to report all accidents and moving violations during the applicant screening process. Existing employees moving into driving positions will be required to complete a similar report at the time of transition. All drivers will be required to complete an accident and moving violation report annually.

MVRs will be obtained on new drivers at the time of employment or when transitioning into a driving position. MVRs will be obtained annually thereafter. Department Heads will determine the acceptability of a driver's MVR. Prospective employees must have a MVR that is CLEAR or ACCEPTABLE in order to be hired for positions requiring driving. Current drivers must

have an MVR record that is CLEAR, ACCEPTABLE, or BORDERLINE. Departments Heads may restrict the driving privileges of individuals with BORDERLINE MVR records or require drivers to receive additional training or monitoring. Drivers with POOR MVR records will be suspended from driving on organization business. If a dispute shall occur, the employee shall appeal to the City Administrator.

<p>Major violations generally include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaving the scene of an accident</li> <li>• Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol</li> <li>• Excessive speed (&gt;20 mph over limit)</li> <li>• Reckless, negligent or careless driving</li> <li>• Felony, homicide or manslaughter involving the use of a motor vehicle</li> <li>• License suspension or revocation resulting from accidents or moving violations</li> </ul>	<p>Minor violations generally include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speeding &lt; 20 mph</li> <li>• Failure to obey sign</li> <li>• Failure to yield</li> <li>• Illegal turn</li> </ul>
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## **Employee Benefits Programs**

### 301 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Eligible employees of the City of Fort Valley are provided a wide range of benefits. A number of programs (such as Social Security, worker's compensation, and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law.

Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification, and your supervisor can identify the programs for which you are eligible. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the employee handbook.

### 302 VACATION BENEFITS Revised 1/2000: Revised 9/2013

Annual leave with pay is available to every employee in the city service holding a regular full time status position (Reference Section 4) and having occupied such position for a period of six consecutive calendar months to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits.

The amount of paid annual leave employees receive each year increases with the length of their employment as shown in the following schedule:

<b>Length of Service</b>	<b>Hours per Month</b>
Zero (0) thru Three (3) Years	3.33
Four (4) thru Ten (10) Years	6.66
Eleven (11) thru Fourteen (14) Years	10.00
Fifteen (15) Years and Above	13.33

Employees in a new-hire probationary status shall begin accruing annual leave on their first day of work. However, such employees may not take any accrued annual leave during the probationary period unless specifically authorized to do so by the Mayor and Council.

Employees assigned to shifts for the Fire Department will accrue annual leave as follows:

<b>Length of Service</b>	<b>Hours per Month</b>
Zero (1) thru Three (3) Years	6.00
Four (4) thru Ten (10) Years	12.00
Eleven(11) thru Fourteen (14) Years	18.00
Fifteen (15) Years and Above	24.00

Note: Firemen will be charged for twenty-four (24) hours of annual leave for each workday taken. The maximum number of days Fire Department employees may accrue is 27 days, or 648 hours.

Employees working a 40 hour workweek will be charged eight (8) hours of annual leave for each workday taken. The maximum number of annual leave hours that regular employees may accrue is 360 hours (or 45 days). At the end of the calendar year, any annual leave accrued in excess of 360 hours for employees working 40 hour work week and 648 hours for firefighters shall be forfeited by the employee.

Once employees enter an eligible employment classification, they begin to earn paid annual leave according to the schedule above. However, before annual leave can be used, a waiting period of 180 calendar days must be completed. After that time, employees can request use of earned annual leave including that accrued during the waiting period. Employees are requested to schedule desired annual leave with their Departmental Supervisor as early as possible. Employees who have more than 40 hours of annual leave and wish to take such leave in separate weeks will receive seniority consideration for only their first selection of weeks. All other weeks will be scheduled at the convenience of the Department Head, and he/she will not “bump” less senior employees before those employees who have had the opportunity to select and/or take annual leave.

Paid annual leave can be used in minimum increments of one-half day. To take vacation, employees should request advance approval from their Departmental Supervisors. Requests will be reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements.

Annual leave is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of vacation. It does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or shift differentials.

If a regularly scheduled holiday occurs while an employee is on annual leave, that employee shall be granted an additional day of vacation leave.

Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for the purposes of determining overtime.

As stated above, employees are encouraged to use available paid annual leave for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. However, absence on account of sickness, injury, or disability in excess of that heretofore authorized for such purpose may, at the request of the employee and within discretion of the Department Head, be charged against annual leave allowance.

All annual leave hours accrual and use records will be maintained by the Payroll Department. It is the employee's Department Head's responsibility to make sure that the total available hours for each employee is coordinated with the Payroll Section and that the total hours used are reported promptly so an accurate record can be maintained on the employee's personnel records. The Payroll Section will be responsible for maintaining a current record of all annual leave hours accrued and/or used by the employee.

Each Department Head shall schedule annual leave with particular regard to employee seniority, operating requirements and, insofar as possible, with the request of the employees.

Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for unused annual leave not to exceed 360 hours for 40 hour work week employees and 648 hours for firefighters unless:

- 12) The employee owes the city money and the vacation pay is retained by the city to pay the debt portion thereof; or
- 13) If the employee has been issued city-owned uniforms or equipment, annual leave pay will be withheld until all city-owned property charged to the employee is accounted for and returned to the city. The Payroll Department will be responsible for verifying this accountability with Department Heads prior to issuing a final check to the employee.

### 303 HOLIDAYS

Fort Valley will grant holiday time off to all regular full-time employees on the holidays listed below.

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King Day (third Monday in January)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Veterans Day (November 11)
- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas (December 25)
- Day After Christmas (December 26)

In addition, city employees may also receive additional holidays on such days as the City Council shall designate from time-to-time.

According to applicable restrictions, Fort Valley will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible nonexempt employees immediately upon assignment to an eligible employment classification. Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight-time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on that day.

An employee must be in a pay status the last scheduled day before a holiday and the first scheduled day after a holiday to receive pay for the holiday.

A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. Public Safety employees only recognize the actual day of the holiday for holiday pay purposes.

If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid absence (e.g., vacation, sick leave), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time off benefit that would otherwise have applied.

City employees, with the exception of employees of the Fire Department, who are required to work on any of the above holidays will receive double pay for all hours actually worked on the holiday.

Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for the purposes of determining overtime.

#### 304 WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

The City of Fort Valley provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, workers' compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period or, if the employee is hospitalized, immediately.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses will inform their supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible.

Neither Fort Valley nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by the city.

### 305 SICK LEAVE BENEFITS

Fort Valley provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries. Sick leave is a privilege, not a right, granted to city employees when ill. For the purpose of this section, "sick leave" is defined as a legal absence from the work station during the employee's normal work time, resulting from personal illness or injury. City employees are expected to use sick leave only in a case of bona fide personal illness or injury and are required to report their illness to their supervisor as soon as possible.

Eligible employees will accrue sick leave benefits after ninety (90) calendar days of employment with the city. Sick leave is accrued at the rate of two (2) hours per forty (40) hour workweek and will be charged eight (8) hours of sick leave for each work day of absence.

For Fire Department employees working forty-eight (48) and seventy-two (72) hour rotating shifts, sick leave will be accrued at six (6) hours per workweek. Such employees will be charged twenty-four (24) hours of sick leave for each work day of absence. Additionally, such employees may only take sick leave in minimum increments of twelve (12) hours. Paid sick leave can be used in minimum increments of four (4) hours for all other city employees. Fire Department employees working rotating shifts who transfer to another department within the city not having such shifts will have their accrued sick leave hours converted to regular employee sick leave hours by dividing the total number of accrued sick leave hours by three (3).

Eligible employees may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to their own illness or injury or that of an immediate family member. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family member shall include the employee's mother, father, brother, sister, grandparent, spouse, child, step-parent, step-child, ward, guardian, or legal dependent. There is no maximum accumulation of sick leave for an employee.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should notify their Departmental Supervisor before the scheduled start of their workday. The Departmental Supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. Each Department Head shall keep correct and accurate records of all sick leave and report to the Payroll Section the use of sick leave by city employees. The Payroll Section shall make a record of sick leave for each employee, which shall include the number of days or hours taken and remaining for each employee.

In cases of extended sick leave, or suspected abuse of sick leave privileges, the city may require a physician's statement to verify a disability and/or illness prior to allowing an employee to return to work. Such verification may be requested for other sick leave absences as well and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits. Department Heads may, at their discretion, require such verification when they have reason to believe that an employee is abusing sick leave privileges.

As an additional condition of eligibility for sick leave benefits, an employee on an extended absence must apply for any other available compensation and benefits, such as workers' compensation. Sick leave benefits will be used to supplement any payments that an employee is eligible to receive from state disability insurance, workers' compensation or city-provided disability insurance programs. The

combination of any such disability payments and sick leave benefits cannot exceed the employee's normal weekly earnings.

Sick leave benefits are intended solely to provide income protection in the event of illness or injury, and may not be used for any other absence. Unused sick leave benefits will not be paid to employees while they are employed or upon termination of employment.

### 306 TIME OFF TO VOTE

Fort Valley encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by participating in elections. Generally, employees are able to find time to vote either before or after their regular work schedule.

Employees should request time off (not to exceed two (2) hours) to vote from their Departmental Supervisor at least two working days prior to the election day. Advance notice is required so that the necessary time off can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work shift, whichever provides the least disruption to the normal work schedule.

### 307 EMPLOYEE INSURANCE AND RETIREMENT

The City of Fort Valley provides a retirement program, major medical and hospitalization insurance to full-time city employees. If employees so choose, they may pay additional premium costs and receive dependent coverage. Questions concerning benefits and coverage of both insurance and retirement programs should be directed to the respective Departmental Supervisor or the City Administrator. The City of Fort Valley will not provide payroll withholding services to employees for voluntary withholdings such as insurance, individual retirement accounts, etc. The City of Fort Valley will, however, continue to withhold, pursuant to court order, garnishments and child support payments.

### 308 JURY DUTY

The City of Fort Valley encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. Compensation for such leave shall be limited to the difference between pay received from said service and normal city pay.

Employees must show the jury duty summons to their Departmental Supervisor as soon as possible so that the supervisor may make arrangements to accommodate their absence. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits. Upon release from jury duty, employees are to report back to city work.

### 309 WITNESS DUTY

Fort Valley encourages employees to appear in court for witness duty when subpoenaed to do so. Compensation for such leave shall be limited to the difference between pay received from said service and normal city pay.

The subpoena should be shown to the employee's Departmental Supervisor immediately after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate the employee's absence. Upon release from witness duty, employees are to report back to city work.

### 310 BENEFITS CONTINUATION (COBRA)

The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the City of Fort Valley's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at the city's group rates plus an administration fee.

Fort Valley provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under Fort Valley's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

## **Time Keeping / Payroll**

## 401 TIMEKEEPING

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every nonexempt employee. Federal and state laws require the City of Fort Valley to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Nonexempt employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. They should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons. Overtime work must always be approved by the Mayor, City Administrator, City Clerk, Department Head, or his/her designee before it is performed.

Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Failure to comply with this provision shall be grounds for immediate dismissal.

It is the employee's responsibility to sign his or her time record to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. The Departmental Supervisor will review and then initial the time record before submitting it for payroll processing as required by the Mayor and Council. In addition, if corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes by initialing the time record. Departmental Supervisors are responsible for verifying the accuracy of time records and submitting them to the City Clerk's office for processing.

## 402 PAYDAYS

All regular employees are paid weekly or biweekly on Thursdays. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off (e.g., a weekend or holiday), employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.

## 403 EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION

Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- RESIGNATION - employment termination initiated by an employee who chooses to leave the city voluntarily.
- DISCHARGE - employment termination initiated by the city.

- LAYOFF - involuntary employment termination initiated by the city for nondisciplinary reasons.
- RETIREMENT - voluntary retirement from active employment status initiated by the employee.

Employees will receive their final pay in accordance with applicable state law.

Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner. All accrued, vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid. Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense if the employee so chooses. The employee will be notified in writing of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations of such continuance.

#### 404 PAY ADVANCES

Neither pay advances nor extensions of credit on unearned wages can be provided to employees.

#### 405 ADMINISTRATIVE PAY CORRECTIONS

The City of Fort Valley takes all reasonable steps to assure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday.

In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of his/her supervisor who will notify the City Clerk so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

Once underpayments are identified, they will be corrected in the next regular paycheck.

Overpayments will also be corrected in the next regular paycheck unless this presents a burden to the employee (where there is a substantial amount owed). In that case, the city will attempt to arrange a schedule of repayments with the employee to minimize the inconvenience to all involved.

#### 406 PAY DEDUCTIONS AND SETOFFS

The law requires the City of Fort Valley to make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal and state income taxes. The city also must deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "wage base." Fort Valley matches the amount of Social Security taxes paid by each employee.

Fort Valley offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. Eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their pay checks to cover the costs of participation in these programs. Pay setoffs are pay deductions taken by Fort Valley, usually to help pay off a debt or obligation as required by state or federal law.

Employees may contact the Personnel Department to discuss voluntary payroll deductions.

If you have questions concerning why deductions were made from your pay check or how they were calculated, your Departmental Supervisor can assist in having your questions answered.

## **Work Conditions and Work Hours**

## 501 SAFETY

To provide a safe and healthful work environment for employees, citizens, and visitors, Fort Valley has established a workplace safety program. This program is a top priority for the city. All Department Heads are responsible for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety program for their respective departments. The safety program's success depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all.

Fort Valley provides information to employees about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication channels such as supervisor-employee meetings, bulletin board postings, memos, or other written communications. Departmental Supervisors shall conduct safety programs as needed for each department. In addition, each Department Head shall solicit suggestions as to safety regulations and as to possible improvements to alleviate hazardous conditions.

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor. Cleanliness and order in each place of work shall be preserved to prevent unsafe or unhealthy conditions. Employees must report to their Departmental Supervisor any accident of which they may be aware and which involves the City of Fort Valley during regular working hours. Unsafe hazardous conditions shall be noted and employee's shall exercise caution when performing duties which involve hazardous activities.

Employees who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report or, where appropriate, remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Likewise, employees who refuse to cooperate with Departmental Supervisors in preventing unsafe or unhealthy conditions may be dismissed at the discretion of the supervisor. It is the responsibility of employees to be conscious and knowledgeable of all posted or announced safety regulations.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees should immediately notify their departmental head or the appropriate supervisor. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures.

## 502 WORK SCHEDULES

Employees shall report to work as directed by Departmental Supervisors or as prescribed by the Mayor or Council.

The normal work schedule may vary for particular departmental needs but administrative offices of the City of Fort Valley will observe an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday working schedule. Supervisors will advise employees of the times their schedules will normally begin and end. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Administrative employees are entitled to a one-hour non-paid lunch break each day at some point between the hours of 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. or as close to that time as possible. Other departments shall arrange for meal periods, as to the time and duration, at the discretion of the respective Departmental Supervisors. Such meal periods shall not exceed one hour.

Each workday, employees are provided with two rest periods of 15 minutes in length. To the extent possible, rest periods will be provided in the middle of work periods. Since this time is counted and paid as time worked, employees must not be absent from their work stations beyond the allotted rest period time.

All full-time employees are provided with one meal period each workday. Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time.

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, the City of Fort Valley expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on the city. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their Departmental Supervisor within 30 minutes or as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence. Department Heads should report to the City Clerk if they are not to be at their respective work location in the city.

Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. An employee who is absent and fails to contact his/her supervisor for a period of two days will be considered to have abandoned his/her job and will be notified by certified mail (at last known address) of his/her release of employment.

### 503 USE OF PHONE AND MAIL SYSTEMS

Personal use of city telephones for long-distance and toll calls is not permitted. Employees should practice discretion in using city telephones when making local personal calls and may be required to reimburse the City of Fort Valley for any charges resulting from their personal use of the telephone.

The use of Fort Valley-paid postage for personal correspondence is strictly prohibited.

Failure to comply with these provisions may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

To assure effective telephone communications, employees should always use the approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller, and hang up only after the caller has done so.

### 504 SMOKING

In keeping with Fort Valley's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking is prohibited in city hall in the administrative offices and in all city-owned vehicles. The City of Fort Valley will comply with all federal and state laws, as amended, regarding smoking in the workplace. This policy applies equally to all employees and visitors.

## 505 OVERTIME

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees may be required to work overtime to complete work assignments. Department Heads (or supervisors) shall assign to each employee regular work duties and responsibilities which can normally be accomplished within the established work day and work week. However, occasionally some overtime work may be necessary for proper performance of work duties and responsibilities. All overtime work must receive prior authorization from the Mayor, City Administrator, or City Clerk. Overtime assignments will be distributed as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, Department Heads are not eligible to receive overtime pay.

When regular employees are required to work extra or prolonged shifts, Mayor and Council may authorize overtime pay equal to, or one and one-half times, the employee's regular hourly rate.

As required by law, overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, holiday, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

Failure to work scheduled overtime or overtime worked without prior authorization from the Departmental Supervisor may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

## 506 USE OF EQUIPMENT

The City will require that all employees of the Police and Fire departments and all other employees who operate city-owned licensed vehicles have and maintain, at all times during their employment, a valid motor vehicle driver's license. No employee will operate a licensed city vehicle without a current valid license. The employee shall be required to provide a copy, upon request, of his/her current license. Failure to follow these rules may result in disciplinary action against the employee, including termination.

Equipment essential in accomplishing job duties is often expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Employees will notify their supervisor if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. The supervisor can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job.

All materials and equipment used in the operation of city activities shall not be used for private purposes. Employees are strictly forbidden to use city property for non-city business.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### 507 EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, or earthquakes, can disrupt city operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of all or part of the city. In the event that such an emergency occurs during nonworking hours, local radio and/or television stations will be asked to broadcast notification of the closing.

Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances, employees who work may receive overtime or compensatory time off if approved by their Department Head.

## **Leaves of Absence**

## 601 FAMILY LEAVE

The city provides family leaves of absence **without pay** to eligible employees who wish to take time off from work duties to fulfill family obligations relating directly to the birth or adoption of a child or the illness of a child, spouse, or parent. Regular full-time employees are eligible to request family leave as described in this policy. The city and its employees will comply with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA).

As soon as eligible employees become aware of the need for a family leave of absence, they should request a leave from the Department Head. The FMLA requires employees to give the employer at least thirty (30) days notice of the date of the foreseeable leave; otherwise the leave can be delayed under certain circumstances. 29 C.F.R. § 825.304(b). If the employee fails to give the employer thirty (30) days advance notice of a foreseeable leave, and the employee has given no reasonable excuse for the failure to provide timely notice, the employer can deny the employee's taking of FMLA leave until at least thirty (30) days after the employee gives the notice to the employer. 29 C.F.R. § 825.304(b); 29 C.F.R. § 825.312(a).

Employees requesting family leave related to the illness of a child, spouse, or parent may be required to provide a physician's statement verifying the illness, its beginning and expected ending dates, the need for the employee to provide care, and the estimated time required.

Eligible employees may request up to 12 weeks of family leave within any 12-month period. With the Department Head's approval, an employee may take any available vacation leave as part of the approved period of leave.

Requests for family leave will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated workload requirements, staffing considerations, and hardship to the city's operations during the proposed period of absence. Requests that cannot be accommodated may be denied or deferred.

Subject to the terms, city conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, the city will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full period of the approved family leave.

Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

When a family leave ends, every reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same position, if it is available, or to a similar available position for which the employee is qualified. Except when legally required, the city cannot guarantee reinstatement. The FMLA provides generally that the employee has a right to be restored to an "equivalent" position. 29 U.S.C. § 2614(a); 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.218, 825.312(a).

If an employee unequivocally advises the employer that the employee does not intend to return to work, the employment relationship is deemed terminated, and the employee's entitlement to reinstatement, continued leave, and health benefits ceases. The city will make a reasonable inquiry to determine whether the employee will return to work and, if it appears the employee is unwilling to return, the city should deliver, in person or by certified mail, written confirmation of the employee's voluntary

termination. An employer may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on the employee's status and intention to return to work.

## 602 MILITARY LEAVE

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees, except those occupying temporary positions, to attend scheduled drills or training in the National Guard or Reserve Armed Forces, or if called to active duty with the U.S. armed services. Military leaves are not to exceed thirty working days annually.

Requests for military leave must be accomplished by a copy of official orders requiring such training. The employee will receive his/her normal pay while on military leave. A copy of the military pay voucher shall be submitted prior to authorization for payment to the employee for the period of leave only to verify that the employee actually performed said military duty.

If an employee must be absent for a period longer than thirty days continuously, or more than thirty days in one calendar year, (e.g., for extended boot camp session) that employee may charge said absence to annual leave or take unpaid leave of absence for any absence in excess of thirty days.

Subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible, health insurance benefits will be provided by Fort Valley for the full term of the military leave of absence.

Employees on two-week active duty training assignments or inactive duty training drills are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of training, allowing reasonable travel time.

Every reasonable effort will be made to return eligible employees to their previous position or a comparable one. They will be treated as though they were continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service, such as job seniority rights.

## 603 MATERNITY-RELATED ABSENCES

- A. The benefits provided under this section are granted to employees of the City who have accrued at least six (6) months of full-time service at the time leave is granted.
- B. Maternity Leave. A qualified employee who gives birth to a child shall be entitled to time off with pay not to exceed four weeks (or shift equivalent).
- C. Paternity Leave. A qualified employee shall be entitled to time off with pay not to exceed one (1) week (or shift equivalent) upon the birth of a child he has fathered.
- D. Adoption Leave. A qualified employee shall be entitled to time off with pay not to exceed one (1) week (or shift equivalent) upon the legal adoption of a child.
- E. Employees shall provide documentation of the basis for any leave requested under this section. In the event of adoption leave, such documentation shall be provided within 90 days of the leave. Failure to provide required documentation shall result in the forfeiture of the appropriate amount of annual or sick leave.

- F. Qualifying employees may receive leave under this section once per calendar year only.
- G. Leave provided in this section shall run concurrently with that provided under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).”

#### 604 FUNERAL LEAVE

A regular full-time employee will be granted two (2) days of paid funeral leave for a death occurring in the employee's immediate family, i.e. spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, siblings, or for any relative who is domiciled in the employee's household. Funeral leave is not accumulated. More time may be added at the request of the employee pending approval of the employee's Department Head/Supervisor.

#### 605 PERSONAL LEAVE

The City of Fort Valley offers paid personal leave to its regular full-time employees. Employees may take one (1) day of personal leave per year. Personal leave may be taken in increments of one (1) hour. Personal leave may be used at the discretion of an employee; however, employees must receive prior approval from their supervisor's before taking any personal leave. Personal leave is not accumulated.

#### 606 COMPENSATORY TIME

Compensatory time off is paid time off the job which is earned and accrued by an employee in lieu of immediate cash payment for employment in excess of the statutory hours for which overtime compensation is required under the Fair Standards Labor Act. The City of Fort Valley offers compensatory time off in lieu of overtime for employees.

For the purposes of calculating compensatory time hours, the employee shall earn one and one-half (1.5) hours of compensatory time for every one (1) hour of overtime worked and not paid for. Each Department Head will be responsible for maintaining official count of the number of compensatory time hours earned by each employee in his/her department. When payroll requests are submitted to the Payroll Department by an employee's Department Head, the payroll request shall identify the number of hours of overtime earned during that pay period. If compensatory time is being provided to the employee in lieu of overtime payments, the Payroll Department will note the number of compensatory time hours earned by the employee. **Note: The actual number of compensatory time hours on file for each employee will reflect the number of overtime hours worked multiplied by 1.5.**

If the work of an employee for which compensatory time may be provided included work in a public safety activity, an emergency response activity, or a seasonal activity, the employee engaged in such work may accrue not more than 480 hours of compensatory time for the hours worked after April 15, 1986. If such work was any other work, the employee engaged in such work may accrue not more than 240 hours of compensatory time for hours worked after April 15, 1986. Any such employee who has accrued 480 or 240 hours, as the case may be, of compensatory time off shall, for additional overtime hours of work, be paid overtime compensation (per statutory provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (Section 7(o)(3)(A)), Standard Number 553.21 of Subpart A). If compensation is paid to an employee for accrued compensatory time off, such compensation shall be paid at the regular rate earned by the employee at the time the employee receives such payment.

## **Employee Conduct**

## 701 EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WORK RULES

To assure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, the City of Fort Valley expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the city.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property

Falsification of timekeeping records

Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating city-owned vehicles or equipment

- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of city-owned or citizen-owned property
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized absence from work station during the workday
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- Excessive personal telephone calls to, by, or in regard to the employee.

For further information regarding unacceptable conduct, please refer to Personnel Policy 801, Disciplinary Action.

## 702 DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

(1) *Substance abuse as a medical problem.* The City of Fort Valley recognizes that substance abuse (defined as the use of illegal drugs or the abuse of other controlled substances or alcohol) is a medical problem which can be successfully treated. Almost all substance abusers deny they have a problem

and ordinarily do not seek treatment voluntarily. This denial is the single most significant obstacle to successful treatment. Recognizing this reality, although the City of Fort Valley encourages voluntary drug and alcohol abuse treatment, it will take strong action against employees who do not seek treatment of their own. This strong action is designed to break through the denial barrier and convince substance abusing employees of the need for treatment.

(2) *Assistance in overcoming alcohol or drug abuse for employees who voluntarily seek help.* Early recognition and treatment of alcohol or drug abuse is important for successful rehabilitation, for economic return to the work force, and for reduced personal, family and social disruption. The city encourages the earliest possible diagnosis and treatment for alcohol or drug abuse. The city supports sound treatment efforts. Whenever feasible, the city will assist employees in overcoming drug or alcohol abuse. However, the decision to seek diagnosis and accept treatment for alcohol or drug abuse is primarily the individual employee's responsibility. Any employee who voluntarily seeks assistance in dealing with an alcohol or drug abuse problem prior to being found in violation of this ordinance may do so without jeopardizing their continued employment with the city if they meet all of the conditions and requirements of the treatment program and meet and continue to meet all established standards of conduct and job performance. The city reserves the right, however, to make such employment decisions on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind both the rights of the employee, as well as the benefits to the employee, the city, the job performance, the providing of services and functions by the city to the public in general, and the rights of the public in general to be safe.

(3) *Authorized use of prescription medicine.* Employees undergoing prescribed medical treatment with any drug which may alter their behavior or physical or mental ability must report this treatment to their department head and the department head shall report such to the departmental committee of the Council of the City of Fort Valley in charge of such department, and the committee, after consultation with the department head, and after hearing from the employee if the employee desires to be heard, determine whether the city should temporarily change the employee's job assignment during the period of treatment. Employees must keep all prescribed medicine in its original container, which identifies the drug, date of prescription, and prescribing doctor.

(4) *Arrest or conviction under criminal drug statutes.* Employees must notify their department head within five (5) days of any arrest or conviction under any criminal drug statute or ordinance.

(5) *Prohibitions.* The following acts or occurrences are prohibited.

- (a) Use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensation or sale of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia on city premises or on city business, in city-supplied vehicles, or during working hours;
- (b) Unauthorized use or possession, or any manufacture, distribution, dispensation or sale of a controlled substance on city premises or on city business, in city-supplied vehicles, or during working hours;
- (c) Unauthorized use, manufacture, distribution, or sale of alcohol at a city work place during working hours or while operating a city vehicle;

- (d) Being under the influence of an unauthorized controlled substance or illegal drug on city premises or on city business, in city-supplied vehicles, or during working hours (being "under the influence" of an unauthorized controlled substance or illegal drug is defined as testing positive at a specified mg/ml level);
- (e) Being under the influence of alcohol at a city work place during working hours or while operating a city vehicle (being "under the influence" of alcohol is defined as a blood alcohol content of .04 or higher);
- (f) Use of alcohol off city premises that adversely affects the employee's work performance, his own or others' safety at work, or the city's regard or reputation in the community;
- (g) Possession, use, manufacture, distribution, dispensation or sale of illegal drugs off city premises that adversely affects the employee's work performance, his own or others' safety at work, or the city's regard or reputation in the community;
- (h) Switching or adulterating any urine samples submitted for testing;
- (i) Refusing consent to testing or to submit a breath, saliva, urine or blood sample for testing requested by appropriate city officials;
- (j) Refusing to submit to an inspection when requested by city officials;
- (k) Failing to adhere to the requirements of any drug or alcohol treatment or counseling program in which the employee is enrolled;
- (l) Conviction under any criminal drug law;
- (m) Arrest under any criminal drug law under circumstances which adversely affect the city's regard or reputation in the community;
- (n) Failure to notify the city of any arrest or conviction under any criminal drug law within five (5) days of the arrest or conviction;
- (o) Failure to report to the department head the use of a prescribed drug which may alter the employee's behavior or physical or mental ability;
- (p) Failure to keep prescribed medicine in its original container;
- (q) Refusing to sign a statement agreeing to abide by the city's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Ordinance, when requested by the appropriate city officials;
- (r) Refusal to complete a medical questionnaire and consent form prior to any testing, when requested by an appropriate city official;

- (s) Refusal to complete any custody forms or other forms with regard to submission of a urine or blood specimen test when requested by any appropriate city official.

(6) *Drug and alcohol testing.* The City of Fort Valley requires that every newly hired employee be free of alcohol or drug abuse. Each offer of employment shall be conditioned upon the passing of a breath, saliva, blood and/or urine test for alcohol and drugs. The city will not hire any applicant who fails to pass the pre-employment alcohol and drug test.

Whenever the city reasonably suspects that an employee's work performance or on-the-job behavior may have been affected in any way by alcohol or drugs, or that an employee has otherwise violated this ordinance, the city may require the employee to submit a breath, saliva, urine and/or blood specimen for alcohol and drug testing. An employee who tests positive for alcohol or drugs as a result of such test will be in violation of this ordinance.

The city will randomly test law enforcement employees who are directly involved in drug interdiction or enforcement of related laws and/or who carry firearms, and firefighters. Such an employee who tests positive for alcohol or drugs during a random test will be in violation of this ordinance.

Whenever the city's standard policy requires an employee in a law enforcement position or a firefighter to undergo a physical exam, that examination will include a breath, saliva, urine and/or blood test for alcohol and drugs. Any such employee who tests positive for alcohol or drugs during such a physical exam will be in violation of this ordinance.

Whenever the city has reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee may have contributed to an on-the-job accident involving a fatality, bodily injury, or damage to property, the city may require the employee to submit a breath, saliva, urine and/or blood specimen for alcohol or drug testing. Any such employee who tests positive for alcohol or drugs as a result of such a test will be in violation of this ordinance.

The city will randomly test employees who as a normal and usual condition of their employment on a normal and usual basis operate motor vehicles of the City of Fort Valley or machinery and equipment of the City of Fort Valley, such as, but without being limited to mowing machines, tractors, and the like. Any such employee who tests positive for alcohol or drugs during a random test will be in violation of this ordinance.

The city will afford applicants and employees subject to testing the opportunity, prior to testing, to list all prescription and non-prescription drugs that they have used in the last thirty (30) days and to explain the circumstances surrounding the use of such drugs.

Applicants and employees subject to testing must sign, prior to testing, a form consenting to the testing and consenting to the release of the test results to appropriate, but limited, city management officials, on a need-to-know basis.

Prior to taking any action, the city will give all applicants and employees who test positive for alcohol or drugs in violation of this ordinance the opportunity to explain the test results.

(7) *Inspections.* Employees may be assigned city-owned offices, vehicles, lockers, desks, cabinets and cases for the mutual convenience of the city and its personnel. Employees have no expectation of privacy in any such vehicles, desks, etc. that are owned by the city nor in any personal belongings which they may place in such areas. Whenever the City of Fort Valley reasonably suspects that an employee's work performance or on-the-job behavior may have been affected in any way by alcohol or drugs, the city may search the employee, the employee's locker, desk or other city-owned property under the control of the employee. Whenever the city reasonably suspects that an employee has sold, purchased, used or possessed alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia on city premises, the city may inspect the employee, the employee's locker, desk or other city-owned property under the control of the employee. Inspections under this section of this ordinance are limited to investigations into work-related misconduct and offenses against the employment relationship. Any searches for law enforcement purposes must otherwise comply with all applicable criminal law standards.

(8) *Consequences for violation of this ordinance.* Violations of this ordinance may result in severe disciplinary action, including discharge for a first offense, at the city's sole discretion. The city will routinely discharge an employee in the following cases:

- (a) When the employee uses, possesses, manufactures, distributes, dispenses or sells illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia on city premises or city business, in city-supplied vehicles, or during work hours;
- (b) When the employee uses or possesses without authorization, manufactures, distributes, dispenses or sells a controlled substance on city premises or city business, in city-supplied vehicles, or during working hours;
- (c) When the employee stores in a locker, desk, automobile or other repository on city premises any illegal drug, drug paraphernalia, or any controlled substance whose use is unauthorized;
- (d) When the employee is convicted under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring on or off the job;
- (e) When the employee switches, tampers, or adulterates, or attempts such switching, tampering or adulteration of a urine sample provided for testing;
- (f) When the employee refuses to consent to testing or to submit a breath, saliva, urine or blood sample for testing when requested by an appropriate city official;
- (g) When the employee refuses to submit to an inspection as defined in Subsection (7) above when requested by an appropriate city official;
- (h) When the employee fails to notify the City of an arrest or conviction under any criminal drug statute within five (5) days of arrest or conviction;
- (i) When the employee refuses to sign a statement agreeing to abide by the city's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Ordinance when so requested by an appropriate city official;

- (j) When the employee refuses to complete any medical questionnaires or consent forms prior to any testing, when requested by an appropriate city official;
- (k) When the employee refuses to complete any forms after submission of a urine or blood specimen, when so requested by an appropriate city official.

In addition to any other disciplinary action for a positive test for alcohol or drugs in violation of this ordinance, the city may, in its discretion, refer an employee for counseling and treatment programs for alcohol or drug abuse. Any employee who undergoes counseling and treatment for substance abuse and who continues to work must meet all established standards of conduct and job performance.

The city will promptly terminate any employee who tests positive for alcohol or drugs while undergoing city-required or referred counseling and treatment for alcohol or drug abuse or who tests positive on a periodic unannounced test for alcohol or drugs during a 24-month period following initiation of such rehabilitation program.

(9) *Condition of employment.* Compliance with the city's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Ordinance is a condition of employment. Failure or refusal of an employee to cooperate fully, sign any required document, submit to any inspection or test, or follow any prescribed course of substance abuse treatment will be grounds for termination. (Ord. of 4-3-90, § 3)

### 703 SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

Fort Valley is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. As an example, sexual harassment (both overt and subtle) is a form of employee misconduct that is demeaning to another person, undermines the integrity of the employment relationship, and is strictly prohibited.

Any employee who wants to report an incident of sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter to his or her Departmental Supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee should immediately contact the City Administrator. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly advise the Mayor or City Administrator, who will handle the matter in a timely and confidential manner.

Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### 704 PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the image the city presents to the community.

During business hours, employees are expected to present a clean and neat appearance and to dress according to the requirements of their positions.

Consult your Departmental Supervisor or Department Head if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate attire.

#### 705 RETURN OF PROPERTY

Employees are responsible for all property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must return all city property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment. Where permitted by applicable laws, the city may withhold from the employee's check or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. The City of Fort Valley may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

#### 706 RESIGNATION

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with the City of Fort Valley. The city requests at least two weeks' **written** resignation notice from all employees. Employees who fail to give sufficient notice of their intended resignation will have such failure noted in their personnel file and shall not be eligible for reemployment. City policy prohibits reemployment without City Council approval. Any employee who leaves employment with the city for any reason, whether voluntarily, or by termination, and who at any time thereafter applies for employment with the city to any position, shall not be employed unless and until approval by the Mayor and Council. Any former employee whose re-employment is approved by the Mayor and Council shall be specifically subject to the provision of Section 201-A and Section 205 (Probationary Period) as well as all other provisions of the Personnel Manual (Ord. of 3-4-86, § 1).

#### 707 SOLICITATION

In an effort to assure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by the City of Fort Valley may not solicit or distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose.

Fort Valley recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, employees may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities during working time. (Working time does not include lunch periods or any other periods in which employees are not on duty.)

In addition, the posting of written solicitations on city bulletin boards is prohibited. Bulletin boards are reserved for official organization communications on such items as:

- Employee announcements
- Internal memoranda
- Job openings
- Organization announcements
- Payday notice

- Workers' compensation insurance information
- State disability insurance/unemployment insurance information

### 708 Political Activities

City employees shall not be appointed or retained on the basis of their political activity. City employees shall not be coerced to take part in political campaigns, to solicit votes, to levy, contribute or solicit funds or support for the purpose of supporting or opposing the appointment or election of candidates for any city office.

In addition, the Hatch Acts further restrict political activity by government employees. If you have any questions regarding what political activities are allowed, please contact your Departmental Supervisor or the Personnel Department.

**Disciplinary Action**  
**and Grievance Policy**

## 801 DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS (Revised 1/2002)

It shall be the duty of all city employees to comply with and assist in carrying out the provisions of the city's personnel rules and regulations. No regular full-time employee or department head shall be disciplined except for violation of established rules and regulations, and such discipline shall be in accordance with procedures established by the personnel rules and regulations.

### (1) Employee and Supervisor Responsibilities:

- (a) It is the duty of every employee to correct any faults in performance when called to his/her attention and to make every effort to avoid conflict with the city's rules and regulations.
- (b) It is the duty of every supervisor to discuss improper or inadequate performance with the employee in order to correct the deficiencies and to avoid the need to exercise disciplinary action. Discipline shall be the responsibility of the supervisor and should be of an increasingly progressive nature. The steps of progression should be first oral reprimand, then written reprimand, suspension, and finally dismissal. However, this is not to say that any supervisor should not immediately terminate an employee for any one of the below listed reasons. Discipline should correspond to the offense.
- (c) Discipline of Department Heads shall be the responsibility of the City Administrator. Discipline of the City Administrator shall be the responsibility of the Mayor and Personnel Committee.

### (2) Grounds for Disciplinary Action or Dismissal

The following are declared to be grounds for oral reprimand, written reprimand, demotion, suspension, or removal of any full time employee or department head. (However, this is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of all grounds for disciplinary action):

- (a) Conviction of a felony.
- (b) Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude, whether a felony or a misdemeanor.
- (c) Acts of incompetency.
- (d) Absence without leave.
- (e) Acts of insubordination.
- (f) Intentional failure or refusal to carry out instructions.
- (g) Misappropriation, destruction, theft, conversion, or misuse of city property.
- (h) Employee becomes physically or mentally unfit for the performance of his/her essential functions.

- (i) Acts of misconduct while on duty.
  - (j) Willful disregard of orders.
  - (k) Habitual tardiness and/or absenteeism.
  - (l) Falsification of any information required by the city for employment purposes.
  - (m) Failure to properly report on-the-job accidents or personal injuries.
  - (n) Neglect or carelessness resulting in damage to city property or equipment.
  - (o) Repeated convictions during employment of misdemeanor, other than crimes of moral turpitude and/or traffic charges.
  - (p) Introduction, possession, or use on city property or in city equipment, or working under the influence of intoxicating liquor, wine, malt beverages, or any schedule drugs without prescriptions.
  - (q) Loss by a fire or police officer of any independent certification required of him/her in order to be such an officer.
  - (r) Arrest for any felony offense in the State of Georgia or any offense or act which if committed in the State of Georgia would constitute a felony.
  - (s) An arrest for any offense or act which prevents an employee from performing his/her job or significantly impairs an employee's ability to effectively perform his/her job.
- (3) It shall be the duty of each employee to maintain high standards of conduct, cooperation, efficiency, and economy in their [his/her] work with the city. Whenever work habits, attitude, production, or personal conduct of any employee falls below the accepted norm for all employees, supervisors should point out those behavioral deficiencies to the employee at the time they are observed or a reasonable time thereafter. Corrections and suggestions should be presented in a constructive and helpful manner in an effort to elicit cooperation and goodwill from all employees. Supervisors shall assist employees in attaining competence through on-the-job training and additional training as required. Whenever possible, oral and/or written warnings shall precede formal discipline.

#### (4) Employee Notice

A written notice shall be given to each employee stating the reasons for disciplinary action and its effective date. Notice must be given to the employee before any disciplinary action is taken. A copy of such notice signed by the employee in the employee's file shall serve as evidence of delivery.

802 RIGHT OF APPEAL (Revised 1/2000 & 9/2004))

All non-probationary employees are granted the right of appeal from impending disciplinary action resulting in the loss of compensation. Within ten days after notice of disciplinary action, the employee may file a written appeal to the supervisor of the department. If not satisfied with the decision rendered by the supervisor, the employee, within seven days after receiving the decision of the supervisor, may appeal disciplinary actions to the City Administrator and/or the Mayor. An employee may appeal the decision of the City Administrator and/or Mayor in writing within five days after receiving the decision to the Personnel Committee of the City Council. A decision concerning disciplinary action rendered by the Personnel Committee of the City Council shall be final and conclusive with respect to hourly workers except in cases where the disciplinary action led to the termination of employment. An employee that has been terminated may appeal the decision of the Personnel Committee within five days after receiving the decision of the Personnel Committee to the Mayor and Council. However, Mayor and Council shall have the final decision with regard to the City Administrator and Department Heads. All appeal requests shall be heard within ten days from the day of the employee's request. All rulings on the appeals shall be made in a timely manner.

### 803 GRIEVANCE POLICY (revised 12/20/04)

(1) *Purpose.* A formal policy is hereby established to provide prompt consideration of employees grievances. It is the desire of the Mayor and Council to resolve grievances informally. Both supervisors and employees are expected to make every effort to resolve problems as they arise.

(2) *Policy.* An employee must first present a grievance to his or her supervisor and thereafter to the Department supervisor. If the employee is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance, the employee may refer the grievance to the City Administrator. If the employee is dissatisfied with the disposition of the grievance by the City Administrator, the employee may refer the grievance to the appropriate departmental committee. If the employee is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance by the departmental committee, the employee may refer the grievance to the Mayor and Council.

(3) *Grievances to be Written.* All grievances shall be submitted in writing.

(4) *Protection.* No employee shall be disciplined or discriminated against in any way because of his or her proper use of the grievance procedure.

## **Public Complaints**

## 901 PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

A public complaint against any city employee may be submitted only in writing. The complaint will be directed to the appropriate Department Head for his/her review and action. Within five days of receipt of such complaint, a conference with the City Administrator shall be held at which the city employee and the party originating the complaint, with the attendance of the employee's department head, will have an opportunity to make known the origin and specific circumstances of the complaint. Such a conference must be held prior to any form of disciplinary action which is subsequently taken against a city employee resulting from a public complaint. The Department Head is required to notify the complainant within five (5) working days of the action that was taken against the employee. The Department Head may, at his/her discretion, elect to have a preliminary investigation regarding the complaint completed by an outside agency.

**Life-Threatening Illnesses**  
**In The Workplace**

## 1001 LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES IN THE WORKPLACE

- (A) Employees with life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer, heart disease, and AIDS, often wish to continue their normal pursuits, including work, to the extent allowed by their condition. Fort Valley supports these endeavors as long as employees are able to meet acceptable performance standards. As in the case of other disabilities, the City of Fort Valley will make reasonable accommodations in accordance with all legal requirements, to allow qualified employees with life-threatening illnesses to perform the essential functions of their jobs.

Medical information on individual employees is treated confidentially. Fort Valley will take reasonable precautions to protect such information from inappropriate disclosure. Managers and other employees have a responsibility to respect and maintain the confidentiality of employee medical information. Anyone inappropriately disclosing such information is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

- (B) When required by law, the city will provide inoculations for employees who are exposed to infectious diseases.

## **APPENDIX A**

## ANNEX A

### CITY OF FORT VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

1. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
2. Have a high school diploma or equivalent, GED Certificate.
3. Submit to and pass all phases of a medical examination.
4. Submit to and pass a written examination.
5. Submit to and pass a polygraph test prior to employment and also at any time when requested by the City of Fort Valley.
6. Submit to a complete drug screening prior to employment and at any time requested by the City of Fort Valley.
7. Submit to and pass the minimum physical fitness requirements and maintain department requirements throughout employment.
8. Obtain and maintain certification as a (Basic Emergency Medical Technician) within two (2) years of employment or as soon as courses are made available to the City of Fort Valley and understand that this certification will be a part of the criteria for promotions.
  - a. Failure from the assigned E.M.T. course will result in you being required to enroll, at your own expense, in another course and complete it within the required 24 months after employment.
  - b. Attendance in the E.M.T. class will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor and will include your scheduled work days and scheduled off days as necessary, without additional compensation.
  - c. Resignation from the Fort Valley Fire Department within 24 months after completing your E.M.T. certification will result in a pro-rate share of the cost of the course being charged to you for payment, based upon the length of expired time since certification.
9. Obtain a State of Georgia Class B or greater driver's license within year of probation and maintain license throughout employment.
10. Must obtain a National Professional Qualification Firefighter Level 1 Certification within twelve (12) months of employment.
11. Report the need for sick time by 0700 hours on the day of scheduled work.

12. Submit to an alcohol breath analysis on request of the Fire Chief or his designated representative.
13. Know, understand, and abide by the dress codes of the Fort Valley Department.
14. Read and understand the rules and regulations of the City of Fort Valley and the Fort Valley Fire Department, as provided by the Fire Department.
15. Reside within 6 miles of Fincher Park. This includes any relocation of current firefighters.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand these conditions of employment, and I agree to adhere and abide by the terms as stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary (seal)

Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Witness

## **PRE-EMPLOYMENT ORAL INTERVIEW**

1. Explain what motivations you may have in seeking a career as a firefighter.
2. What qualifications do you feel you have that will qualify you as a firefighter?
3. As an employee of the Fort Valley Fire Department, will you have any problems conforming to set rules and regulations concerning on and off duty behavior, dress codes, and personal appearance?
4. The Fort Valley Fire Department works under a chain of command system. What are your feelings as to being at the bottom of that chain of command?
5. Will you and your family have any problems adjusting to a 24 hours on and 48 hours off work schedule?
6. Do you feel that with the proper training you can perform the duties required of the Emergency Medical Service Personnel?
7. Explain why you feel you can mentally handle the stress involved when working with trauma victims, different types of disease, and death.

## **FIRE HYDRANT EXERCISE**

INSTRUCTIONS: (Read to applicant)

MAXIMUM TIME: 5 Minutes

This exercise is designed to test your mechanical and operative abilities. You are furnished a fire hydrant, two (2) fifty (50)- foot sections of 2-1/2" hose, a 2-1/2" nozzle, a plug wrench and an assortment of fittings. All of the fittings can be used to make the connections if you feel that any of them are needed. The object of this exercise is to couple one section of the hose to the hydrant, couple both sections together and couple the nozzle on the end of the hose and stretch the hose to its full 100-foot length. You may use any of the fittings that are placed before you if, in your opinion, any or all of the shortest length of time. Although time is important, take time to complete the exercise.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Applicant to wear helmet.

## **HALYARD (ROPE) PULL EXERCISE**

INSTRUCTIONS: (Read to applicant)

MAXIMUM TIME: 1 Minute 30 Seconds

This exercise is to test your physical and manipulative abilities and physical agility.

While two or more regular firefighters hold the 35-foot extension ladder in the upright position, the applicant must place either foot against the main beam at the base and, using the hand-over-hand method, pull on the halyard (rope) one hand at a time and extend the top section fully to the top. It must then be lowered using the hand-over-hand method (with one hand at a time) until the top section is completely down. The top section of the ladder must be fully extended and lowered three (3) times to complete the exercise. Although time is an important factor, take enough time as you need so as not to allow the halyard (rope) to slip through your hands.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Applicants and participants wear helmet and bunker coat. (Gloves optional.)

**FORT VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
MINIMUM PHYSICAL FITNESS REQUIREMENTS**

INSTRUCTIONS: (Read to applicant)

These exercises are to test for the minimum physical fitness.

The applicant will perform a minimum of seven (7) (Palms Away) Pull-Ups.

The applicant will perform thirty-five (35) bent-knee sit-ups within two (2) minutes.

The applicant will perform a minimum of twenty-five (25) standard push-ups.

## **LADDER CLIMB EXERCISE**

INSTRUCTIONS: (Read to applicant)

MAXIMUM TIME: 4 Minutes

This exercise is to test for fear of height, legs and hand coordination, and natural ability.

The ladder is set at a 70 degree climbing angle and extended fully into the air. To complete the exercise, the applicant, with a life safety belt on, must climb the ladder, without stopping and without placing two feet on the same rung at the same time, to the top of the ladder, hook the safety snap ring around the second rung from the top of the ladder, lean back taking the slack out of the safety belt, and clap the hands three (3) distinct and separate times over the head. Reverse the order and descend the ladder to the bottom.

Use a safety line on all operations.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Applicant wears helmet and safety belt. (Glove optional.)

**FORT VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
PHYSICAL FITNESS EVALUATION FORM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Test: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Exempt:      Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Pull-Ups (Chins) Performed: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Sit-Ups Performed: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Push-Ups Performed: \_\_\_\_\_

I concur that the above information is correct.

Signature

Examiner Signature

## ANNEX B

### FORT VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SELECTION HIRING

1. PURPOSE:

To describe the elements of Personnel Selection Process and to require that any adverse impact be minimized in the selection process.

2. AUTHORITY:

The authority for administration of the employment/selection process is with the Chief of Police.

3. PROCESS:

The following elements of the selection process will not necessarily be completed in order:

- A. All employment opportunities are advertised for a minimum of ten (10) days in a mass media market and minority media when available. Job announcements are posted in the City Hall and Police Department.
- B. Applicants submit application forms to the Chief of Police. Resumes, certificates and diplomas should be omitted unless requested.
- C. Applicants are screened for minimum qualifications. If an applicant is disqualified on the face of the application, he/she will be notified by mail as to the reason. An application will not be rejected if the omission is easily correctable before the start of testing.
- D. Qualified applicants will be notified by mail as to the date, place and time to submit to the testing process to measure required characteristics for acceptable job performance or traits important to job performance. Testing and survey material shall be validated. Testing will include, but is not limited to, psychological, aptitude, and physical qualification testing.
5. Applicants completing the testing and evaluation will be notified of the results by mail. The applicant will be advised of the date, time, and place to come for an interview. Interviews will be conducted by the Division Commanders and the Chief of Police.
- F. The applicants will be notified of the results of the interview.

- G. At the conclusion of the employment interviews, background investigations will be completed on the top candidates. Background investigations will be conducted as directed by the Chief of Police.
  - H. Background investigations shall, at a minimum:
    - 1. Be completed before an applicant is hired. However, the act of hiring does not preclude a further background investigation if warranted;
    - 2. Verify a candidate's qualifying credentials;
    - 3. Review a candidates criminal record, if any;
    - 4. Verify at least three personal references;
    - 5. Be performed by personnel trained in collecting required information.
    - 6. Be maintained on file for a minimum of five (5) years.
  - I. A drug screen shall be performed by a qualified testing company.
  - J. The medical examinations shall only be conducted by a licensed physician to certify the general health of a candidate. He may be assisted by qualified personnel.
  - K. A polygraph exam will be scheduled for the candidate. No person shall be disqualified for employment solely on the opinions of the polygraph operator. Admissions that conflict with previously submitted information may be taken into account.
  - L. All candidates must be at least 19 years of age at the time of application, be a United States Citizen, have a valid driver's license, and submit a complete set of fingerprints.
  - M. Lateral entry may be considered for all positions whether sworn or civilian. Lateral entry candidates must meet all requirements incumbent upon other applicants. When a lateral entry candidate is equally qualified, the selection decision shall favor agency employees. Candidates for the position of Police Officer who have up-to-date Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Law Enforcement certification will be given more favorable consideration for employment over non-certified applicants.
  - N. Any candidate who is deferred on the basis of correctable deficiencies may re-apply after six (6) months for re-testing. Any candidate who is dropped for consideration on the basis of a single test, examination, interview or investigation shall be informed, in writing, of the specific reason within thirty (30) calendar days.
  - O. The records of candidates not being hired shall be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years.
4. SCORING:

Successful candidates must pass all steps as follows:

- A. Psychological survey must reflect a score of "Recommended". If two or more candidates are equal in other respects, the candidate in the higher percentile group will be considered to have the higher score.
- B. Candidates must score at or above the designated cut-off score of 70 percent on the aptitude test to remain under consideration.
- C. Interviews are scored individually by the procedure described on the interview material.
- D. Physical fitness and agility testing and scoring will be conducted in accordance with the Police Department Policies and Procedure Manual.
- E. The Chief shall consider the totality of the testing/ evaluation procedure when making his choice(s).

5. DISQUALIFICATIONS:

- A. Any positive test for illegal drug(s), submitting a contaminated or tampered sample, failure or refusal to submit a specimen, or failure to disclose use of a drug whether prescribed or not, shall be disqualifying.
- B. No applicant shall be considered who does not successfully complete each phase of the selection process, except as noted.
- C. Falsification, misrepresentation, omission or cheating on application or any part of the application, testing or selection process.

6. FORMER EMPLOYEES:

Former employees who left the Fort Valley Police Department in good standing may be re-hired at the discretion of the Chief without repeating the selection process except for drug screening and psychological survey.

7. HIRING ACTION:

- A. The Chief of Police, or his/her designee, will notify the candidate selected and notify the remaining candidates that a selection has been made.
- B. The salary and grade step will be determined by the Chief in accordance with city pay classification. The Chief of Police will prepare a Personnel Order containing the date of employment and other pertinent data, in accordance with the City Policy Manual.

C. Whenever possible, new hires will be placed on the payroll at the beginning of a pay period.

8. PROBATIONARY PERIODS:

Per Personnel Policy.

CHIEF OF POLICE

## ANNEX C

### VACATION BUY –BACK POLICY (Revised 3/2001)

The City of Fort Valley prefers that each employee use their accrued vacation hours. However, sometimes, there are circumstances which may prevent this from happening. Therefore, the City Council has approved the buy-back of vacation hours under certain circumstances. In order for an employee to be eligible to sell vacation time, the employee must meet the following conditions:

- Have more than 80 hours of accrued vacation time, (144 hours for Fire Department employees assigned to shifts.)
- Buy back of vacation hours cannot reduce accrued vacation time below 80 hours (144 hours for Fire Department.)

During the first two weeks of August each year, the Payroll Department will notify each eligible employee of the following;

- The number of vacation hours accrued by such employee
- The maximum number of hours eligible for buy-back
- The rate at which these hours will be compensated
- The total of such compensation if approved.

Within three working days of receipt of this information, the employee must notify the Payroll department of the number of hours he/she wishes to sell to the City. The Payroll Department will use these requests to calculate the cost to the City to meet these requests. The Payroll Department will compare this total to the amount budgeted for buy-back. This comparison will determine the percent of each request which can be approved. The approved total shall not exceed budgeted amount. The Payroll Department will compile a report of this information and present it to Mayor and Council for review and take appropriate action. If the “Buy-Back” for that year is approved, the employee will be paid prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Notes:

- The Buy-Back Program will be subject to yearly approval
- The finance Committee of the City Council will consider this program each year during the Annual budget preparation to determine the availability of funds. A recommendation based on the identified availability of funding will be made to full Council with final approval being made by the Council.
- Nothing in this procedure is intended to supercede the provisions of Section 302 (Vacation Benefits) of the Personnel Manual.

## ANNEX D

### Sick Leave Donation (*Revised 7/2003*)

#### I. Purpose:

To allow for the donation of sick leave as a means of assisting employees who, because of severe illness or injury to themselves, their spouse, child, parent or grandparent, have exhausted their accrued leave hours and are therefore subject to a loss of income.

#### II. Applicability:

All full-time employees.

#### III. Eligibility:

An employee requesting donations of leave hours must meet the following requirements:

1. Have an absence due to a non-occupational, personal illness or disability for which they have medical documentation. Medical documentation must be provided at the time donations are requested and at any time thereafter as required.
2. Have exhausted all sick leave and vacation leave hours.
3. Have an expected absence which will be at least two weeks in duration after the exhaustion of the employee's sick leave and vacation leave hours.
4. Have no counseling statements, disciplinary action or unsatisfactory performance evaluations related to attendance in the twelve (12) months prior to requesting the donation of leave.
5. Have a spouse, child, parent, or grandparent with a serious illness or injury that requires inpatient care or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider.
  - a. "Parent" means the biological parent/grandparent, legally adoptive parent/grandparent, or an individual who stood *in loco parentis* to the employee.
  - b. "Child" means a biological son or daughter, an adopted child, foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child of a parent standing *in loco parentis*.
  - c. "Spouse" means husband or wife.
  - d. "Serious Health Condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves
    - i. inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential

medical care facility.

ii. continuing treatment by a healthcare provider.

#### **IV. Requirements for Donation of Leave:**

1. An employee can donate sick leave only in increments of full work days.
2. An employee donating sick leave hours cannot donate an amount of sick leave hours which would cause the employee's sick leave balance to fall below a balance of four (4) work weeks of accrued sick leave.
3. An employee may donate a maximum of thirty (30) work days of sick leave in any one calendar year as long as the required minimum balance is maintained.
4. Once an employee has given official notice of his/her intent to terminate employment, the employee cannot donate time.

#### **V. Administration of the Donation Program:**

The Administrative Assistant in the Administration Department shall have the responsibility for administering the Leave Donation Program which includes the following:

1. Verifying medical documentation.
2. Verifying eligibility requirements for receipt of leave.
3. Verifying eligibility requirements of donation of leave.
4. Contacting departments for donations and handling of corresponding paperwork.
5. Approving and processing donations and maintaining proper accounting of hours donated and distributed.

An employee who requests donation of sick leave must have recommendation of the Department Head and approval of the City Administrator.

An employee who fails to provide a current medical statement with a diagnosis and expected return to work date within seven (7) days of the request shall not receive further donations.

An employee is not eligible for more than the equivalent of 35 work days of donated time in a three year period. The maximum amount of donations an employee may receive during his or her employment with the City is 60 work days.

## ANNEX E

### City of Fort Valley Pay Scale (2006)

Grade	Minimum	Mid Point	Maximum
1	13,858	17,323	20,787
2	14,551	18,189	21,826
3	15,278	19,097	22,917
4	16,041	20,052	24,062
5	16,843	21,054	25,264
6	17,685	22,107	26,528
7	18,572	23,215	27,858
8	19,500	24,375	29,249
9	20,473	25,592	30,710
10	21,497	26,871	32,247
11	22,576	28,219	33,864
12	23,701	29,627	35,552
13	24,887	31,109	37,331
14	26,131	32,665	39,197
15	27,438	34,298	41,158
16	28,810	36,012	43,215
17	30,250	36,787	45,375
18	31,763	39,703	47,644

19	33,350	41,688	50,026
20	35,685	44,607	53,529
21	38,183	47,729	57,275
22	40,855	51,070	61,284
23	43,715	54,645	65,573
24	46,776	58,470	70,164
25	50,050	62,562	75,075

### **Guidelines for Use of Pay Scale**

I. New Hires:

All new hires will begin at the minimum wage for the classifications for which they were hired. Any deviation from this policy requires prior approval of Mayor and Council. No exceptions.

II. Promotions:

When an individual is promoted to a job with a higher classification than his/her current classification, he/she will start at the minimum of the new classification. Any deviation from this policy requires prior approval of Mayor and Council. No exceptions.

III. Merit Raises:

As there is no budget consideration given to funding of merit raises, any such raise must have prior approval of Mayor and Council. No exceptions.

*City of Fort Valley Position/Grade*

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Pay Grade</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	
City Administrator	25
Finance Director	21
Finance Technician	12
City Marshal	19
Municipal Court Clerk	14
Administrative Assistant	12
<b>FIRE DEPARTMENT</b>	
Fire Chief	23
Captain	20
Lieutenant	17
Firefighter/Engineer	13
Administrative Secretary	10
<b>POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>	
Chief	23
Training Officer	22
Captain-CID	21
Captain-Patrol	21
Lieutenant - Crime Prevention	19
Lieutenant - CID	19
Lieutenant - Patrol	19
Sergeant - CID	17
Sergeant - Patrol	17
Detective	16
Police Officer	14
Administrative Assistant	12
Animal Control Officer	10
Administrative Secretary - CID	10
Police Records Technician	10
<b>PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT</b>	
Public Works Director	23
Administrative Assistant	12

Sanitation Supervisor	16
Mechanic	14
Cemetery Crew Supervisor	12
Street Crew Supervisor	12
Parks Crew Supervisor	12
Sanitation Equipment Operator I	10
Sanitation Equipment Operator II	11
Tractor Operator	9
Maintenance Worker (Laborer)	7

**ANNEX F  
CITY OF VALLEY  
REQUEST FOR MATERNITY/PATERNITY/ADOPTION LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date of Anticipated Leave: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Date of Return to Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you taken any type of maternity/paternity/adoption leave in the past 12 months? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_  
No

Which type of leave are you requesting? \_\_\_ Maternity \_\_\_ Paternity \_\_\_ Adoption  
**(Please provide documentation from a health care provider or attorney certifying that you have had a child or adopted a child)**

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Employee Signature

Date

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Department Head Signature    Date

Director of Human Resources    Date

\*\*\*Return to Director of Human Resources\*\*\*

**Form Approved by City Administrator 3/22/17**