

**REQUEST FOR ITEM TO BE PLACED ON AGENDA  
THOMPSON FALLS CITY COUNCIL**

I, Gussie Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

request the following item be placed on the agenda for  
the February 9 2026, City Council Meeting:

Please give a brief description of the item to be discussed,  
approximate time you need and the results you would like to see.

Information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time: 6:00 pm

Action: Review city Personnel Policy  
Manual

\_\_\_\_\_

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**All agenda requests must be submitted by Noon on  
Wednesday before the Council Meeting.**



# CITY of THOMPSON FALLS Personnel Policy Manual

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## INTRODUCTION LETTER

Welcome New Employee:

The CITY of THOMPSON FALLS is pleased that you have joined our organization of professionals. The City is a professional organization providing many valuable services to the residents of Thompson Falls. Your position has been designed to assist the City with accomplishing these services. We hope you will find this position rewarding and challenging.

During your twelve-month probationary period, your employment with the City is at will and may be terminated with or without consent at any time by either you or the City. This policy manual is not an employment contract. Rather, it is designed to provide you general information regarding employment practices and benefits with the City. The policy manual cannot cover all employment situations, scenarios, or questions, but it is designed to cover the basic rules. Policies and rules contained within the manual will be added, updated, or deleted as determined by the City. You are encouraged to submit suggestions or ideas regarding current policies or additional policies to the MAYOR or his/her designee.

As you familiarize yourself with the City staff and your new office, please note the employee bulletin board displays the required federal and state postings. The postings are updated from time to time - be sure to read the board occasionally. If you notice an item that is obsolete or needs updating, please let the MAYOR or City Clerk or their designee know.

During your first few days working for the City you will probably have several general questions regarding our organization and policies. You are encouraged to research the answer within the manual; however, do not hesitate to ask your supervisor or the Mayor or his/her designee concerning any questions you may have.

The staff of the City would like to welcome you.

Sincerely,

CITY OF THOMPSON FALLS  
MAYOR, RUSTI LEIVESTAD



Revised and approved by the City Council – June 12, 2023

It is expressly understood that the policy manual for the City of Thompson Falls does not constitute a guarantee of employment or promise of any kind. The City, in its sole discretion, may direct, hire, promote, transfer, assign and retain employees; supervise, discipline, and relieve employees from their duties; determine and change hours of work, shifts, and methods of operation; establish change or abolish its policies, practices, rules and regulations.

It is understood that the policy manual is issued to inform employees regarding the operating policies of the City. The policy manual may be changed from time to time at the sole discretion of the City, and is to be used as a guide to City employees in the performance of their duties. Violations of the policies set forth in this manual may result in disciplinary action.

By signing this statement, the employee acknowledges the City of Thompson Falls policy manual has been received and read and that the employee understands the policies contained herein.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date of Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Attest:

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Definitions

Conflict of Interest – Conflicts of interest for the City of Thompson Falls employees arise when a government employee’s personal or financial interest conflicts or appears to conflict with his official responsibility.

Discipline – Correction, punishment or penalty. Discipline is used to bring order to situations where there have been violations of federal, state or local laws and/or violations of City rules and regulations, employee conduct/behavior/performance standards, or City policies.

Exempt Employee - Exempt employees are those who, according to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), are not covered under the provisions pertaining to minimum wage or overtime pay. The FLSA provides for certain exemptions for employees employed in a bona fide executive, administrative or professional capacity. In order to be an exempt employee, certain tests relating to duties, responsibilities and salary must be met (see the Clerk/Personnel Director for details).

Grievance – An injury, injustice or wrong which gives ground for complaint because it is seen as unjust, discriminatory, or oppressive. Employees file grievances through the Grievance Procedure contained in this manual.

Independent Contractor - Independent Contractors are not considered employees of the City. Rather, Independent Contractors are those who work on a contract for services basis and must complete work assignments or responsibilities and receive payment (compensation) as identified in the contract. No employee benefits are provided to the Independent Contractor.

Nonexempt Employee - A nonexempt employee is an employee who, according to the (FLSA) is entitled to receive at least minimum wage and receive overtime pay or overtime compensatory time after the employee has worked 40 hours in a work week period. Overtime pay is equivalent to one and one-half times the employee’s regular hourly pay for each hour over 40 hours worked.

Regular Full-Time Employee - An employee who normally works 30 hours a week. Regular full-time employees are eligible for all employee benefits.

Regular Part-Time Employee - An employee who normally works less than 30 hours a week.

Remote Employee - An employee who performs the majority of their work in a location different from where City general operations occur. They may or may not be covered under the provisions of the FLSA, depending on the status of their employment, and have specific conditions of employment outlined in their respective employment agreements.

Seasonal Employee - An employee designated as seasonal at time of hire, who performs duties interrupted by the seasons, and who may be recalled without the loss of rights or benefits accrued during the preceding season. A seasonal employee may be eligible for limited or prorated benefits.

Short-term Worker - A short-term worker is hired to work for an hourly wage established by the CITY for a period not to exceed 90 days within a 12 month period. Short-term workers are not eligible for permanent status and may not be hired without a competitive selection process. The short-term worker is not eligible for any employee benefits including leave, holiday benefits or any insurance benefits.

Sick Leave – Period allowed by an employer to an employee for the employee’s sickness either with or without pay but with no loss of seniority or other benefits.

Temporary Employee - An employee who is hired on a temporary basis for a definite period of time not to exceed 12 months and will be terminated at the end of the employment period. This employee may perform temporary duties or regular duties on a temporary basis; however, the employee is not eligible to become a regular employee without completing a competitive selection process. Temporary employees may be eligible for limited or prorated benefits.

Vacation Leave – A recess or leave of absence; a respite or time of respite from active duty or employment; an intermission or rest period during which activity or work is suspended; a period of freedom from duty or work but not the end of employment. Vacations do not result in loss of seniority or other benefits.

Workplace Violence – Unjust or unwarranted exercise of force, usually with the accompaniment of vehemence, outrage or fury. Violence can include unlawfully exercised force, any exertion of physical force so as to injure, damage or abuse, as well as veiled threats by words and/or acts.

## **2. Expectations**

Welcome to the City team. The City wants every employee to know what they can expect from the City of Thompson Falls and what the City expects of them. The policy manual is designed to inform employees what the City expects of them, City policies and procedures, and the Grievance Procedure should employees have a problem.

Employees are expected to treat co-workers, Board Members, vendors, colleagues, customers and other business contacts with respect and dignity. Employees are expected to conduct their job functions in a professional, businesslike fashion with minimal interference by other staff members or visitors. Employee attention to responsibilities and work products should be constant, consistent, efficient and productive. Personal interference or distractions should be kept to a minimum.

The affairs of the City are important and are to be considered a confidential trust, as well as a responsibility. Employee attitude, ability, productivity and a sense of responsibility are critical aspects of all job descriptions.

## **3. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The City is an equal opportunity employer. The City shall comply with all relevant federal and state laws, to include rules and regulations put forth by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, (EEOC). The City shall adhere to all relevant provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, (ADA). The City ensures equal employment opportunity regardless of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, marital status, familial status, political belief, age, or mental/physical disability, (as defined by the ADA), unless such disability effectively prevents the performance of the essential duties required of the position and which are bona fide occupational qualifications that cannot be accommodated without undue hardship to the City. All applicant and employee medical records will be kept confidential.

If an employee believes that they have been subjected to discrimination, including harassment, based upon any of these factors, they should immediately contact their supervisor and pursue corrective action. If the employee feels they need to resolve the problem by filing a grievance, they should pursue action through the Grievance Procedure stated within the City's policy manual.

Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, the CITY will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on the MMIA and/or a direct threat to the health and/or safety of the individual or others.

Employees or applicants who believe they need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should contact the Clerk or Mayor and request such an accommodation. The CITY will engage in the interactive process to identify the barriers that make it difficult for the applicant or employee to have an equal opportunity to perform his or her job. The CITY will then identify possible accommodations, if any, that will help to eliminate the limitation or barrier. If the accommodation is reasonable and will not impose an undue hardship on the CITY and/or a direct threat to the health and/or safety of the individual or others, the CITY will make the accommodation. The CITY may also propose an alternative accommodation(s). The CITY is not required to provide the accommodation preferred by the individual, to reallocate essential job functions, or to provide personal use items (i.e., eyeglasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs, etc.)

#### **4. Confidential Information/Personal Gain**

Employees of the City of Thompson Falls may deal with confidential information. It is imperative that employees maintain integrity and not discuss City business with people who should not be privy to the information. In some circumstances, City business should be revealed to other City employees on a need-to-know basis. If an employee has questions regarding confidential information and to whom the information should be revealed, they should consult with the Mayor or his/her designee, or with City's legal counsel.

Likewise, employees may not use knowledge gained through their

employment at the City to achieve personal gain for themselves or anyone else. Employees cannot participate as a City employee where they may have private pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, or perform in some function requiring discretion on behalf of the City. Employees cannot disclose or use confidential information concerning property or City affairs to advance personal or private interest with respect to any contract or transaction that is or may be subject of official action of the City.

### **5. Lawsuits Against the City**

When an employee is approached by a legal process server, they should refer the server to the MAYOR or his/her designee or to legal counsel. Should an authority not be available and the employee is required to accept served papers, it is the employee's priority to locate and forward the information to either of the authorities listed without opening or reading the documents.

No employee shall discuss aspects of any legal situation that is subject to or is currently involved in a lawsuit or hearing without first consulting with the Mayor or his/her designee or legal counsel. Likewise, if an employee is approached for a press release or news quote, refer all contacts to the Mayor or his/her designee.

### **6. New Employees**

New employees will complete an informal orientation session with the MAYOR or his/her designee. The employee will have the opportunity to complete necessary employment forms required by Federal and State Statutes, as well as payroll and withholding information. The Mayor or his/her designee will explain in general terms the rules and expectations and provide an overview of the pay and benefit packages offered by the City. The employee will be responsible for reading and following the policies established within the policy manual, to include understanding their employment classification. In addition, new employees will be provided orientation and education specific to the equipment and tasks required of their new position.

All employees will serve a 12 month probationary period. The probationary period allows time for the employee to learn the position as well as time for the supervisor to evaluate an employee's potential and performance. During

the established probationary period, City reserves the right to terminate an employee with or without cause. An evaluation will be completed prior to completion of the 12 month probationary period to notify the employee of their status (regular, terminated or extended probation when applicable).

#### **7. Employment of Relatives (Nepotism)**

No employees will be appointed in a manner inconsistent with the Nepotism laws and definitions as outlined in Title 2, Part 2, Chapter 3, MCA.

#### **8. Authority for Personnel Action**

The City reserves the right to direct, hire, promote, transfer, assign and retain employees. The City of Thompson Falls also reserves the right to supervise, discipline, and relieve employees from their duties for any reason determined sufficient by the City; as well as determine and change hours of work, shifts, and operational methods. The policies, practices, rules, and regulations may be established or changed/abolished with the sole discretion of the City. The Mayor or his/her designee will execute personnel actions at his/her discretion, with consultation and/or consent from the Clerk/Personnel Director and/or City Council, when necessary and consistent with all applicable laws, regulations and this policy.

#### **9. Outside Employment**

The City should be the primary job for regular employees. Should another position interfere in any way with the employees' ability to satisfactorily complete City job duties, the employee may receive disciplinary action.

#### **10. Remote Employment**

In some situations, the City may see fit to hire employees who reside in different locations. Remote employment brings with it unique responsibilities and advantages that should not be abused or misused. If a remote employee requires a unique work environment that is deemed unreasonable by the employer or creates a situation which the City determines is not workable, the City may require that the employee work out of the appropriate City facility. If the employee could not do this, the City reserves the right to take other actions as required in accordance with City

policies. Specific conditions of remote employment shall be included in the employee's individual employment agreement.

### **11. Performance Appraisals and Job Evaluations**

Employee performance evaluations are provided at least annually to non-probationary employees. The evaluations report progress and allow correction of any deficiencies, recognize employee strengths and special abilities as well as provide an opportunity to discuss areas that need improvement. Annual appraisals and evaluations should provide an ongoing performance record. This may be used as a supportive document for personnel actions such as promotions or demotions. They also provide employees an opportunity to discuss personal goals, City goals and means for improvement. Annual evaluations provide an opportune time to formulate or update the employees' job descriptions.

Probationary employees will receive informal feedback throughout their probationary period. The supervisor or the Mayor or his/her designee will formally evaluate the probationary employee at the end of the probationary period or as soon as is feasible, at which time the employee will be advised of his or her status (regular or terminated.)

The employee's immediate supervisor or the Mayor or his/her designee will complete the evaluation using their job description and the City personnel policy manual as the appraisal basis. The employee is encouraged to complete a preliminary self-appraisal to prepare for the evaluation meeting. The employee and the evaluator shall schedule a conference to discuss the employee's job performance and the job description. The conference will provide the opportunity for the employee to work with their supervisor or the Mayor or his/her designee to develop the employee's understanding of the position, annual goals, training needs, budget restraints/needs and improvement plan. If the employee, their supervisor or the Mayor or his/her designee do not agree on an evaluation result, the employee may respond in writing within 10 working days and attach the statement to the performance evaluation form.

The employee, their supervisor or the Mayor or his/her designee will sign and date the evaluation form. If the employee refuses to sign the evaluation form, documentation of their refusal will be added to their evaluation. The

employee's signature will indicate that the employee has reviewed the evaluation with their supervisor or the Mayor or his/her designee and understands the comments contained within the evaluation.

### **12. Work While Traveling out of the Office**

City employees may be required to travel. When working away from the office, it is important for employees to maintain contact with the appropriate City office by frequently calling into the office to provide status reports and to check for messages.

Occasionally it may be necessary to get in touch with traveling employees. It is important for the employee to leave an itinerary with appropriate City staff, in the event the employee needs to be contacted. The employee should inform their supervisor of their route and travel plans so other City staff can assist in their safe arrival.

### **13. Use of City Equipment**

All City equipment, (owned, leased or otherwise) shall be used for City business purposes only.

City Employees shall not permit non-city employees to use City equipment. Further provisions regarding use of City property are found in paragraph 14 (telephones), paragraph 15 (computers), and paragraph 25 (vehicles).

### **14. Telephone**

City telephones are to be used for City business. Personal telephone calls should be kept at a minimum and should not interfere with the employee's work. Unless traveling, long distance charges are to be billed to the employee's personal calling card, collect to the call receiver, or to the employee's home number. Personal charges/bills to the City shall be the responsibility of the employee. Employees violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

While traveling, employees may make calls to check in with their families/significant others. Such phone calls are to be made on a reasonable basis at City expense. The Mayor or his/her designee will notify employees if such phone calls become unreasonable or appear inappropriate at which

point disciplinary action may also occur.

### **15. Computer Usage**

Use of the City's electronic communications equipment, systems and/or tools is a privilege. Electronic communications equipment should be used for activities that fall within the course and scope of the employee's job duties. Personal computer use that is deemed excessive or inappropriate by the City or computer use that is illegal is prohibited and may result disciplinary action. New employees will be given a period of instruction on the City's computer equipment by the Mayor and/or City Clerk as part of their new employee orientation. Upon completion of the period of instruction, a statement signed by the employee and their supervisor will be entered in the employee's personnel file. If the employee refuses to sign the statement, a written statement documenting their refusal will be added to their personnel file.

#### Email

Employees are responsible for the content and dissemination of their messages. This responsibility includes ensuring that their messages are accurate, courteous and that they do not violate another's right to privacy or confidentiality. If an employee has a question pertaining to the content of an email, they should consult with their supervisor.

#### Security

The City owns the contents of all files stored on its systems; all messages transmitted over its systems, and reserves the right to access them. E-mails may be accessed and monitored in the normal course of business by system administrators, supervisors and support staff. The City expressly reserves the right to monitor use of the Internet by employees.

### **16. Personnel Files**

The City maintains records on every employee related to their employment with the City. The employee's personnel file will contain information such as employment application /resume or cover letter, performance evaluations, training records, commendations and awards, disciplinary records, and resignation/termination records. Such information will be obtained from the employee or from others with the employee's authorization. Any