

CITY OF TUMWATER  
POLICY MANUAL – PART 1: PERSONNEL POLICIES

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3.01 Appointing Authority

The Mayor is the appointing authority with power of appointment, discipline or removal of all employees. The Mayor may delegate the authority to approve the appointment, discipline or removal of employees as deemed appropriate, subject to any applicable Civil Service Rules or provisions of valid labor contracts.

3.02 Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the City of Tumwater to foster and maintain a harmonious and non-discriminatory environment for employees, officials and members of the public who do business with the City.

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3.02 Equal Employment Opportunity

The City of Tumwater treats all job applicants and employees equally and without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age or other basis prohibited by state or federal law.

This policy extends to all areas of City employment and to all recruitment selection, placement, promotion, job assignment, compensation, disciplinary measures, demotions, layoffs, job terminations, testing, training awards, benefits, daily working conditions, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

Any person who believes he/she has been or is subject to discrimination by an employee of the City of Tumwater is encouraged to immediately bring the matter to the attention of the employee's department manager or to the City's Equal Employment Opportunity Officer for investigation and appropriate action. Violations of this policy will be subject to discipline; up to and including termination.

3.03 Recruitment and Selection

Available positions are publicized for a reasonable period by announcements posted on city department bulletin boards and by such other means as deemed appropriate. Announcements may specify the title, rate of pay, duties to be performed and required minimum qualifications. All current employees are encouraged to apply for available positions if they so desire. The City of Tumwater is an equal opportunity employer and selection for any position will be based solely on merit, efficiency and fitness for that position.

Retirees of any Washington State Retirement System are required to notify the City upon hire that they are a retiree. Retirees may be limited in the number of hours and/or days they can work without affecting their retirement. As an Equal Opportunity Employer, the City of Tumwater will not discriminate against any retiree of a Washington State Retirement System seeking employment. Retirees will be treated like any other applicant for an open position.

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3.04 Nepotism

Members of the immediate family of city employees or elected officials members will not be hired if one or more of the following applies, as determined by the Mayor:

- a) One member would have the authority or practical power to supervise, hire, remove or discipline the other; or
- b) One member would be responsible for financially auditing the work of the other; or
- c) One member would handle confidential material which may create the appearance of improper or inappropriate access to that material by the other.

3.05 Position Designation

All budgeted positions are designated as either full-time or part-time. Employees in part-time positions work less than a standard 40-hour work week and are normally not entitled to benefits, unless otherwise specified in the letter of appointment, employment contract or bargaining agreement, and approved by the Mayor.

3.06 Appointments

- a) All appointments to vacancies are made solely on the basis of merit, efficiency and fitness for the position as determined through evaluation and/or testing procedures appropriate for the position.
- b) All appointments to positions in the City of Tumwater will be by letter of appointment or employment contract, setting forth conditions of employment and appointment status. The employment relationship is at will of the parties and may be terminated at any time in accordance with applicable personnel rules, contract or Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

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3.06 Appointments

- c) Subject to the approval of the City Administrator, any new employee hired by the city, whose permanent residence is more than one hundred miles from Tumwater, may be reimbursed for all or part of the actual cost of moving the employee, his/her family, and/or personal property to the Tumwater area. The actual amount or limit for reimbursements of moving expenses must be determined prior to the initial employment date and must be detailed in the letter of appointment or employment contract. Once the letter of appointment or employment contract has been signed by both the employee and the City Administrator, the reimbursement arrangement is final. In no case will the decision to reimburse employee moving expenses be made after an employee has accepted a position and begun employment with the city.

3.07 Appointment Status

- 3.07.01 Regular. All appointments to positions in the City of Tumwater are regular status unless special employment conditions are necessary. If it is determined that special conditions apply, they will be specified in the appointment letter and made a condition of employment.
- 3.07.02 Probationary. All new employees appointed to regular positions are in probationary status and subject to the conditions of the probationary period.
- 3.07.03 Temporary. A temporary appointment may be made to any position in the City of Tumwater. Temporary appointments are for a limited period of time and employees are not entitled to city benefits unless authorized by the Mayor as special conditions. All conditions of a temporary appointment will be specified in the letter of appointment or contract. Seasonal employment is considered temporary appointment status. Temporary employees do not attain regular status in the classification, have no grievance rights and may be terminated at will.

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3.07 Appointment Status

3.07.04 Acting. When the need arises to fill a position due to approved leave of absence, disciplinary actions or when a vacancy exists, a current regular status employee may be appointed “acting” to a position of higher pay grade or to a position of differing classification. Such appointments are for a limited time to fill a temporary vacancy. Employees will not attain regular status in the higher position from an acting appointment and will be returned to the previous classification. No probationary period is required for an acting appointment.

3.07.05 Trial Performance. A regular status employee promoted to a position of changed responsibility, new duties, or higher pay within the city will serve a six-month trial performance period in the new position. This trial performance is to ensure the employee meets the desired performance levels of the higher position which will be determined through written performance evaluations. If it is determined that the promoted employee cannot for any reason perform the duties of the higher position as required, they will be returned to the former, or similar position.

3.08 Probationary Period.

3.08.01 All regular status employees with the exception of a Department Manager, whether part-time or full-time, will be required to serve a probationary period for six months from the date of employment. A current employee in any appointment status may be placed on probation for disciplinary reasons after the initial six month probationary period has been served.

Department Managers will be required to serve a probationary period for twelve months from the date of employment.

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3.08 Probationary Period

- 3.08.02 At appropriate intervals, the Department Manager will determine through a written Employee Performance Evaluation whether each employee is performing the job satisfactorily. If the employee's performance is satisfactory after the appropriate probation period the Department Manager will recommend to the Mayor through the final written evaluation that the employee be taken off probation and placed on regular status.
- 3.08.03 If an employee's performance is not satisfactory during the probationary period, the Department Manager may recommend termination of employment at any time during the probation or, in special circumstances, request that the Mayor extend the probationary period up to an established period of time, specified in writing to the employee. In the event the employee's performance is still unsatisfactory, the employee may be terminated at any time within the extended probationary period.
- 3.08.04 A probationary status employee will accrue vacation and sick leave and receive all other benefits of regular status employees.
- 3.08.05 A probationary status employee has no grievance rights and may be terminated at will.
- 3.08.06 Provisions for length of probationary period and termination during the probationary period are subject to any applicable Civil Service rules for those classifications covered under Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

3.09 Employee Performance Evaluation Program

An employee performance evaluation program, as authorized by the City Administrator, will be conducted for all employees as determined necessary by the supervisor/rater, but not less than yearly. Probationary status employees will be evaluated per Section 3.08.

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3.10 Reduction-In-Force

Fluctuating revenue and budget conditions may from time to time force the city to reduce personnel in one or more departments or programs. This reduction may be accomplished by either of the following methods:

3.10.01 Lateral Transfer

This is a method of employee transfer from one classification to another classification with the same pay grade or within the same classification or pay grade from one department to another. When done for budgeting purposes, such transfer would normally be for the duration of the financial problem only. A lateral transfer must be approved by the Mayor.

3.10.02 Layoff

A layoff is a method of permanent termination of the employee due to financial circumstances or a change in the need for which the position or positions was created. A layoff must be approved by the Mayor. No regular employee shall be laid off while another person in the same classification is employed on a probationary, temporary, acting or part-time basis. In determining which employees in any classification are to be laid off, consideration is to be given to individual performance and then to seniority in the positions to be affected.

3.11 Re-Employment

Regular full-time employees terminated as a result of lay-off may be offered the first opportunity to fill comparable vacant positions that become available. These employees will be placed on the City's job announcement mailing list for a period of one year from the effective date of lay-off to assist them in applying for other job vacancies with the city for which they are qualified.

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3.12 Resignation

- 3.12.01 An employee wishing to leave city service in good standing will file with the Department Manager a written resignation, including a statement as the reasons for resigning and the effective date of resignation. The written resignation notice will be completed at least two weeks prior to the effective date of resignation. Notice requirements may be waived by the Department Manager.
- 3.12.02 The City Administrator and Department Managers shall be subject to Rule 3.12.01 except that they shall be required to give at least four weeks' notice to the Mayor. Notice requirements may be waived by the supervisor.
- 3.12.03 A copy of the resignation notice and a final performance evaluation report shall be placed in the personnel file of the employee.

3.13 Exit Interview

- 3.13.01 In all separations from employment of regular status employees, an exit interview will be conducted with the employee prior to issuance of the final check.
- 1) In the case of any separation from employment, the exit interview will be conducted by the Administrative Services Department and will consist of a discussion of:
    - a) The reasons for separation from employment, i.e. resignation, termination, and lay-off including re-employment options, if any.
    - b) Determination of any complicating factors of the separation, including whether work related injuries have been sustained by the employee.
    - c) Arrangement for the return of all City-owned uniforms, equipment and other City-owned items.



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3.13 Exit Interview

- d) An explanation to the employee of the effects of separation of employment on benefits provisions and contributions to the Public Employees Retirement System, the amount of vacation leave accrued and the method and amount of payment.
- 2) The employee will be afforded the opportunity to constructively comment on city employment through a discussion with the department Manager, City Administrator or Mayor.

3.13.02 A summary of the exit interview will be placed in the personnel file of the employee.

3.14 Personnel Records

3.14.01 Personnel records will be maintained for each employee and are the property of the city. Personnel records will show the employee's name, title of position held, the department assigned, salary, change in appointment status, training received, with the exception of Police and Fire Department in-service training maintained in Departmental files, performance evaluations, fringe benefits administration, including vacation and sick leave rates of accumulation and use, notes regarding disciplinary action or other counseling sessions, and such other information as may be considered pertinent.

3.14.02 Employee Records are confidential and accessible only to the employee, the employee's Department Manager and the Mayor, or other staff assigned to the personnel file except as provided for elsewhere in this manual for processing of the city payroll.

3.14.03 Employees are entitled to review their own personnel file annually, or upon approval of the Department Manager. Employee review will be conducted in the presence of authorized personnel.

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3.14 Personnel Records

3.14.04 Confidential personnel records will not be released to any unauthorized individuals except with the written consent of the employee or in response to valid court orders or government requests directing the provision of information from personnel records except as provided for elsewhere in this manual for processing of the city payroll.

3.14.05 Employees have the opportunity to submit a letter of rebuttal regarding any information contained in their file that is in dispute.

3.15 Employment References

3.15.01 Unless otherwise required by a valid court order, the city will furnish only the following information about past or present city employees to persons outside city government.

- 1) Dates of Employment
- 2) Current job title or job title at date of termination.
- 3) Verification of salary information
- 4) Employment references

3.15.02 All requests for any information regarding past or present city employees will be directed immediately to the Administrative Services Department. All other personnel will not respond directly to any requests for information. Due to potential liability to the city, all requests for employment references are to be referred to the appropriate Department Manager, the City Administrator or Mayor.

3.16 Retention of Personnel Records

Personnel records that are not confidential will be maintained and destroyed in accordance with established policy regarding public records. Confidential personnel records and payroll records may be destroyed five (5) years after the employee has ceased to work for the city, or at an earlier date as determined by the Mayor.

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3.17 Identification of Employees

- 3.17.01 It is the policy of the city that when on duty, all employees be visible and identifiable to the public to the maximum extent compatible with assigned work duties. All city furnished uniforms or work clothing are to be maintained in a presentable manner by the employee. "Presentable manner" will be determined by the Department Manager.
- 3.17.02 City-furnished uniforms remain the property of the city at all times. Uniforms will be worn only on duty or during additional approved volunteer activities that are identical to those performed while on duty. Wearing of uniform items while commuting between a home and the work location may be permitted providing that the wearer does not participate in any interim activity where the image and good name of the city might be negatively affected. For example, city uniforms are not to be worn in an establishment while consuming alcoholic beverages.
- 3.17.03 The outer garment of each uniform furnished by the city will bear the official insignia of the city and other such markings or emblems as each Department Manager may specify, except that rain gear may be identified otherwise. The Department Manager will determine the appropriateness of the employee name on the uniform. Proper location of such insignia and names on the uniform will be determined by the Department Manager.
- 3.17.04 All employees who come in direct contact with the public outside the City-owned buildings may be required to carry an identification card issued by the city. The card will contain name, title, department, address and telephone number of work location; and in some circumstances, a head and shoulders photograph and certification that said person is an employee of the City of Tumwater.

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3.17 Identification of Employees

3.17.05 All City-issued identification, uniforms and other City-owned materials or property in the employee's possession must be surrendered to the city before issuance of a final paycheck upon termination of that employee.

3.18 Training

It is the intent of the City to provide maximum flexibility as well as good budgetary control of training for employees. All training required by the City must be job related and included in departmental budgets.

3.18.01 Any type of training as required by the Department Manager will be paid wholly by the City.

3.18.02 Compensation for time spent by employees on training programs will be in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

3.19 Tuition Reimbursement

3.19.01 Tuition reimbursement applies to all non-represented, regular status employees and to union employees when specified in a bargaining agreement. Reimbursement for part-time employees will be pro-rated on the basis of the number of hours worked.

- a) Tuition is defined as a registration or other course fee charged by an accredited college or university (at the undergraduate or graduate level), vocational school or a professional training organization for a formal educational course (includes correspondence and online courses). Tuition does not include registration fees for conferences, workshops, professional seminars or meetings.
- b) The ability to offer tuition reimbursement is subject to availability of funds.
- c) Department Managers may deny an employee the opportunity to participate in the tuition reimbursement

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program on the basis of an employee's documented job performance deficiencies.

- d) To be eligible for reimbursement, courses must reasonably be applied toward the completion of a degree, eligible certification program, or enhancement related to the employee's current position or potential future position at the City of Tumwater and taken at an accredited college, university, or vocational education institution.
  - 1) Any employee seeking reimbursement for a degree or certificate path must obtain pre-approval of the program from the Department Manager, Administrative Services Director and the City Administrator prior to being eligible for reimbursement of any tuition expenses.
  - 2) Under the Constitution of the State of Washington, the City cannot use public monies for religious education, worship or instruction. Therefore, the City will not provide tuition reimbursement for any devotional class.
  - 3) Doctoral level courses are not eligible for reimbursement under this policy.
- e) No reimbursement will be allowed for books, travel expenses, materials costs or other expenses.
- f) It is expected that employees will select educational opportunities at the least possible expense. As such, regardless of the educational institution attended, reimbursement will be limited to 50% of the tuition up to a maximum of \$5250 per calendar year.
- g) Reimbursement is limited to actual out-of-pocket expenses. The amount to be reimbursed is the cost to the employee after scholarships or grants have paid for any portion of the tuition.

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- h) The employee must successfully complete the course obtaining a "C" grade or better, or a "pass" in a pass/fail system, or as required to retain status in the program if a higher standard is imposed by the school. (Where the educational institution does not offer grades, alternative arrangements to gauge successful completion must be agreed upon by the Department Manager and the employee prior to the beginning of the class.)
- i) Reimbursement requests must be submitted within three (3) months of completion of the course. Courses completed late in the calendar year must have the appropriate documentation for reimbursement submitted in time for the final (period 13) accounts payable run of the year in which the education occurred.
- j) Employees are required to attend classes offered outside their regular work schedule in order to minimize job disruptions. Courses which are offered only during regular working hours may be approved by the Department Manager, provided time off can be arranged conveniently and reasonable arrangements can be made to make up time off and/or leave without pay is granted.
- k) Hours spent in courses reimbursable by the tuition reimbursement program are not considered compensable hours.
- l) To qualify for tuition reimbursement, employees must make application and receive prior approval from the Department Manager and the City Administrator.
- m) Requests for tuition reimbursement must be submitted to the Department Manager and the Administrative Services Director for approval prior to submittal to the City Administrator for final approval. Approved requests will obligate the specified amount for reimbursement at the end of the school period. If the request is not approved, the employee will be notified promptly.

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- n) Reimbursement will be made when the employee submits documentation showing successful completion of the course to include grade report, receipt for payment of the course and other documentation which may be required by the Department Manager.
- o) Course records for courses attended through the tuition reimbursement program will be maintained in the Administrative Services Department either online through a Learning Management System or hard copy in the employee's personnel file.

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3.20 Suggestions

All employees are encouraged to make suggestions which will improve efficiency of city operations, or employee job satisfaction. Even ideas for other departments of the city are helpful. Suggestions may be written or verbally given to the employee's supervisor at any time. The supervisor will then discuss the idea with the appropriate person or group.