

I. INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE

The City of East Providence is committed to providing and promoting a high quality of life, safety, and business success to residents, visitors, and future generations, and thus making East Providence an excellent place to work, play and raise a family.

City departments and employees are vital to the City's ability to carry out these goals. City employees' status in the governmental hierarchy, and the daily exposure to public scrutiny, comment and criticism requires City employees to be mindful of how their conduct and appearance may reflect on the City. Although the amount of public exposure may be limited for your position, you have a vital role in presenting the City in a favorable light. You may be the first point of contact when the City provides services to the public or responds to citizen inquiries/requests. Thus, you have a unique responsibility to make a positive impression with the citizens of our community.

Being an employee of the City of East Providence puts you in a unique position of trust. Therefore, it is important that you fully understand the emphasis the City places on maintaining the public's trust in the City and its employees. The City expects that you will conduct yourself, personally and professionally, in a manner that will help maintain that trust.

This Handbook was created to provide guidelines to aid all employees of the City of East Providence in understanding policies, procedures and benefits that relate to their employment with the City. It contains general statements of City policy and should not be read as including the fine details of each policy, nor as forming an express or implied contract or promise that the policies discussed in it will be applied in all cases. The City may add to these guidelines or revoke or modify them from time to time. The City will try to keep these guidelines current, but there may be times when a policy will change before this material can be revised, published and communicated. The most up to date version of this Handbook can always be found on the Human Resources page of the City's Website.

Notice: This handbook generally applies to all employees. However, in some instances based on negotiated effective dates found in collective bargaining agreements employees may be entitled to benefits that are not contained in this handbook. The Human Resources Department is available to answer any questions regarding all human resources issues including benefits eligibility questions.

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

This Employee Handbook contains many of the policies and procedures you are expected to follow as an employee of the City of East Providence. The City has developed this Handbook to provide general information to its employees regarding topics that commonly arise during a person's employment. This Handbook is not meant to include all of the many policies that may apply to you in your specific role with the City.

This handbook should be viewed as serving two important purposes: first, the handbook sets forth the City's expectations for you as an employee; second, the handbook is meant to educate you on what you can expect from the City in your employment relationship. The overall intent is to assure fair, equitable, and open relations between you and the City.

The City expects its employees, when dealing with the public during the course of their employment, to respond to the public as the situation would dictate in a manner which will uphold the public image and traditions of the City. Through this cooperative and collaborative relationship between all employees, the reputation and traditions of the City for providing quality services will continue to be achieved.

This Handbook is not an employment contract nor is it intended to be construed as such. It does not guarantee any rights to employees, but serves as a valuable resource document for employees of the City.

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, final interpretation and implementation of the policies contained in this Handbook is vested solely with the City of East Providence through the City Manager. The Handbook is subject to change at any time and will be reviewed and revised periodically.

Human Resources policies clarify the behavior expected of you. These policies do not, however, contain all the procedures and regulations which may be applicable to a particular position with the City of East Providence. More detailed Departmental and Divisional regulations may be adopted which are not inconsistent with these policies.

It is your responsibility to read and understand these policies. It is also your responsibility to ask questions regarding portions of the Handbook or other policies and collective bargaining agreements that are applicable to your position in the City that you do not understand.

To the extent this Handbook conflicts with specific language in applicable collective bargaining agreements covering certain employees, the specific language of the collective bargaining agreement shall control over the language of the Handbook when required.

RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT

In order to achieve its Mission, the City has broad authority to manage its operations and functions. These responsibilities include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Prescribing and administering rules and regulations essential to accomplishing the services desired by the City Manager, City Management Team, and the City Council;
2. Managing and otherwise supervising all employees;
3. Hiring, promoting, transferring, assigning and retaining employees;
4. Taking disciplinary action such as suspension, demotion, termination or any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the City;
5. Relieving employees of duties because of lack of work or for other legitimate reasons;
6. Maintaining the efficiency and economy of operations entrusted to the City administration;
7. Determining the methods, means and personnel by which such operations are to be conducted; and
8. Establishing the kinds and amounts of services to be performed and the employees to perform those services.

The above responsibilities may be limited by the laws of the State of Rhode Island and the United States of America. Many of these laws are referenced in other portions of this Handbook

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Operation of any government agency depends on an effective chain of command and the City of East Providence is no exception.

City Council: The ultimate decision concerning policy in the City of East Providence resides by law with the City Council (elected officials) under the leadership of its elected president who is elected amongst/ by the City Council members.

City Manager: The City Manager is an employee of the City who is appointed by the City Council. The City Manager is the chief executive officer of the City. As head of City Administration, the City Manager is authorized to exercise all of the executive and general administrative powers granted under Section 3-3, Charter of the City of East Providence.

Department Heads: The Heads of the designated Departments of the City are part of the senior management team of the City and report to the City Manager.

Division Managers: The Division Managers of the designated Departments of the City are part of the management team and report to their designated Department Head.

The management team concept is the process by which a recommendation for any action, program, service, etc. is developed and the decision implemented. This system represents a means of establishing orderly lines of organization and communication as management personnel unite with the employees of the City to promote and deliver effective services to the community.

The City Manager is responsible for the development, supervision, and the operation of the City, its personnel and facilities. Employees have an obligation to assist the City Manager in providing professional advice to the City Council through the chain of command. The City Manager is given the latitude to determine the best method of implementing the policy decisions of City Council.

Each employee is to keep the person he/she reports to informed of his/her activities by whatever means the supervisor deems appropriate. If an employee has any questions, opinions or suggestions about the information contained in this Handbook or about any other aspect of his/her job, then those questions, opinions or suggestions should be directed through the chain of command.

The City recognizes that many employees handle directives or requests from the Public on a daily basis as part of their positions. The City expects that employees will use sound judgment and common sense to determine which directives or requests are inappropriate and should be reported to a supervisor. If an employee is unsure of whether a directive or request should be reported, the employee should discuss it with his/her supervisor. Any employee who receives inappropriate directives or requests for special treatment from an individual citizen, business representative or elected or appointed official must immediately report such directive or request to his/her supervisor. No specific directives or requests covered by this policy should be fulfilled unless permission to do so is given by the employee's supervisor.

II. WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The City of East Providence is an equal opportunity employer. Employment decisions are based on merit and operational needs. The objective of the City's employment practices is to employ individuals who are qualified for specific work by such job-related standards as work experience, demonstrated attitude and skill, education, training, overall ability and other job relevant considerations.

The City employs people who are concerned with the success of East Providence; people who care first about the highest quality public service and the interests of the public; people who can carry on their work with skill and ability; and people who can work well with our City team.

The City provides equal employment opportunities for all qualified persons without regard to **race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, genetic information, veteran status**, or any other basis protected by State or Federal law.

The City complies with all the relevant and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other laws. The City will make reasonable accommodation wherever necessary for all employees or applicants with disabilities, provided the individual is otherwise qualified to safely perform the essential duties and assignments connected with the job and provided any accommodations made do not impose an undue hardship on the City.

Equal consideration shall be given to all qualified persons without regard to his/her protected status when making employment decisions including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Recruitment for employment
2. Hiring, placement, promotion, transfer or demotion
3. Compensation
4. Conditions of employment
5. Training and development
6. Involuntary layoff or separation from employment, and
7. All other components of the City's human resources policies

Posted Notices: Equal employment opportunity notices are posted near employee gathering places as required by law. These notices summarize the rights of employees to equal opportunity in employment and list the names and addresses of the various government agencies that may be contacted in the event any person believes he/she has been discriminated against.

HARASSMENT & RETALIATION-FREE WORKPLACE

It is the policy of the City to maintain a safe workplace environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and retaliation. Every employee has a personal responsibility to help maintain a safe and healthful workplace environment.

In keeping with this commitment, the City will not tolerate harassment of City employees by anyone, including any supervisor, co-worker, vendor, client or customer of the City. This policy provides each employee of the City of East Providence the protection necessary to function in a productive environment.

Harassment defined: Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based on a person's protected status as defined by law, such as sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, medical condition, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status, sexual orientation, or other protected group status. The City will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment defined: Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct based on sex, whether or not such conduct is repeated, constitute sexual harassment when:

Submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment;

An individual's submission to or rejection of such conduct becomes the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, sexually oriented "kidding" or "teasing," "practical jokes," jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, display of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body. Sexual harassment also includes conduct directed by a person at another person of the same or opposite gender.

All City employees are responsible for helping to prevent harassment. If you feel you have experienced or witnessed harassment, immediately notify your supervisor, the City's Human Resources Department, the City Manager, or any other managerial employee of the City.

No Retaliation Policy: The City strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports harassment or who cooperates in the investigation of a harassment complaint.

The City takes harassment complaints very seriously. Therefore, the City will investigate all harassment complaints thoroughly and promptly and take all appropriate action that may be necessary to end the harassment and prevent this misconduct from reoccurring. To the fullest extent practicable, the City will keep complaints and the terms of their resolution confidential. After the investigation is completed, the City will advise the complainant of the result of that investigation. If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the City will take corrective action, which may include discipline as appropriate, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The City of East Providence is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment free from any threats or acts of violence.

The City will not tolerate violence, threats of violence, harassment or intimidation in and around the workplace, or among individuals conducting City business. The City will intervene in situations involving such acts that it becomes aware of and will take appropriate action to resolve issues when necessary. The City reserves the right to address any off-premises conduct involving violence, threats of violence, harassment or intimidation that has or may have an impact on the workplace or an employee.

Violence: Violence is defined to include, but is not limited to: physical assault, aggressive behavior towards another individual, purposeful destruction of City property, intimidation through verbalized or implied threats, carrying weapons of any kind in the workplace, and destruction of another's property. Reported acts or threats will be investigated as a possible serious violation of City policy. Any confirmed act or threat will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment. When appropriate, an employee may be referred to the Employee Assistance Program for evaluation and recommendations.

Employee Responsibility: Any employee who has been a recipient of a threat of violence or victim of an act of violence is to make a report to his/her immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Director. Such reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible. The City will investigate such reports and take action as appropriate to the situation. The City may involve and cooperate with local law enforcement representatives if it is determined that such action is warranted.

As acts of violence in the workplace may also be perpetrated by people from outside the workplace, the City requests any employee, who feels an outside threat poses a risk within the workplace, to report such a situation to his/her immediate supervisor and to the Human Resources Director. The City will assess the need for special safeguards or other considerations.

The City of East Providence prohibits all individuals entering City buildings from carrying a handgun, firearm, knife, or other weapon of any kind regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon or not. Further, the City prohibits its employees from carrying weapons in the course of their employment for the City including employees who are licensed to carry a weapon by the State of Rhode

Island. This prohibition includes while operating City owned vehicles and while performing work outside of City buildings. The only exception to this policy is for sworn law enforcement officers or other persons who act in the interests of the City and have the legal authority to carry a weapon, or who have been given written consent by the Chief of Police to carry a weapon on the property.

Nothing in this policy prohibits a licensed individual from keeping a concealed weapon in his/her personal vehicle or from keeping a concealed weapon in his/her personal vehicle while using that vehicle to travel in the course of his/her employment as required by law.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

It is the policy of the City of East Providence to hire employees who are able to meet the physical requirements of the job for which they are being hired.

All applicants who are offered employment with the City of East Providence must complete a physical examination before commencing employment with the City. This will be coordinated through the Human Resources Department with a health care professional chosen by the City.

The City may require an employee at any time during the course of their employment to have a physical examination at City expense with reasonable notice, if in the opinion of the City the employee's health or physical condition presents a hazard to the employee, fellow employees, or the public; or if the employee's health or physical condition can reasonably be expected to present a liability to the City.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a drug-free workplace; to eliminate and/or discourage drug/alcohol use and abuse in the workplace; and, to assure delivery of services to the public in a safe and conscientious manner.

It is the policy and intent of the City of East Providence to maintain a drug-free workplace for all of its employees and the public. Therefore, no employee shall report to work or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours. This policy includes: any paid or unpaid lunch periods; training sessions; and the working hours of conferences attended as a representative of the City. The sale, possession, transfer or purchase of illegal drugs while in the course and scope of employment with the City is also prohibited.

Each City employee must be able to work in a drug-free environment and themselves be free from the effects of alcohol and other mood-altering substances and adulterants when reporting for work and during the workday. In order to ensure that the City remains a drug-free environment, the distribution, sale, possession or use of alcohol, other intoxicants, drugs, narcotics, or any other controlled substance in the workplace without a valid prescription is prohibited. Further, employees are prohibited from being under the influence of any drugs, intoxicants, narcotics, alcohol or any other controlled substance while in the workplace.

Testing: The City conducts Drug and Alcohol testing pursuant to the City’s Drug and Alcohol policy and Department of Transportation Regulations.

Any employee found to have used, sold, distributed, possessed, or been under the influence of drugs or alcohol in the workplace or otherwise failing to comply with any drug-free workplace requirement may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Reporting of medication use: City employees using medications prescribed by a doctor that may affect work performance should inform their supervisor, in writing, of the possible side effects, performance limitations, or any other safety hazards that may occur from the use of prescribed medication. Based upon this information, the supervisor may reassign the employee, transfer the employee, or modify the employee's job to ensure the safety of the employee, co-workers, and the public, or relieve the employee of his/her duties until such time that the medication no longer affects his/her performance.

This policy is not intended to needlessly intrude on employees’ privacy. Rather, the City needs to know about employee medications so it can prevent placing employees in situations that are unnecessarily dangerous to themselves and their co-workers. All disclosures of medication use will remain strictly confidential like other employee health information.

Employee Assistance: The City recognizes that alcohol and substance abuse are serious matters and will offer appropriate assistance, as it is available for other employee issues. Information concerning drug abuse counseling, rehabilitation programs or any other employee assistance is available to employees by contacting the Employee Assistance Program or the Human Resources Department.

Any employee convicted of using, selling, distributing or possessing a controlled substance while employed by the City shall notify the City Human Resources Department within five (5) calendar days of that conviction.

WORKPLACE SAFETY/WORKERS COMPENSATION

The City of East Providence is committed to furnishing a safe place of employment that includes the use of safety devices and safeguards, methods and processes reasonably adequate to render employment safe, and other things reasonably necessary to protect the life, health, safety, and welfare of such employees.

The City of East Providence subscribes to and follows the requirements of the law that relate to the protection of the life, health, safety, and welfare of City employees.

The City of East Providence encourages proper attitudes toward injury and illness prevention on the part of both management and employees. It also requires cooperation in all safety and health matters, not only between supervisors and employees, but also between each employee and his/her co-workers. It is the City of East Providence’s major objective to protect the City’s most valuable asset – its employees.

Workplace Safety: Any unsafe practice or condition, affecting persons, property or equipment, must be reported immediately to your supervisor. Should a hazardous situation exist, safety always takes precedence over continuing operations.

Employee: Job safety is everyone's responsibility. You, as a City employee, are required to follow all safe work procedures and must conduct yourself carefully at all times. Most accidents are caused by carelessness and horseplay. When you observe unsafe working conditions, it is your obligation either to correct the problem or to report it to your supervisor. It is not your responsibility to attempt a job which appears to be unsafe; ask your supervisor for instruction or clarification. Similarly, all work areas are to be kept clean and free from debris, and tools and equipment are to be kept clean and in good repair. Failure to follow safe work procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

No Retaliation: Retaliation against employees for reporting workplace safety issues or a work-place injury is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Offenders will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of employment.

City employees are encouraged to submit suggestions to their supervisor or to Human Resources regarding ways to increase workplace safety. It is our collective workplace and any suggestion to make it safer will receive careful consideration.

Worker's Compensation: The City carries Worker's Compensation insurance to protect its employees against losses due to injury or illness caused while in the performance of his/her duties.

In Case of Injury in the Workplace

1. All injuries, no matter how slight, must be reported immediately to your supervisor. The supervisor will in turn immediately report to Human Resources using the City Employee Accident Investigation Form.
2. If immediate medical attention is required, the injured employee shall be sent to the nearest medical facility capable of handling the type of injury involved.
 - a. If the injury demands immediate emergency medical treatment, the employee shall be sent to the emergency room at the nearest hospital.
 - b. If an ambulance is needed, 911 shall be dialed.
2. A return-to-work slip shall be provided to the employee's supervisor directly following a doctor visit. A copy shall immediately be sent to Human Resources.

III. PERSONAL CONDUCT POLICIES

GENERAL STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL & ETHICAL CONDUCT

City employees are expected to follow general work rules that are promulgated by their employer. Many of the City's work rules are covered in this Handbook. However, City employees' unique position of trust with the public requires them to embody a heightened level of professional and ethical conduct. The City expects you to honor that trust by holding yourself and your fellow employees to these high ethical and professional standards.

The following policies address common situations that arise for many City employees, and give you general guidance. These policies are not meant to cover every possible scenario that could arise. The standards set forth in the following policies are intended to eliminate conflicts of interest, improve standards of service, and promote and strengthen the faith and confidence of the citizens in their City. If you ever have questions about the appropriate course of action for a specific situation that is or is not covered in this Handbook, you should discuss it with your supervisor or with the City's Human Resources Department.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

The City does not prohibit employees from accepting outside employment or following economic pursuits that do not interfere or conflict with the full and faithful discharge of their duties with the City. Outside employment is prohibited if it would affect the employee's ability to perform City duties or responsibilities or creates a conflict of interest.

You are required to notify your immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Department prior to accepting outside employment that may interfere with your City employment. Employment includes all paid employment, on-going self-employment and volunteer work that may be similar to your paid employment with the City. If you are uncertain regarding the compatibility of outside employment with your City employment, you should consult with the Human Resources Department

GIFTS AND FAVORS

City employees are trusted to act in the public's best interest when fulfilling their employment duties. It is inconsistent with that trust to accept gifts or favors for the execution of their duties.

An employee shall not accept gifts, gratuities, or loans from organizations, business concerns, or individuals with whom he/she has official relationships on business of the City government. These limitations are not intended to prohibit the acceptance of articles of negligible value (not to exceed \$25.00) that are distributed generally, nor to prohibit employees from accepting social courtesies which

promote good public relations, nor to prohibit employees from obtaining loans from regular lending institutions. It is particularly important that employees involved in contracting and purchasing guard against relationships that might be construed as evidence of favoritism, coercion, unfair advantage, or collusion.

CONFIDENTIAL/PRIVILEGED INFORMATION

The City of East Providence is bound by Rhode Island's Open Meetings and Public Records law to provide certain information to the public. It is the City's policy to follow these laws to their fullest extent. However, City employees often receive information that would be inappropriate for them to disclose. City employees must be aware of the confidential information that they receive and refrain from disclosing it unless directed by a supervisor.

Confidential/privileged information is defined as any information which is obtained by reason of an employee's job position with the City that by law or practice is not available to the public.

City employees shall not disclose any information gained during the course of or by reason of their employment with the City in a confidential capacity, unless expressly authorized to do so or as required by Rhode Island's public records law.

Employees shall not use any information gained during the course of their service in a confidential capacity for their own personal financial gain unless such information is, or becomes, a public record.

In instances where you are uncertain regarding whether information is confidential or not, consult with your immediate supervisor or the Department Head for a determination. The Department Head or other authorized employee may contact the City Solicitor for assistance in interpreting the public records law.

USE OF CITY PROPERTY OR EQUIPMENT

City property shall be used by employees only in conjunction with the performance of City operations and duties. City property shall not be used by City employees for personal purposes unless such City property is generally available for use by the public.

Offices, computers, desks, lockers and equipment provided to employees by the City to assist employees in performing their work are considered the property of the City and may be opened, reviewed, or examined by a City representative at any time, without infringing on any employee's right to privacy or reasonable expectation of privacy. City property also includes written materials such as personnel policies, written agreements, contracts, project reports, formal City documents, financial information, etc. No employee may remove City property from the premises without a supervisor's knowledge and approval.

City property should be used for City business purposes. Personal use of City property including photocopiers, postage machines, fax machines, office supplies, and telephones should be kept to a minimum, and only with prior permission from your supervisor.

In instances when City employees are uncertain regarding whether use of City property for personal purposes is appropriate, they should consult with their immediate supervisor for a determination.

City Vehicles: There are times during your employment that you may need to use a City-Owned Vehicle. City vehicles may be used for City business purposes only. City vehicles are to be used within City limits only, and are not allowed to leave the City without prior approval by your supervisor. Vehicles used for public safety and public works are allowed to leave the City limits in accordance with established rules and regulations.

You must have a valid driver's license and may not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol or while otherwise impaired. You may not text or answer phone calls while operating a city vehicle. You must wear your seatbelt at all times when operating a city vehicle.

You are expected to drive in a safe and courteous manner. The City will not be responsible for any parking or moving violations you receive while operating a city vehicle.

NEPOTISM

All City employees can expect fair and impartial treatment from supervisors or employees with oversight authority. A familial, close personal, or financial relationship between a supervisor or employee with oversight authority and an employee whom they have direct influence over exposes them to possible charges of conflict of interest, favoritism, bias, and inappropriate conduct that may adversely impact the performance of City functions or the working environment. In the public sector, it is essential to avoid situations which may lead to real or perceived favoritism, bias, conflict of interest or inappropriate conduct.

City employees may not participate in official actions, decisions or deliberations that affect his/her family members, business associates, outside employers or any business that he/she may represent. Employees may not hire, evaluate, supervise or otherwise participate in employment decisions affecting family members.

The City shall avoid placing family members in direct or indirect supervisory/subordinate employment relationships within a department and/or division or in positions where the relationship has the potential for creating an adverse effect on supervision, safety, security, or morale. Where a marriage occurs between two City employees and creates such a situation, efforts will be taken to move one or the other so as to comply with the intent of this policy. (Seasonal employees will generally not be assigned to work in the same department with other family members.) When potential nepotistic situations arise as a result of organizational restructure, marriage or other development, the employees involved have an obligation to immediately inform their department head or supervisor.

TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY

The City's computers, networks, programs, communication devices and tools, other technology, and internet (collectively "technology") are intended as tools for the City to serve the public and the City, and are provided so employees may better perform their job-related responsibilities. Inappropriate use can adversely affect the City, interfere with the work of its employees, increase its costs, and even expose the City to damage, liability, and security risks.

City technology is provided to employees to assist with the performance of City operations and duties. Personal use of City technology must be kept to a minimum in order to ensure efficient and effective City operations.

Monitoring: In order to protect its interests, the City reserves its right to monitor all usage of technology by its employees. No employee should expect privacy or secrecy in the use of technology. Employee use constitutes acceptance of the City's monitoring and disclosure of the employee's use. Use of the City's technology can be limited by the City at any time for any reason. The City may consent to the disclosure of information from use of technology or any other property as required by law or otherwise deemed appropriate by the City.

Personal Use: No written policy can list every conceivable circumstance that relates to proper use. The City's employees are professionals who are expected to exercise responsible professional judgment. The City has complete and sole discretion to determine whether any use or access is inappropriate, even if the use is not expressly prohibited or addressed in this Handbook or the City's Electronic Communications Policy.

The City may ask employees to stop any use it believes is improper. In addition, the City may block access to any content it believes is not appropriate. Employees who do not adhere to this policy may be disciplined, which can include restriction of internet use or discipline up to and including termination. If you have a question about whether a particular use of the City's technology is proper, you should consult with your supervisor before engaging in such use.

Social Media: The City recognizes that technology is changing at a rapid pace and the City and its employees must adjust to an ever changing world. The City also recognizes that not all employees use social media. For employees who use social media, the City expects them to do so in a responsible and respectful manner.

Under no circumstances should employees use social media to engage in or post communications or material that would violate any City policy. If you have a question about whether a particular use of electronic communication or social media is appropriate, you should refer to the City's Social Media Policy or consult with your supervisor or the City's Human Resources Department before making such communication.

APPEARANCE AND DRESS CODE

As a City employee, you represent the City and your department when you are on duty and/or when you are in a City uniform. Employees are expected to be neat and clean, and to dress for work according to generally accepted business and professional standards as dictated by their work assignment and as

required by their department. The City reserves the right to restrict dress for legitimate reasons relating to safety, hygiene or environmental conditions.

IV. WORKPLACE POLICIES

OVERVIEW

Public service as an employee of the City is a privilege. The City strives to employ public servants who protect and further the trust and confidence the public has placed in its public servants and who seek to provide efficient and effective service.

High quality performance, honesty, respect, reliability, professionalism and good judgment are fundamentally required of each employee. Other standards of conduct exist in order to maintain an orderly and efficient working environment and for preservation of the public's trust in its public servants.

Actions of employees that are inconsistent, incompatible, or in conflict with the values established by the City negatively affect its reputation and that of its employees. Such actions and inactions thereby detract from the City's overall ability to effectively and efficiently serve the public and conduct other essential business of the City.

The following policies address common situations that arise for many City employees both while working (on-duty) and while away from work (off-duty), and are intended to give you general guidance. These policies are not meant to cover every possible scenario that could arise. The standards set forth in the following policies are intended to eliminate conflicts of interest, improve standards of service, and promote and strengthen the faith and confidence of the citizens in their City. If you ever have questions about the appropriate course of action for a specific situation that is or is not covered in this Handbook, you should discuss it with your supervisor or with the City's Human Resources Department.

The City reserves the right to take disciplinary action should an employee's off-duty conduct negatively affect the City and the employee's future ability to serve the public and/or conduct business on behalf of the City.

The City shall set forth work rules to guide employee behavior and outline the processes to be used in its relations with its employees. Many of these work rules are contained in this Handbook. However, each Department and Division may set forth certain work rules and procedures for employees to follow that are specific to that Department or Division and are consistent with the City's policy.

Rules of Conduct

Your primary objective is to protect and further the public's trust and confidence and to perform at a high quality level so that our citizens, businesses, representatives of other entities, coworkers, and visitors receive high quality services from each employee. Conduct that is inconsistent with those objectives, or in violation of Policy or general expectations of professional conduct is forbidden and will be subject to discipline up to and including termination. The City has established these Rules of Conduct to demonstrate its expectation of employees and assist them in having a successful career.

No list of rules or types of unacceptable conduct can substitute for the sound and reasonable judgment expected of each employee. It is impossible to list every conceivable type of unacceptable conduct that is contrary to the interests of the City. The following non-exhaustive list of conduct is illustrative of the types of conduct that could warrant discipline up to and including termination:

1. Dishonest, misleading, or deceptive conduct
2. Circumventing the chain of command
3. Undermining the authority of a supervisor
4. Refusing or failing to follow an order or directive
5. Theft or misappropriation of City property or the property of others, including theft of work time, excessive time at break periods, misuse of sick leave or other designated leave, misrepresenting work time, or failing to accurately record work time
6. Leaving the job without permission
7. Working unauthorized overtime
8. Engaging in conduct that creates an unsafe work environment
9. Fighting, threats, intimidation or harassment of others
10. Damage or defacing of City or employee property
11. Misuse or unauthorized use of City property
12. Possession, use, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty
13. Engaging in illegal conduct
14. Unauthorized possession of weapons or firearms during work time or on City premises or property

15. Absence of three scheduled work days in succession without notice
16. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
17. Failing to promptly report absence or tardiness
18. Disclosing confidential information to unauthorized sources
19. Loafing or sleeping on the job
20. Failure to promptly report defective equipment or safety hazard
21. Failure to immediately report injury or accident
22. Horseplay or violation of safety rules
23. Substandard quality or quantity of work, including deliberate reduction of output
24. Conducting personal business on City time or property
25. Failing to fully comply with Policies
26. Failing to comply with expectations of conduct communicated to an employee

The City reserves the right to modify this list at any time or determine that other conduct is contrary to the interests of the City and warrants disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

Corrective Action: The Employer considers all violations of policy, rules of conduct and general expectations of professional conduct seriously. Violations of these policies, rules, and general expectations can subject an employee to discipline, up to and including termination.

The City's corrective action program is designed to both prevent misconduct before it occurs and to correct problem behavior so that it is not repeated. Occasionally, it may be necessary to remove employees from service who cannot or will not meet the established standards of performance.

The City evaluates all disciplinary matters individually considering a wide range of factors including, but not limited to, the nature of the employee's conduct, the rule, policy, or regulation violated, past disciplinary history, length of service to the City, and any aggravating or mitigating factors surrounding the conduct.

Types of actions: The City has discretion to impose various types of discipline including, but not limited to, verbal warnings, written warnings, and suspensions from work, transfers to another position, and demotions and terminations of employment.

Documentation: All corrective action or discipline will be documented with a copy provided to the employee, and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file.

Investigation and Administrative Leave: The City will determine the scope, duration, and strategy of internal investigations. The City reserves its right to place an employee on administrative leave, with or without pay, pending an internal investigation, pending disposition of a criminal matter, or for other reasons determined by the City Manager. The determination of whether leave will be with pay or without pay is reserved to the City Manager.

The appropriate level of discipline is determined by management on a case-by-case basis, and any progressive disciplinary measure may be passed over in favor of more severe discipline, including termination.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

The City recognizes that as an employee, you will often be in the best position to observe and report potential violations of City policies or applicable laws by employees, elected officials or other members of the public. To ensure that you are comfortable bringing forward good faith reports of misconduct the City offers protections for "whistleblowers."

The City of East Providence's policy is to promote openness, honesty and transparency in City government and to encourage good faith reports of alleged misconduct concerning compliance with City policies and State and Federal laws and regulations. As a result, the City prohibits harassment, discrimination, or any other form of retaliation taken against an employee for reporting, in good faith, possible compliance issues.

The protections of this policy extend to employees who directly report suspected violations of City policy and/or applicable laws as well as employees who provide information or cause information to be provided or otherwise assist in an investigation and who file, testify or otherwise participate in a proceeding related to suspected violations of law or City policy.

Reporting a Suspected Misconduct: The City provides various mechanisms to assist and encourage employees to come forward in good faith with reports or concerns about suspected misconduct. An employee who becomes aware of a potential or actual violation of policy or law is expected to report such conduct, regardless of whether the employee is personally involved in the matter.

Generally, reporting misconduct should follow the Chain of Command set forth in the Employee Handbook and applicable department work rules. This makes an employee's immediate supervisor his/her first option for making a report. If the employee feels unable to do so or if there is any reason why this may not be appropriate, the employee may report the issue further up the chain of command up to and including the department head, human resources director, or city manager.

All reports of suspected misconduct will be handled as confidentially as possible, under the circumstances, with appropriate discretion and due regard for the privacy of the reporting employee.

Whistleblower Retaliation: Employees should report suspected retaliation for “whistleblowing” and supervisory employees must report all suspected retaliation violations. Employees may report alleged retaliation to their supervisor, any department head, the Human Resources Director or the City Manager.

Investigation and Discipline: The City will take appropriate steps to respond to all complaints, which may or may not include a full investigation. The City reserves the right to determine what steps are necessary to respond to a complaint. All information disclosed in the complaint and any investigation will be held in confidence and only disclosed when necessary to fully investigate and/or resolve the matter, subject to applicable public records laws. Anyone who the City determines has willfully neglected to report suspected misconduct, brought forward reports of suspected misconduct in bad faith, or retaliated against a whistleblower may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

JOB VACANCIES & JOB POSTINGS

The City values and recognizes the quality of its employees and recognizes that in many cases filling vacancies with existing employees is beneficial. Promotion from within is often cost effective because internal candidates are frequently able to fill a position with little or no training. Further, the City is in a better position to consider an internal candidate because of the existing employment relationship. Therefore, the City desires to afford current qualified employees the first opportunity to apply for open positions within the City’s various departments and divisions.

The City will advertise its vacant positions internally consistent with the applicable collective bargaining agreement. At times, the City will advertise a position internally and externally concurrently. The City is committed to employ, in its best judgment, the most highly qualified candidates for approved positions.

Filling Job Vacancies: When considering internal candidates for vacant positions, the City will consider job-related standards such as work experience, the employee’s past job performance, demonstrated attitude and skill, education, training, overall ability, length of continuous service and other job relevant considerations.

TRANSFERS & DEMOTIONS

Employment with the City is dynamic. You should not expect that you will never change positions as an employee of the City. Employees change positions for a variety of reasons including career advancement, operational needs, and performance. Of course, the City recognizes that consistency and continuity are beneficial as well. All situations involving employee movement within the City’s organizational structure are subject to review and approval by the City Manager. The following policies are meant to address the various ways that employees may change positions within the City. They cover many of the situations that arise and serve as a valuable background if you are considering a change in your position with the City.

Transfers: Occasionally, the City may require an employee to change jobs in order to better meet the needs of City operations and/or the public. In those cases, the City may seek volunteers to transfer to the position. If there are no volunteers or the City determines that the volunteers do not meet the minimum

qualifications, the City may choose an employee for an involuntary transfer. Employees may also request to transfer to a vacant position.

Demotions: Unfortunately, there may be occasions when an employee is demoted due to performance issues, work-related misconduct, or changes in the composition of the workforce. In such cases the City will determine the appropriate classification of the employee.

Further, employees may voluntarily request a demotion for a variety of reasons such as job satisfaction or personal needs. In those cases the City will work with employees to help with the transition and to ensure that the position is meeting the employees' and the City's needs. As with other demotions, the City reserves the right to determine the employees' classification.

Reclassifications: Reclassifications can occur for a variety of reasons including but not limited to changes in job duties that naturally occur in a changing work environment or reorganizations of City departments or divisions. The City periodically reviews all position descriptions and the overall compensation plan to ensure that employees are classified correctly. When the City determines that a reclassification is necessary, it will review the position's compensation to determine if it is appropriate. The City reserves the sole discretion to determine the appropriate classification and compensation level for each position.

PAYROLL

The City has a standardized payroll system and payroll procedures in accordance with state and federal guidelines. Employees are paid biweekly by direct deposit.

Payroll Records: Each employee is responsible for and required to accurately record his/her hours of work or use of paid time off each day, and each employee will be held accountable for failing to completely and accurately record his/her time. Each employee will be required to verify that the hours on the employee's time records are complete and accurate by signing the time records. Each employee should record his/her time only. Errors must be immediately reported by the employee. Employees should never assume a supervisor or payroll clerk would notice or edit any time discrepancy, as this is the employee's responsibility.

Employees are Responsible for Data Changes and Updates: For the system to be effective, it requires current information for all City employees. Therefore, it is the employee's responsibility to keep all payroll and required Human Resources information current. Employees are to notify their supervisor, and Human Resources, of any changes to their name, home address, telephone number(s), marital status, name or number of dependents, number of tax exemptions, insurance classification, beneficiary changes, or individuals to be contacted in case of emergency. Having all this information current and accurate is necessary as it may affect benefits and other important matters.

Deductions from a Paycheck: It is the City's policy to comply with applicable wage & hour laws and regulations. If you have any questions or concerns about your employment status or you believe that any deduction has been made from your pay that is inconsistent with your employment status, you should immediately raise the matter with your Supervisor and/or Payroll so they can assist you in understanding, as well as obtaining, the information that is required in order to investigate the matter, if an investigation is necessary.

PERSONNEL FILE ACCESS

The City maintains a personnel file for each employee. The files are kept in the Human Resources Department. Information retained in the personnel file includes, but is not limited to, personal information such as enrollment forms for benefits, and specific work-related information such as applications for employment, resumes, performance evaluations, salary adjustments, job changes, and other designated records.

The City maintains complete personnel records that accurately reflect each employee's record of service to the City. Reasonable access to personnel records will be authorized in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 28-6.4-1. Further, all personal medical information will be secured in an area separate from the personnel records, with strictly controlled and limited access, in order to protect confidentiality.

Procedure for Review: Employees may request to inspect their own personnel files. Requests to inspect your personnel file must be submitted in writing to the City Human Resources Department. Human Resources staff will review the file to determine if any of the records are not subject to inspection, and will schedule a mutually convenient time for you to inspect the records, within seven (7) working days.

You or your written authorized designated representative may review and request copies of items in your personnel file. However, you may not remove or alter personnel records unless agreed to by the Human Resources Director. If you disagree with any information in your personnel file, you may submit a written statement explaining your position which shall be attached to the disputed portion and included in the file.

SEPERATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

There are many reasons an employee may choose to terminate or be terminated from his/her employment with the City.

City Property & Records: All voluntarily terminated or involuntarily terminated employees are required to immediately return all City property and records upon termination.

Resignation: If an employee decides to voluntarily terminate his/her employment with the City, to remain in good standing the employee must give at least 14 days' notice prior to his/ her date of departure so that an orderly transition can be made.

Retirement: The City expects employees to give reasonable notice, in writing, of their intent to retire. For most employees, thirty (30) days' notice is considered reasonable. Sixty (60) days is expected for Department Heads. Where circumstances warrant however, less notice may be acceptable in individual cases. Employees should also be aware that providing less notice to the City or the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island (ERSRI) may create a gap between the end of the retiree's employment and when they start to receive retirement benefits. It is important for employees to give reasonable notice to avoid this from happening. We suggest you contact the ERSRI in advance of your retirement date to address any questions you may have.

Final Pay: Any employee who resigns or who is terminated will receive his/her final pay on the next regularly scheduled payday.

V. BENEFITS

The City of East Providence provides its eligible employees with a variety of benefit programs to help maintain a high quality of life. These programs include a health insurance plan, dental insurance plan, HRA, life insurance plan, which includes accidental death and dismemberment insurance, and employee pension plan. Some of these benefit programs require employee contributions. All contributions to the medical and dental plan are contributed with pre-tax dollars.

Although we introduce you to these benefits in this section, we cannot provide the details of each benefit here. You should receive official plan documents for each of the benefit plans that we offer. Those documents along with your applicable collective bargaining agreement should be your primary resource for information about your benefit plans. If you don't understand information in the plan documents or if you have any questions about the benefits we offer, please schedule an appointment with the HR Department.

Health Care Benefits:

The City currently offers health insurance coverage thorough Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island for all benefits-eligible employees and their dependents who are eligible to participate in the plan. Health benefits begin the first of the month following your start date.

When you become eligible, you will have the option to accept or decline coverage through the City's health insurance plan. If you decline coverage you must have a qualifying event or wait until the next open enrollment period to subsequently enroll in the City's health insurance plan.

Dental Benefits:

The City currently offers dental benefits through Delta Dental for all benefits-eligible employees and their dependents who are eligible to participate in the plan. Dental benefits begin the first of the month following your start date.

When you become eligible, you will have the option to accept or decline coverage through the City's dental benefit plan. If you decline coverage you must have a qualifying event or wait until the next open enrollment period to subsequently enroll in the City's dental benefit plan.

Insurance Continuation: (COBRA) Under state law and the Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 ("COBRA") and subsequent amendments to the act, employees covered under the City's group health insurance plan are eligible for continuation of medical coverage under the

group plan upon the employee's termination (except for gross misconduct) or when there is a reduction in hours to a level that does not qualify the employee for benefits under the City's insurance plan. Under COBRA regulations an employee's covered spouse and covered dependents are allowed to elect continuation of coverage upon the employee's death, divorce or legal separation, an employee's entitlement to Medicare, or a dependent's loss of dependent status under family coverage.

All employees, as well as their qualified dependents, will receive notice of mandated insurance continuation benefits at the time of hire or whenever the plan coverage for the employee begins. If a qualifying event occurs which entitles the employee and/or qualified dependents to continuation coverage, the plan administrator will notify the qualified beneficiaries of their right to elect continuation coverage. Continued participation will be solely at the participant's expense. Details are available in the Human Resources Department.

Term Life Insurance Term life insurance is provided for eligible employees in accordance with the terms of the group life insurance contract. The City pays the full cost of all premiums during employment with the City.

Employee Assistance: The City cares about the health and well-being of its employees and recognizes that a variety of personal problems can disrupt their personal and work lives. While many employees solve their problems either on their own or with the help of family and friends, sometimes employees need professional assistance and advice. The City provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Coastline EAP that provides confidential access to professional counseling services for help in confronting personal problems such as alcohol and other substance abuse, marital and family difficulties, financial or legal troubles, and emotional distress. The EAP is available to all City employees and their immediate family members, offering problem assessment, short-term counseling, and referral to appropriate community and private services.

Disclaimer: This handbook is not intended to give a detailed explanation of insurance benefits, but rather to provide general information. Complete details of insurance benefits are available in Human Resources.

VI. TIME AT WORK AND TIME AWAY FROM WORK

WORK HOURS & ATTENDANCE

In order to maintain a high level of responsiveness to the City of East Providence residents, it is important that employees follow established work hours, avoid tardiness and unauthorized absences, and follow reporting requirements.

As a general statement all offices of the City will be kept open continuously from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday during a regular work week. Unless otherwise approved by the City Manager, the regular work day is from 8a.m. to 4 p.m. Each department may schedule alternate work schedules to meet their needs and the needs of citizens with approval of the City Manager.

Attendance Requirements

Maintaining good attendance is a condition of employment and an essential job function of every employee. An employee will refrain from unauthorized absences or tardiness; abusing sick leave; absences or tardiness that causes significant disruption of service; and excessive amount of time off the job, regardless of reason. An employee absent from the job without proper authorization for three consecutive workdays may be considered to have resigned his/her position without notice, unless exigent circumstances are demonstrated upon review on a case-by-case basis.

OVERTIME

The work of the City and its departments and divisions has been organized as to the number of employees needed and the work schedules required to meet the commitments to and expectations of the citizens we serve. Whenever possible, it is best to be able to provide those services and activities within a normal scheduled work day and work week for employees. However, from time to time it is necessary to schedule work beyond the normally scheduled work day or work week.

The City is committed to providing a consistent system for scheduling and paying for overtime in compliance with the overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Please refer to your applicable collective bargaining agreement for specific details regarding overtime.

HOLIDAYS

The City provides paid time off for eligible employees on recognized holidays. Employees who work on an identified holiday will be paid according to their collective bargaining agreement.

To be eligible for holiday pay, the employee must work the full shift on his/her last scheduled work day before the holiday and his/her first scheduled work day following the holiday, unless the employee is on an approved form of leave.

Identified Holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day	Columbus Day
President's Day	Veterans' Day
Good Friday close at 11:30 AM	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve close at 11:30 AM
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Victory Day	New Year's Eve close at 11:30

Observance: Whenever a holiday falls on a Saturday the preceding Friday shall be considered the observed holiday. Whenever a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be considered the observed holiday.

VACATION

The City believes that employees need time away from work each year to rest and relax and attend to personal matters and provides eligible employees with paid vacation days.

The City may consider several factors when determining the amount of vacation for which an employee is eligible. The City considers years of continuous service to the City to be a significant factor in making this determination. Therefore, employees will generally be granted paid vacation benefits as of January 1 of each year based upon their length of continuous service with the City. Please refer to your applicable collective bargaining agreement or offer of employment letter for specific details regarding your vacation benefit.

PERSONAL DAYS

The procedure for employee personal days shall be determined by the employee's applicable collective bargaining agreement or offer of employment letter.

SICK LEAVE

Paid sick leave is accrued and provided to maintain continuity of your income during limited periods of non-job-related illness. Please refer to your applicable collective bargaining agreement or offer of employment letter for specific details regarding your sick leave benefit.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

The City grants eligible employees leaves in accordance with the Rhode Island Family and Medical Leave Act and the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

The City encourages employees who find themselves in situations where they are contemplating use of this Leave to meet with Human Resources to assure a full understanding of how their particular situation may be handled under this policy. All such conversations and inquiries will be treated as confidential.

JURY DUTY

The City believes its employees serving as jurors should be 'made whole' while serving on a jury. Therefore, employees will receive their regular rate of pay for the time served as a juror plus any mileage reimbursement; however, this requires employees to relinquish the "per diem" portion of the Court paid portion of their jury duty compensation to the City by sending a copy of the court check to Payroll to have the amount, less mileage, deducted from the next paycheck.

As a condition for the above payments, the employee is required to report for work at his/her scheduled hours both before and after jury duty when reasonably possible.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

As a general statement, the City recognizes the need for employees to have time to make arrangements, handle family matters and attend funerals when a close member of their family dies. This policy is meant to address the legitimate time needs of employees at these difficult times. Factors to be considered include the relationship of the employee to the deceased, the location, date and time of the funeral, and other facts specific to the deceased and the funeral and/or family arrangements.

Please refer to your applicable collective bargaining agreement or offer of employment letter for your specific details regarding your bereavement leave benefit.

MILITARY LEAVE

The City allows military leave for employees who temporarily leave employment with the City to join and/or serve in the military forces of the United States in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act and State Military Leave Laws.

All employees requesting military leave must notify the Human Resources Department prior to said leave unless precluded by military necessity. The notice must be in writing and, where appropriate, include a copy of the employee's military orders and/or training schedule.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

After the exhaustion of all available paid leave benefits, an employee may request leave without pay. As a general practice, the City will review and evaluate the amount of time off requested, the current workload for the individual or their department, the employee's past history of time away from work and other circumstances as presented by the requesting employee.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, the City Manager or the City Manager's designee has the authority to issue a Declaration of Inclement Weather for the City of East Providence employees.

In the event of extreme weather conditions, the City Manager may announce the closing of non-emergency City offices by issuing a Declaration of Inclement Weather.

The Declaration of Inclement Weather will be communicated by the most practical means available at the time.

When inclement weather does not warrant City closure or delayed opening, but individual employees decide not to report to work due to their own safety concerns, transportation problems, or dependent care issues, the following compensation conditions shall apply:

1. Employees must notify their supervisors as soon as possible of their decision not to report to work.
2. Time loss incurred by an employee due to inclement weather may be charged against vacation, personal days, other appropriate leave balances, or time off without pay.
3. At the discretion of the supervisor, an hourly employee may make up lost time through an adjusted work schedule, but under no circumstances shall this result in the employee becoming eligible for overtime compensation.

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EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received a copy of the Employee Handbook. I have read and I understand its contents. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to ask questions about anything I do not understand.

I understand that it is my responsibility to comply with all City policies, rules and expectations as set forth in this Handbook, as well as policies, rules and expectations that the City may otherwise establish or change from time to time. I further understand and acknowledge that this Handbook provides guidelines and information, but this Handbook is not, nor is it intended to constitute, an employment contract of any kind.

I understand that the contents of this Handbook may be changed by the Employer at any time, with or without notice.

After you have read the Handbook sign this page. Then please detach the page from the Handbook and return it to your supervisor, who will submit it to the Human Resources Department to be placed in your personnel file.

Employee Signature

Date

Print Name

