**TOWNSHIP OF MEDFORD**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

**Issued January 1, 2025**

****

**CONTENTS**

General Management of Township Personnel 2

I. Fair Employment Practices 3

II. Employee Benefits 3

 Involuntary Payroll Deductions 3

Department Heads and Statutory Employees 3

 Pay Rates for Other Non-Union Employees 4

 Timekeeping Protocols 4

 Medical Benefits 6

 Health Benefits in Retirement 7

III. Leaves of Absence 7

 Vacation, Personal & Sick Leaves 8,9

 Extended Leaves of Absence 9

IV. Employment Practices 9

 Employment Protocol 10

 Open Public Meetings Act and Personnel Matters 12

 Background Checks for Employees, Applicants and Volunteers 12

 Orientation of New Employees 15

 Initial Employment Period 15

 Job Descriptions 15

 Educational Assistance and Job Training 15

 Conferences and Seminars 16

 Resignation and Retirement 16

 Retirement 17

V. Safety & Health 17

 Smoking Prohibited 18

 Video Surveillance 18

VI. Employer Property & Equipment 19

 Maintenance of Driver’s License 19

 Use of Fire & EMS Vehicles 19

VII. Miscellaneous Personnel Rules 20

 Appearance 20

Breaks 20

 Bulletin Boards 21

 Early Closings & Delayed Openings 21

 Public Relations/ Media 21

 Employee Handbook 22

**General Management of Township Personnel**

The Township of Medford seeks to develop and maintain a workforce that is dedicated to serving the needs of its residents. To do so, the Township strives to foster an equitable work environment, to treat employees and prospective employees in a manner consistent with all applicable employment laws and regulations, and to offer a competitive compensation package. The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual of the Township applies to all employees, volunteers, (elected or) appointed officials and, where applicable, to independent contractors. This Employee Handbook has been developed to supplement the Township’s Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (“PPPM”) by covering or supplementing topics that are in addition to those encompassed in the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.

All employees, officers and Department Heads shall be appointed and promoted by the Appointing Authority, except where applicable law otherwise provides. No person shall be employed or promoted unless there is a position created by an ordinance adopted by the Township Council of the Township of Medford and/or by the authority of the Township Manager, as may be appropriate under the form of government under which the Township of Medford operates. No person shall be employed or promoted unless there are sufficient funds appropriated in the current budget and the salary is established in the manner required by applicable law.

The Township Manager and all managerial/supervisory personnel are authorized and responsible for implementing and enforcing personnel policies and procedures. The Payroll & Benefits Specialist has been designated to perform some of the Township’s Human Resources duties to assist the Township Manager in implementing personnel practices. The Township Manager also works with the Township’s Labor Counsel to provide guidance in personnel matters.

As a general principle, the Township of Medford has a “no tolerance” policy towards workplace wrongdoing. Township officials, supervisors and employees are to report anything perceived to be improper through the respective chain-of-command. The Township also encourages Department Heads and supervisors to maintain an Open Door Policy that encourages employees to bring concerns and problems promptly to the attention of management.

.

**Note: If there is a conflict between this Handbook and any collective negotiations agreement, the provisions of the collective negotiations agreement will govern for represented employees. This Handbook has been written so as not to conflict with the provisions and mandates of the laws and regulations governing employment in the State of New Jersey. If there is a conflict between this Handbook and any such mandate pursuant to law, such law will prevail for covered employees.**

1. **Fair Employment Practices:**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (“PPPM”) contains the Township’s official statements with respect to the following topics:

* Equal Employment Opportunity
* Americans with Disabilities
* Harassment and Discrimination
* Whistleblowing (reporting wrongdoing)
* Retaliation

To summarize the intent of these policies, the Township expects all employees to treat coworkers, contractors, volunteers, members of the public – anyone whom they encounter in the course of performing their duties– with courtesy and respect. The Township’s Fair Employment Practices apply to all Township employees and volunteers and to all applicants for employment as well. The Township prohibits discrimination and harassment against anyone in a legally protected category, as well as work activities, practices or behaviors that violate the public’s trust. A procedure for reporting and making complaints is included in this section of the PPPM.

For more information about the Township’s Fair Employment Practices policies, including the procedures to report violations of the same, please consult the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, a Department Head or the Township Manager.

1. **Employee Benefits:**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual contains the Township’s official statements with respect to the following topics:

* Compensation
* Overtime
* Paid Holidays
* Medical Benefits
* HIPPA Compliance
* Workers Compensation
* Transitional Duty

**Involuntary Payroll Deductions:**

The Township of Medford will not accept responsibility for any employee’s personal finances. The Township of Medford will acknowledge judgments against an employee’s pay, but will not act as a mediator between the employee and creditors.

**Department Heads and Statutory Employees:**

Salary ranges for Department Heads and Statutory employees are established by ordinance. If a salary ordinance provides a salary range, the salary paid must fall within the minimum and maximum ranges for the employee’s title. Employees are paid every 2 weeks. Department Heads and Statutory employees are not entitled to overtime compensation or to accrue compensatory time unless otherwise established in the PPPM. Department Heads and Statutory employees may submit a written request to the Township Manager for ‘flex’ time which may be granted by the Township Manager. However, said ‘flex’ time shall not be hour for hour and shall not accrue.

**Pay Rates for Other Non-Union Employees:**

Hourly rates for any non-union employees other than as set forth above shall be fixed by the Township Manager in accordance with adopted salary ranges and as permitted by applicable law. Employees are paid every 2 weeks. Non-union employees shall be entitled to additional compensation as may be required by applicable law.

**Timekeeping Protocols:**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires that employers keep detailed records regarding time worked and employee pay. A time clock is used to record all hours worked and leave taken during the reporting period for non-exempt personnel.

Time clock punches and associated work records are the official basis for recording work hours and shall be considered official records of Medford Township.

It is a job requirement that all employees must “clock in” at the beginning of the workday and “clock out” at the end of the workday at the employee’s place of work, as well as for approved meal breaks. Under certain conditions (such as off-site training), employees should report time worked to their immediate supervisor so that the employee’s work time can be manually entered by the supervisor.

Other requirements:

Non-exempt employees are required to “clock in” and “clock out” at their scheduled times.

a It is prohibited to abuse or take advantage of the time clock “punch window” and rounding policies. For example, an employee may be disciplined if the employee clocks in at 8:37 a.m. knowing that the work time will be rounded back to 8:30 a.m. or clocks out at 4:23 p.m. knowing that the work time will be rounded forward to 4:30 p.m.

b. Most employees are required to clock out and clock in for lunch breaks. Due to the nature of some positions, lunch breaks may be automatically calculated consistent with collective negotiations agreements.

c. It is prohibited for any employee to allow another employee to clock in and clock out for the employee. Violations of this policy may be grounds for termination of employment. The only exception is that an employee’s supervisor may enter time on behalf of the employee in limited circumstances (e.g., employee is attending an off-site training) and shall make a note on the employee’s time record indicating that the supervisor made the particular time entry on behalf of the employee and the reason why.

d. Employees are responsible for clocking in and out and accurately reporting their time. Every employee is required to promptly notify a supervisor if she or he is unable to do so or has made a mistake reporting his or her time.

Punch Window and Rounding:

As a convenience, employees may clock in (i.e., “punch in”) up to 7 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled work time. However, employees shall not engage in any work during that time. In such cases, the employee will not be compensated for the time “on the clock” until the start of the employee’s scheduled work time.

Likewise, employees may clock out (i.e., “punch out”) up to 7 minutes after the end of their scheduled work time. However, employees shall not engage in any work during that time. In such cases, the employee will not be compensated for the time “on the clock” after the end of the employee’s scheduled work time.

In both cases, an employee will be compensated for work performed before and after the employee’s scheduled work time only if overtime has been expressly approved by the employee’s supervisor or department head in accordance with overtime approval procedures.

Punches collected by the time clock to record the start and end of the day/shift are rounded at 7-minutes before and after each quarter hour (*00, 15, 30, 45*).

Employees with schedules requiring him or her to start work at a particular time (e.g., 8:30 a.m., 7:00 p.m., etc.) and who clock in after that scheduled time are considered late regardless of the fact that the time keeping system includes a “punch window” and rounding procedure. Disciplinary action for tardiness and absenteeism is based on actual time clock records.

Falsification, Tampering, and Unauthorized Viewing:

The timekeeping system directly impacts expenditures of public funds as well as the Township’s obligations under the FLSA and, therefore, violations of these policies and procedures may result in serious discipline. In particular the following violations could lead to major discipline including termination:

 a. Any attempt to tamper with time keeping equipment, hardware, or software;

 b. Punching in for an absent or tardy employee (a/k/a “buddy punching”);

1. Punching out for an employee;
2. Interfering with other employees’ use of the timekeeping system;
3. Falsification of time keeping records;
4. Unauthorized viewing of another employee’s time record;
5. Intentionally or carelessly working off the clock; or
6. Underreporting or failing to report work hours.

Once an employee clocks in he or she is responsible for commencing work at the start of the day/shift. Personal matters or simply not working while clocked in is considered “riding the clock” and could be grounds for discipline.

Responsibilities of Department Heads:

* 1. Department Heads shall review all time records prior to submission to the Payroll & Benefits Specialist for payroll processing.
	2. Department Heads shall be responsible for ensuring that all time records for every employee under their supervision comply with this policy.
	3. Department Heads shall ensure that every weekly time card sets forth clearly the work status for every day that employees worked, the leave status if employees are not at work, and indicate the specific hours of authorized overtime for which payment is sought and/or for which compensatory time has been requested.
	4. Department Heads shall approve each and every time card as confirming that all of the time set forth on the time card has been previously approved and is accurate.
	5. Department Heads may delegate the functions set forth in this section to supervisors but shall retain the ultimate responsibility to ensure compliance. The delegation of these responsibilities shall be in writing with a copy provided to the Township Manager.
	6. The failure of Department Heads and supervisors to whom these functions are delegated, to comply with this Policy, shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

**Medical Benefits:**

 All employee contributions toward healthcare benefits shall be made twice per month. Employees shall contribute toward the cost of their healthcare benefit premiums (or premium equivalents) in accordance with the percentages under Year 4 of the schedule outlined in P.L. 2011, c. 78 based upon category of coverage, along with the difference of any higher cost plan (for employees hired on or after 01/01/2014). No employee may contribute less than 1.5% of his or her annual base salary toward the cost of premiums. Healthcare benefits are presently administered by the South Jersey JIF; the Township reserves its right to change plan administrators or plans.

 For employees hired on or after January 1, 2014, the Township shall designate three medical plans as “base” plans. Employees may select any of the base plans. Should an employee choose a plan other than a base plan, the employee shall pay the difference between the base plan and the higher cost plan in addition to the employee contributions indicated above.

 Employees who provide proof of coverage under a spouse and decline medical benefits through the Township shall be eligible for an opt-out stipend based upon the lowest cost plan. The stipend shall be the lesser of 25% of the premium savings or $5,000. Said stipend shall be payable in June and December installments.

**Health Benefits in Retirement:**

 Employees with 20 years of service credit in PERS or PFRS as of June 28, 2011, who meet the years of service requirements to Medford Township, as outlined herein, shall not be required to contribute toward healthcare premiums (or premium equivalents) in retirement.

 Employees hired prior to January 1, 2013 who retire with twenty-five (25) years of creditable service in PERS or PFRS, with a minimum of twenty (20) years service to the Township of Medford, shall receive retiree health benefits for the retiree and his or her eligible dependents (including spouse), consistent with the plans offered to current employees. The retiree shall contribute toward healthcare premiums in retirement at the highest rate indicated thus, based upon his or her retirement allowance:

* At the percentages established under Year 4 of the schedule outlined in P.L. 2011, c. 78 based upon plan and category of coverage;
* 25% of the premium based upon plan and category of coverage; or
* 1.5% of the retiree’s monthly pension allowance, as subject to any COLAs.

Employees hired on or after January 1, 2013, who retire with twenty-five (25) years of creditable service in PERS or PFRS, with a minimum of twenty-five (25) years service to the Township of Medford, shall receive retiree health benefits for the retiree only, consistent with the plans offered to current employees. The retiree shall contribute toward the healthcare premiums at the highest rate indicated thus, based upon his or her retirement allowance, in accordance with the contribution levels described above. Retirees may purchase dependent coverage in retirement at full cost for the category of coverage.

 Upon becoming eligible to enroll in Medicare, the retiree shall enroll in both Part A and Part B and pay the related premiums for Part B coverage at which time participation in the benefits program shall cease. Thereafter, the Township shall reimburse the retiree for the cost of Part B premiums. Payment of Medicare Part B premiums shall cease upon the death of the retiree.

1. **Leaves of Absence:**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual contains the Township’s official statements with respect to the following topics:

* Vacation Leave
* Personal Days
* Sick Leave
* Bereavement Leave
* Family & Medical Leave
* New Jersey Family Leave
* Leave for Domestic Violence (NJ SAFE ACT)
* Military Service Leave
* Jury Duty Leave

**Vacation Leave:**

For employees hired prior to January 1, 2012:

1 day per month from 3rd month of employment through completion of four (4) years;

1 ¼ days per month from beginning of 5th year thru completion of nine (9) years;

1 ½ days per month from beginning of 10th year thru completion of 14 years;

1 ¾ days per month from beginning of 15th year thru completion of 19 years;

2 days per month beginning 20th year thru year of retirement.

For employees hired on or after January 1, 2012:

1 day per month from 3rd month of employment through completion of four (4) years;

1 ¼ days per month from beginning of 5th year thru completion of nine (9) years;

1 ½ days per month from beginning of 10th year thru completion of 14 years;

1 ¾ days per month from beginning of 15th year thru retirement.

Additional time shall be credited the first of the month following the completion of each milestone.

For full time employees, a day is defined as either seven (7) or eight (8) hours depending upon the employee’s workweek (35 or 40 hours). For part-time employees, vacation leave shall be prorated in accordance with the schedules above based upon the employee’s average workweek.

The employer may credit employees with leave in either days or hours. Vacation leave shall not accrue while an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence or disciplinary suspension without pay of more than 10 days. In rare cases of extreme hardship, vacation leave may be used, with advance permission, where an employee has exhausted his or her sick leave.

Township Council or the Township Manager may credit new employees with prior NJ government experience or rehired employees with years of service on the above schedules.

**Personal Leave:**

For employees hired prior to January 1, 2012:

1 day from 3rd month of employment for the first year of employment;

2 days beginning of 2nd year thru completion of four (4) years;

3 days beginning of 5th year thru completion of nine (9) years;

4 days beginning of 10th year thru completion of 19 years;

5 days beginning 20th year thru year of retirement.

For employees hired on or after January 1, 2012:

1 day from 3rd month of employment for the first year of employment;

2 days beginning of 2nd year thru completion of four (4) years;

3 days beginning of 5th year thru completion of nine (9) years;

4 days beginning of 10th year thru retirement.

Additional time shall be credited the first of the month following the completion of each milestone.

For full time employees, a day is defined as either seven (7) or eight (8) hours depending upon the employee’s workweek (35 or 40 hours). For part-time employees, personal leave shall be prorated in accordance with the schedules above based upon the employee’s average workweek.

Personal leave for full time employees may be taken in full or half day increments. Personal Leave must be taken in the year it is accrued and does not carry over to the succeeding year.

Personal Leave is offered to employees to enable them to take off a day on short notice. Ordinarily, Personal Leave must be approved in advance. On a rare occasion, an employee may need personal leave on an emergency basis; a department head may require proof of the emergency condition which shall be supplied by the employee upon reporting to his/her next scheduled workday.

Township Council or the Township Manager may credit new employees with prior NJ government experience or rehired employees with years of service on the above schedules.

**Sick Leave:**

Regular full-time employees shall earn Sick Leave beginning the 3rd month of employment at the rate of one (1) day per month. Beginning the second year of employment, sick leave will accumulate at the rate of one and one-quarter (1 ¼) days per month. Sick leave shall not accrue while an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence or disciplinary suspension without pay of more than 10 days.

**Extended Leaves of Absence:**

Employees may be granted a personal leave of absence for limited reasons for up to six months at the sole discretion of the Township Manager if the leave does not cause undue operational disruption. The leave must include the use of any accrued vacation, personal leave and accrued compensatory time, regardless of the length of leave requested. The portion of the leave that runs beyond the exhaustion of accrued vacation, personal leave and accrued compensatory will be without pay or longevity credit. In exceptional circumstances or extreme hardship, the Township Manager may extend a leave of absence for up to an additional six months, if such extension is considered in the best interests of the Township of Medford.

In addition to the foregoing, a personal leave of absence granted for medical reasons or for any reason which as a matter of law and/or regulation authorizes the use of accrued sick leave shall require the use of said accrued sick leave during the leave of absence.

A personal leave of absence may, but shall not be required to, be granted in conjunction with an employee’s rights pursuant to the State and or Federal family leave laws.

A personal leave of absence shall not be granted for the purpose of seeking or accepting employment with another employer, or for extended vacation time. Employees on a personal leave of absence for more than two weeks in any month will not receive holiday pay, and will not accrue personal leave, sick leave or vacation leave for that month. Health benefits may also be impacted. Refer to the Township of Medford Health Benefits Policy. A personal leave of absence is granted with the understanding that the employee intends to return to work for the Township of Medford. If the employee fails to return within five business days after the expiration of the leave, the employee shall be considered to have resigned.

1. **Employment Practices:**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual contains the Township’s official statements with respect to the following topics:

* Employment References
* Classification and Promotion
* Performance Evaluation
* Layoffs
* Discipline and Termination
* Confidentiality and Access to Personnel Records
* Township and State Residency Requirements
* Vital Information – Changes

**Employment Protocols:**

**a. Public Safety:** The protocols set forth herein shall apply to the selection of sworn police officers and firefighters solely to the extent that said procedures are consistent with the procedures set forth in the Medford Township Police Department Rules and Regulations, the Medford Township Fire & EMS Department Rule and Regulations and/or policy separately promulgated by the Appointing Authority.

**b. Recruitment:** The Township Manager in conjunction with the Payroll & Benefits Specialist and respective Department Head will coordinate the employment recruitment process for all vacancies to ensure compliance with contractual, legal, and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”) requirements. When a vacancy occurs that is intended to be filled, it is the responsibility of the Department Head to notify the Township Manager to request the position be posted. The Township will seek to recruit qualified applicants in accordance with applicable federal and State laws, as applicable. Where positions are advertised, the media or other periodical utilized must have as wide circulation as possible to encourage applications from candidates of diverse backgrounds and must prominently state that the Township of Medford is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**c. Applications:** All candidates must submit a fully completed application form, supplying honest and correct answers to the questions posed; for management level or specialized positions, a resume shall be submitted as well. The employment application is considered to be a confidential document and will not be available to anyone who is not directly involved in the hiring process, except as otherwise required by law.

**d. Interviews:** The Department Head with approval from the Township Manager will coordinate the interview process including the scheduling of applicants, development of interview questions and standards to measure candidate responses. All questions must be within the scope of the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights Guidelines for Pre-Employment Inquiries. The Township will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations to known physical and mental limitations of all applicants with disabilities, provided that the individual is otherwise qualified to safely perform the essential functions of the job and provided the accommodation does not impose an unreasonable hardship on the Township of Medford.

**e. Physical Examinations**: Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, after an offer of employment is made and prior to commencing employment, the Township Manager shall require applicants in physically demanding jobs to pass a physical examination (and in the case of Police and Fire Recruits, a psychological assessment as well) in order to ensure that the applicant can perform the duties of their position without injury to themselves or others. The same post-offer physical examination must be performed on all applicants for a particular position. The Township Manager may require periodic physical examinations to determine the employee’s continued ability to perform the duties of the position. All physical examinations must be performed by a physician chosen by the Township of Medford at the expense of the Township. All medical records of employees and applicants are deemed confidential and are to be maintained by the Payroll & Benefits Specialist and Township Manager separate from the employee’s official personnel file. Medical exams may include tests for drug and alcohol use.

**f. Criminal Background Checks**: Criminal background checks are required of all applicants, 18 years old and older, whether for employment or as a volunteer, that may work directly or indirectly with children/youth/minors (as outlined in the next section), for positions with access to confidential public records or public funds, and public safety positions.

**g. Job Offers:** The final decision will be made by the Appointing Authority after all references, residency, and other information has been verified, except that the advice and consent of Township Council will be required for Department Heads or certain statutory positions pursuant to the Faulkner Act. The final decision will be made by the Township Council as to those positions regarding which the Council retains the statutory authority to appoint same. The employment offer must be made in a letter to the candidate outlining the basic terms and conditions of the offer. The letter will also establish a deadline for acceptance.

**h. Acceptances and Rejections:** If the first offer is rejected, the Township Manager or the Township Council, as appropriate, may decide to hire another candidate or re-open the position. Once a candidate accepts the employment offer, all other candidates who were interviewed will be notified in writing that they were not accepted for the position.

**i. Record Retention:** All applications, notes made during interviews and reference checks, job offers and other documents created during hiring process must be returned to the Payroll & Benefits Specialist and Township Manager. Documents related to the successful candidate will be placed in the employee’s official personnel file except medical records that must be maintained in a separate file. All records and documents related to candidates that were not selected will be retained for one year. Records and documents created during the hiring process are deemed confidential and will be secured in a locked cabinet.

**Open Public Meetings Act and Personnel Matters:**

Discussions by the governing body of the Township of Medford concerning appointment, termination, terms and conditions of employment, performance evaluation, promotion or discipline of any current or prospective officer or employee, if applicable, shall be conducted in accordance with the N.J. Open Public Meetings Act.

Prior to the discussion by the governing body of the Township of Medford concerning such matters, the Clerk shall notify the affected person(s) of the meeting date, time and place, the matters to be discussed and the person’s right to request that the discussion occur in open session. In the event more than one person is affected by the discussion and one of the affected persons does not request that the discussion be in open session, then the discussion shall be in closed session.

**Background Checks for Employees, Applicants and Volunteers:**

**a. Background checks required**: Criminal background checks are required of all candidates over the age of 18, whether for employment or as a volunteer, who will be working directly or indirectly with children/youth/minors. Criminal background checks will also be performed every three years for each employee or volunteer that works directly or indirectly with children/youth/minors. An employee or volunteer who is arrested or charged with violating the criminal code between background checks shall report the arrest or charges to his or her department head within 24 hours of the event.

**b. Background check procedure:** The Payroll & Benefits Specialist or Department Head will perform or initiate criminal background checks and receive reports from the MTPD or outside agencies or contractors. These reports shall include, but are not limited, to court records; police department and corrections agency records; registries or watch lists; state criminal record repositories; and the Interstate Identification Index maintained by the FBI. The Payroll & Benefits Specialist and Township Manager will discuss potentially disqualifying information received with the employee’s or volunteer’s Department Head, and a determination that the information is disqualifying shall be made based on whether the disqualification is job-related for the position and is consistent with business necessity. Written information received as a result of a “Request for Criminal History Record Information for A Noncriminal Justice Purpose” will be destroyed immediately after it has served its authorized purpose, as required by the State Police. Such information will be kept confidential and will not be published or disclosed in any manner not consistent with the procedures listed herein. Such information will not be deemed a public record under P.L. 1963, c.73 (C:47:1A-1, et seq.) as amended and supplemented by P.L. 2001, c.404 (C:47:1A-5, et seq.).

When a disqualification decision has been made as a result of the employer’s “targeted screening process” described below, thePayroll & Benefits Specialist and Township Manager will inform the candidate, volunteer, or employee, in writing, of any information that would disqualify the person from working with children/youth. If the Township contracts with an outside vendor to process the background checks, that contractor may be authorized to inform the person in writing of any information that would disqualify the person from working with children/youth/minors. In addition, the individual shall be advised that he/she has the opportunity to explain the criminal record and to demonstrate why the exclusion based on the employer’s targeted screening process should not apply to him/her under the circumstances. This information may include evidence of an error in the criminal record; facts surrounding the conviction; age at the time of the conviction and/or release from prison; evidence of a clean criminal and employment record since release; rehabilitation efforts; positive references; and evidence that he/she is bondable. Thereafter, the employer shall give the individual further consideration. For subsequent criminal background checks that reveal disqualifying records, existing employees or volunteers will be placed on immediate suspension pending the outcome of a hearing or appeal. Employee suspensions will be without pay.

**c. Conditions Under Which An Employee Will Be Disqualified From Working With Children/Youth/Minors:** A candidate, volunteer, or employee may be disqualified from employment in a position that works with children/youth/minors if that person’s criminal history background check reveals a record of conviction for any of the following crimes and disorderly persons offenses as defined by New Jersey law or by analogous laws in other States:

a. Homicide (N.J.S.A. 2C:11)

b. Assault, reckless endangerment, threats, stalking (N.J.S.A. 2C:12)

c. Kidnapping (N.J.S.A. 2C:13)

d. Sexual Offenses (N.J.S.A. 2C:14)

e. Offenses Against the Family, Children and Incompetents (N.J.S.A. 2C:24)

f. Controlled Dangerous Substances (N.J.S.A. 2C:35 except for 2C:35-10(a)4 and 26:6I-52)

g. Robbery (N.J.S.A. 2C:15)

h. Theft (N.J.S.A. 2C:20)

A disqualification from any position will be based only on a conviction for one or more of the above disqualifying crimes and offenses as a result of the employer’s targeted screening process, by which the employer has taken into account the following factors:

(a) The nature and gravity of the offense or conduct, including the consideration of (i) the harm caused by the crime; (ii) the legal elements required to prove the crime; and (iii) the classification of the crime (i.e., felony or misdemeanor, etc.); (b) The time that has elapsed since the offense, conduct, and/or completion of the sentence; (c) The nature of the job held or sought, including the consideration of: (i) the job duties (not merely the job title); (ii) the level of supervision to be provided; (iii) the working environment (e.g., private home, outdoors, warehouse); (iv) interaction with others, especially with vulnerable individuals such as children/youth/minors; and (v) the relationship of the criminal history to the job to be performed. An acquittal, a dismissal, successful completion of Pre-Trial Intervention (PTI), or an expungement of a criminal offense, including a disqualifying criminal offense, is not a disqualifying conviction. Further, an arrest record standing alone may not be used to disqualify a candidate, volunteer, or employee from an employment opportunity. However, the employer may make a disqualification decision based on the conduct underlying the arrest if the conduct makes the individual unfit for the position in question, in which case the conduct, not the arrest, is relevant for employment purposes.

**d. Appeal Process:** The Appeals Committee will be comprised of the Township Manager, the Police Chief, and the Payroll & Benefits Specialist.

Once a candidate, employee or volunteer has been notified of a disqualifying conviction, the individual has 14 calendar days to submit a Notice of Appeal to the Township. Such Notice of Appeal must be sent in writing to the Payroll & Benefits Specialist and Township Manager.

The Notice of Appeal shall include a Notice of Rehabilitation and/or a Notice that the information is inaccurate or incorrect, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:59-1.6.

In making a determination on the appeal, the following information will be considered:

1. The nature and responsibility of the position which the convicted individual would hold, has held, or currently holds, as the case may be.
2. The nature and seriousness of the crime or offense.
3. The circumstances under which the crime or offense occurred.
4. The date of the crime or offense.
5. The age of the individual when the crime or offense was committed.
6. Whether the crime or offense was an isolated or a repeated incident.
7. Any social conditions which may have contributed to the commission of the crime or offense.
8. Any evidence of rehabilitation, including good conduct in prison or in the community, counseling or psychiatric treatment received.
9. Acquisition of additional academic or vocational schooling, successful participation in correctional work-release programs, or the recommendation of those who have had the individual under their supervision.

The Township will issue a written determination on the employee’s appeal of their disqualifying conviction, setting forth the reasons for the determination.

**e. Local Background Checks:** All employees, applicants and volunteers who are not subject to the provision of paragraph a. above shall still be subject to a local background check conducted by the Medford Township Police Department on forms requiring the individual’s signed consent. Evaluation of the results of such shall follow paragraphs b. to d. above.

**Orientation of New Employees:**

All new employees will be scheduled to meet with the Payroll & Benefits Specialist and the Department Head or supervisor during their first week of employment for a general orientation. Copies of all forms and acknowledgements must be returned to the Payroll & Benefits Specialist for inclusion in the employee’s official personnel file. The orientation will include:

a. A tour of the appropriate facilities to acquaint the new employee with overall operations as they relate to the specific position.

b. The completion of all pertinent personnel, payroll, insurance and pension forms.

c. A review of the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual and Employee Handbook and acknowledgement of receipt (copies may be made available electronically).

d. The Employee Complaint Policy letter and acknowledgement.

e. A safety orientation and acknowledgement.

f. Arrangements for the new employee to complete required PEOSHA safety training.

**Initial Employment Period:**

Except where State requirements direct otherwise, new employees (or present employees transferring or promoting to new positions) will be hired subject to an initial probationary period of 90 days. During this initial probationary period, the employee will be provided with training and guidance from the supervisor who will provide feedback to the employee as to whether he/she is performing satisfactorily. Before the end of the initial probationary period, the supervisor will prepare an employee evaluation recommending continued employment or discharge. In limited circumstances, the Township Manager may extend the initial employment period for an additional 90 days.

Nothing in the procedure set forth in this section shall alter Township of Medford’s employment at-will policy. Subject to applicable law to the contrary, employment with Township of Medford is at will and may be terminated at any time with or without cause or notice by the Township of Medford or the employee.

**Job Descriptions:**

A job description including qualifications shall be maintained for each position by the Township Manager’s Office. Job duties of department heads and/or statutory titles shall be as outlined in the applicable section of the Medford Township Code, the New Jersey Statutes and/or as assigned by the Township Manager. The Payroll & Benefits Specialist and Township Manager will make copies available upon request.

**Educational Assistance and Training:**

Subject to sufficient funds in the budget, applicable provisions of collective negotiations agreements and upon the prior approval of the Township Manager, employees may apply for reimbursement of tuition expenses incurred for training or college courses directly related to the employee’s work. The Township Manager will be the sole judge of whether a particular course or program is “directly related” to the employee’s work. Employees are strongly urged to obtain this determination before enrolling in a course or program.

Employees for whom the Township reimburses tuition shall commit to remaining employed with the Township for the period of time indicated herein. Should the Township invest $2,000 or more in training in a calendar year, the employee shall remain in Township service for a period of 12 months or repay the Township on a pro-rata basis. For any employee desiring to take job-related college classes, the Township shall reimburse the employee at the regular rate of tuition as established by Rowan College of Burlington County. Employees shall earn a “C” or equivalent passing grade, and must remain in Township service for one month per each college credit earned, or repay the Township on a pro-rata basis. The Township Manager may relax the “job-related” requirement where an employee needs specific classes to complete his or her Associates or Bachelor’s degree.

**Conferences and Seminars:**

The Township shall cover the cost of continuing education credits for employees who hold State issued licenses or certifications required for their respective positions. Employees shall attend courses that provide the best value to the Township, cost and distance considered.

Requests to attend a conference or seminar must be approved by the Department Head or Township Manager. Requests shall be made sufficiently in advance to take advantage of discounts for early registration, and must be submitted through the Department Head to the Township Manager at least thirty days before the event. Requests must be in writing including the conference schedule, registration information and estimated costs. The Department Head is responsible to detail all training requests during the budget formulation process. Approval of any conference or seminar request is conditioned upon the relevance of the conference and/or seminar to the employee’s duties and responsibilities, and the availability of funds.

**Resignation from Employment:**

An employee who intends to resign must notify his or her Department Head or the Township Manager in writing at least two weeks in advance. After giving notice of resignation, employees are expected to assist their supervisor and coworkers by providing information concerning their current assignments and helping train a replacement, if such person is available. During the last two weeks, the employee may not use paid time off except paid holidays. The Payroll & Benefits Specialist will prepare an Employee Action form showing any pay or other money owed the employee. The Payroll & Benefits Specialist will conduct a confidential exit interview to discuss continuance or termination of employment benefits including COBRA options, address retirement issues (for eligible retirees) and indicate any remaining pay due. For employees enrolled in the Township’s employee benefits program, a COBRA notification letter will be sent to the employee’s home address. The exit interview will also include an open discussion with the employee. On the last day of work, and prior to receiving the final paycheck, the employee must return the Employee Identification Card, all keys, passwords, equipment and any other Township property. At this time, the employee will sign the termination memo designating all money owed and this memo will be retained in the official personnel file.

Any employee who fails to furnish two weeks’ prior notice or who is absent without approval for five consecutive work days shall be considered to have resigned not in good standing. The resignation status may be changed by the Township Manage for good cause.

**Retirement:**

Under State law, all employees must enroll in the New Jersey Public Employees Retirement System, the Police and Firemen’s Retirement System and/or the Defined Contribution Retirement Program, as applicable. The employee’s contribution to the respective retirement program will be deducted from the employee’s pay. An employee who has completed the required number of years and who has reached the required age under the respective retirement program may retire by submitting an application to the NJ Division of Pensions & Benefits. The State retirement programs request six months advance notice to process the application. Upon filing an application to retire, an employee shall inform his/her Department Head of the anticipated retirement date. The date shall not be changed without approval from the Township Manager. A notice from the NJ Division of Pensions that an employee has filed a retirement application or a notice from an employee that the employee intends to retire as of a date certain shall be considered to be a resignation in good standing effective as of the retirement date indicated, in the event the Division of Pensions has not yet approved the retirement as of the date of separation.

After giving notice of retirement, the process outlined above in the section entitled “Resignation from Employment” shall be followed.

1. **Safety & Health:**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual contains the Township’s official statements with respect to the following topics:

* Workplace Violence
* Domestic Violence
* Protection and Safe Treatment of Minors
* Drug & Alcohol Free Workplace
* Safety & Health
* Contagious/ Life Threatening Illness
* Security

To summarize the intent of these policies, the Township expects all employees to be aware of their surroundings and work activities, to use the proper tools and equipment to perform their jobs and to employ safe work habits. The Township’s Safety and Health policies apply to all Township employees and volunteers and, where applicable, to applicants for employment as well. The Township expects employees and volunteers to perform their duties in a way that keeps themselves and the public as safe as practical. In addition to the policies outlined in the PPPM, the following provisions apply.

**Smoking Prohibited:**

The New Jersey Legislature has declared that in all governmental buildings the rights of non-smokers to breathe clean air supersedes the rights of smokers. In accordance with State law, the Township of Medford has adopted a smoke-free policy for all buildings. In addition, outdoor Township facilities shall be smoke-free and no employee or visitor will be permitted to smoke anywhere on Township of Medford property. Smoking inside vehicles owned by the Township of Medford and near equipment that may be sensitive to smoke is also prohibited. This policy shall be strictly enforced.

**Video Surveillance:**

The Township of Medford may install video surveillance camera systems within public buildings and throughout public areas within the Township, primarily to monitor or deter criminal behavior and for the protection of employees and municipal property. In implementing the use of surveillance systems, the Township will ensure compliance with federal, state and local laws governing such usage. Employees will only be permitted to use the video surveillance camera systems for a legitimate business purpose and with proper authorization by the Township Manager or his/her designee.

No employee shall be permitted to view, continually watch, search, copy or otherwise use one of the Township’s video surveillance camera systems or tamper with access, archive, alter, add to, or make copies of any data that has been recorded and stored within any of these systems without a specific purpose and permission by the Township Manager or designee.

The Township Manager shall designate a person (or vendor) to be responsible for the maintenance and administration of the video surveillance camera system. Such designee will be responsible for maintaining a user access log detailing the date, time and user name of individuals who view/access a stored recording.

Any employee who becomes aware of any unauthorized use or disclosure of a video record in a contravention of this policy and/or a potential privacy breach has the responsibility to ensure that the Township Manager is informed immediately of such breach.

For more information about the Township’s Safety & Health policies, including the procedures to report violations of the same, please consult the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, a Department Head or the Township Manager.

1. **Employer Property and Equipment:**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual contains the Township’s official statements with respect to the following topics:

* Computer Use, Electronic Mail, and Internet
* Telephone and Personal Communication Usage
* Care of the Employer’s Property
* Use of Employer Vehicles

In addition to the practices outlined in the PPPM, the following provisions apply to employees (to the extent that a collective negotiations agreement does not cover these topics), applicants for employment and volunteers.

**Maintenance of Driver’s License:**

Any applicant or employee whose work requires the operation of Township or personal vehicle must hold a valid New Jersey State Driver’s License. Applicants or employees whose positions require a Commercial Driver’s License shall maintain his/her CDL.

All new employees who will be assigned work entailing the operating of a Township vehicle will be required to submit to a Motor Vehicle Commission driving records check as a condition of employment. A report indicating a suspended or revoked license status may be cause to deny or terminate employment.

Periodic checks of employees’ drivers’ licenses through visual and formal Motor Vehicles Commission abstract reviews shall be made by Department Heads or supervisors. Any employee who does not hold a valid driver’s license will not be permitted to operate a Township vehicle until such time as a valid license is obtained.

Any employee performing work which requires the operation of a Township vehicle shall notify his/her immediate supervisor if his/her license has expired, is suspended or revoked. An employee that fails to report such an instance is subject to disciplinary action, including demotion or termination. An employee who fails to immediately report such expiration, revocation or suspension to his/her supervisor and continues to operate a Township vehicle shall be subject to termination.

Any information obtained by the Township in accordance with this section shall be used by the Township only for carrying out its lawful functions and for other lawful purposes in accordance with the Driver’s Privacy Protection Act (18 U.S.C. S 2721 et seq.).

**Use of Fire and EMS Vehicles:**

The provisions below shall apply solely to Township Fire and EMS vehicles. No person shall operate, ride upon or in a vehicle owned, maintained, fueled or insured by the Township of Medford unless they are on the insurance policy of the Township of Medford. Additionally, no person shall operate a Township Fire and/or EMS vehicle if he or she is impaired.

No vehicle shall be used for personal use that is owned, maintained, fueled or insured by the Township of Medford unless written approval is received from the Township Manager.

Any vehicle that is owned, maintained, fueled or insured by the Township of Medford,

that will be out of the Township of Medford for other than the stated reasons below, shall have prior approval by the Township Manager which may be obtained after the fact.

1. Providing Automatic Aide to other Municipalities with in the County of Burlington.
2. Providing Mutual Aid as prescribed in the Burlington County Mutual Aide Agreement for Burlington County.
3. All off site training that is required by Federal, State and Fire & EMS Department regulations.
4. Conducting Fire & EMS Department or Township related business.
5. **Miscellaneous Personnel Rules:**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual contains the Township’s official statements with respect to the following topics:

* Appearance
* Absenteeism and Tardiness
* Employee Dating
* Ethics & Conflicts of Interest
* Nepotism
* Political Activity
* Grievance Procedure (non-union)

**Appearance:**

 Fridays have been designated as a “casual” day, enabling employees to wear jeans and sneakers. Casual day clothing must continue to meet the cleanliness and respectability standards embodied in the PPPM.

**Breaks:**

All full-time staff are entitled to an hour (60 minute) unpaid lunch that is to be arranged by the Department head or supervisor so that offices continue to function. All full time employees are entitled to a ten (10) minute break in the morning and in the afternoon. Administrative personnel must arrange breaks so that offices continue to be available to the public. The supervisor will schedule breaks for other employees.

**Bulletin Boards:**

The bulletin boards located in the Township of Medford administrative office and other Township facilities are intended for official notices regarding policies, procedures, meetings and special events. Only personnel authorized by the Township Manager may post, remove, or alter any notice. The Township Manager may authorize unions to post notices on bulletin boards established for union business.

**Early Closings and Delayed Openings:**

In the event of unsafe weather conditions, the Township Manager may authorize Department Heads to close operations earlier than the normal working hours. If conditions exist prior to the scheduled opening, the Township Manager may delay opening and set the new opening time, and shall so notify Department Heads. Each Department will have a calling system in place. If the employee chooses not to report to work, a full vacation day or personal leave will be charged. Sick time will only be charged for a legitimate illness. If work is called off for the day, no time will be charged for the day. This provision does not apply to the Department of Public Works and Utilities, the Police Department, the Fire & EMS Department and any other personnel who may be required to assist in responding to emergencies or severe weather events.

**Public Relations/ Media Inquiries:**

No employee is authorized to speak on behalf of the Township unless expressly authorized to do so by the Township Manager. Any inquiries by the media, however solicited, shall be directed to the Township Manager. Employees are to be mindful that they may not represent the Employer’s position or views on any Township matter on any medium, including social media platforms, without the Township Manager’s approval.

Nothing in this policy, however, is designed to interfere with, restrain, or prevent social media communications during non-working hours by employees engaging in protected concerted activities regarding wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment pursuant to the New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act or to prevent communications which are protected by the First Amendment freedom of speech clause, unless such communications are made as part of the employees’ official job duties.

**Employee Handbook:**

This document serves as the Township of Medford Employee Handbook. Copies will be distributed and employees will be required to sign an acknowledgement of receipt that will be placed in the official personnel file. This document will be revised and re-distributed whenever there is a significant change in personnel practice that is not covered under the Township of Medford’s Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.