

## **Preamble - Definitions and Application of Personnel Rules**

### **Preamble.1 Authority**

SMC 4.04.050, and subsequent revisions thereto, Rule Making Authority

### **Preamble.2 Definitions**

The following definitions shall be used for the interpretation and administration of all Personnel Rules, except where subchapters to these Rules provide otherwise.

1. “Administrative reassignment” means paid leave status which an appointing authority may authorize for any City officer or employee in his or her department or office, when such employee is the cause of or subject of, or otherwise significantly affected by an active official investigatory process related to alleged violations of personnel rules, policies of the City and/or City Department, City ordinances, or state or federal laws and/or an investigation intended to determine the employee’s fitness for duty. Administrative reassignment shall not be considered discipline.
2. “Alternative Dispute Resolution Program” or “ADR” shall mean a Citywide function located in the Seattle Department of Human Resources to promote the resolution of workplace disputes through training, mediation, conciliation and facilitated discussion.
3. “Appointing authority” shall mean the head of an employing unit authorized by ordinance or City Charter to employ others on behalf of the City. The term includes and can be used interchangeably with department head, department director, superintendent, or chief.
4. “Appointment” shall mean the placement of an employee in a position by initial hire, promotion, transfer, demotion or reduction.
5. “Civil Service Commission” shall mean the Civil Service Commission of the City of Seattle, which is charged with hearing appeals regarding the administration of the personnel system.
6. “Classification specification” shall mean a written description of a classification that includes a title, a description of distinguishing characteristics, a statement of duties and responsibilities, and a statement of minimum qualifications.
7. “Classified service” shall mean all employment positions in the City that are not excluded by ordinance, City Charter or State law from the provisions of Seattle Municipal Code 4.04 or Personnel Rules passed pursuant thereto related to the

selection, discipline, termination or appeals of personnel actions to the Civil Service Commission.

8. "Demotion" shall mean the movement of an employee from his or her current classification to a classification with a lower maximum salary rate, for justifiable cause.
9. "Discharge" shall mean separation from employment, for justifiable cause.
10. "Disciplinary action" shall mean an action taken by the appointing authority or a designated management representative in response to a proven act of employee misconduct or uncorrected poor work performance. Disciplinary actions include verbal warnings, written reprimands, suspension, demotion and discharge.
11. "Discrimination," "discriminate," and/or "discriminatory act" shall mean any act, by itself or as part of a practice, which is intended to or results in different treatment or differentiates between or among individuals or groups of individuals by reason of race, color, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, political ideology, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status; or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability.
12. "Elected official" shall mean the Mayor, City Councilmembers, City Attorney, and all Municipal Court Judges whether elected or appointed.
13. "Employing unit" shall mean any department of the City and, within the Executive and Legislative Departments, any office created by ordinance.
14. "Exempt employee" shall mean one who serves at the discretion of the appointing authority in a position which is exempted by the City Charter or SMC Chapter 4.13 from compliance with this chapter regarding selection, discipline and discharge of employees, and appeals of personnel actions to the Civil Service Commission.
15. "Exempt position" shall mean a position of employment held by an at-will employee who serves at the discretion of the appointing authority in a position that is excluded by ordinance, City Charter or State law from compliance with the provisions of Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 4.04 or the Personnel Rules adopted pursuant thereto related to selection, discipline, termination or appeals of personnel actions to the Civil Service Commission.
16. "External applicant" shall mean an applicant for employment with the City who is not a regularly appointed employee.

17. “Facilitated conversation” shall mean an informal conversation between parties assisted and coached by a trained neutral person.
18. “Finance Director” shall mean the Director of Finance at the Department of Finance and Administrative Services who is charged with managing the City's financial accounts.
19. “Grievable incident” shall mean an alleged action or event that resulted from the alleged misapplication of the provisions of Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 4.04 or the Personnel Rules and any policies or procedures adopted pursuant thereto which aggrieves the employee who files the grievance. The scope of ‘grievable incidents’ may be limited further as defined by Personnel Rule 1.4.
20. “Harassing conduct” shall mean but is not limited to epithets, slurs, and negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; or written or graphic materials that denigrate or show hostility or aversion that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, electronic bulletin boards, e-mail or otherwise placed or circulated in the workplace; when such actions or materials are related to or directed at an individual or group because of race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, families with children status, veteran status, or political ideology.
21. “Harassment” may include but is not limited to verbal or physical conduct toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, families with children status, veteran status, or political ideology, or that of his or her relatives, friends or associates, when such harassing conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities. The term includes sexual harassment.
22. “Harassment complaint” shall mean any oral or written complaint alleging an incident or incidents of harassment made by an employee to a management representative, or any information obtained by a management representative indicating that harassment has occurred or may be occurring in the workplace.
23. “Hourly employee” shall mean an employee who is compensated on an hourly basis for each hour of work performed, including time worked beyond 40 hours in a workweek.
24. “Inappropriate pressure” shall mean any written or verbal suggestion to a City employee the effect of which would preclude open consideration of qualified

applicants, or result in the selection of an employee for reasons other than relative ability, knowledge and skills.

25. “Initial appointment” shall mean the first appointment of an individual to a non-temporary position, or the re-appointment of a former City employee after separation from City employment, or after the exhaustion of the reinstatement or reversion/recall period.
26. “Internal applicant” shall mean a regularly appointed City employee or an active temporary worker who applies for another position of City employment who applies for a regular position of City employment.
27. “Management representative” shall mean any individual working at or above the level of supervisor or crew chief who is responsible for directing the work of employees and who exercises independent judgment with respect to the direction of such work. The term includes human resources representatives, strategic advisors, and departmental equal employment opportunity officers, but excludes individuals employed in the City's Alternative Dispute Resolution Program.
28. “Mediation” shall mean an informal voluntary meeting between the parties to a dispute and one or more trained neutral mediators who assist them to find a mutually acceptable resolution to their conflict.
29. “Opportunity for Advancement Bulletin” or “OFA” shall mean the City's official internal communication of job vacancies.
30. “Overtime threshold” shall mean a combined total of 40 straight-time hours of work and/or paid leave per workweek. Hours worked beyond the overtime threshold must be compensated at the appropriate overtime rate of pay.
31. “Performance evaluation” shall mean a formal assessment or appraisal by a supervisor of an employee’s job performance.
32. “Period of war or armed conflict” shall include World War I; World War II; the Korean conflict; the Vietnam era; the Persian Gulf War; the period beginning on the date of any future declaration of war by the United States Congress and ending on the date prescribed by presidential proclamation or concurrent resolution of the United States Congress; or the following armed conflicts if the person was awarded the respective campaign badge or medal: the crisis in Lebanon, the invasion of Grenada, Panama—Operation Just Cause, Somalia—Operation Restore Hope, Haiti—Operation Uphold Democracy, or Bosnia—Operation Joint Endeavor, Operation Noble Eagle; southern or central Asia—Operation Enduring Freedom; and Persian Gulf—Operation Iraqi Freedom.

33. "Pre-disciplinary hearing" shall mean an opportunity for an employee to meet with the appointing authority to respond to the charges made against him or her that may result in the appointing authority's decision to impose a suspension, demotion or discharge.
34. "Probation" shall mean an extension of the selection process during which period an employee is required to demonstrate his or her ability to perform the job for which he or she was hired. Employees shall serve one 12-month probationary period, except that their probation may be extended in accordance with the Seattle Municipal Code and these Rules.
35. "Probationary employee" shall mean an employee who has not yet completed a probationary period of employment.
36. "Progressive discipline" shall mean a process of applying and documenting disciplinary actions progressing from less to more serious depending on the employee's history and the nature of his or her offense.
37. "Project Hire" shall mean a program administered by the Seattle Human Resources Director that provides job referrals to individuals who are at risk of layoff or who are on a reinstatement list.
38. "Promotion" shall mean an appointment to a class or position with a higher maximum pay rate that occurs subsequent to an employee's initial appointment.
39. "Reduction" shall mean the non-disciplinary voluntary or involuntary movement of an employee to a position with a lower maximum pay rate at the request of the employee to be reduced, or by the appointing authority or his or her designated representative for reasons of organizational change, reduction in force, poor job match or poor work performance.
40. "Regular employee" shall mean an employee who has been appointed to a position in the classified service and who has completed a probationary period of employment.
41. "Regular status" shall mean the status an employee holds after completion of a probationary period.
42. "Regularly appointed employee" shall mean an individual with a probationary, trial service, regular or exempt appointment to a position of City employment.
43. "Reinstatement" shall mean the appointment from a reinstatement list of an employee within 12 months of layoff to a position in a class in which he or she previously held probationary, trial service or regular status.

44. "Reinstatement list" shall mean a list maintained by the Seattle Human Resources Director of regular, probationary, and trial service employees who are eligible for reappointment to a position in a class in which they were laid off.
45. "Reversion recall list" shall mean a list maintained by the Seattle Human Resources Director of individuals who did not complete their trial service period and who could not revert to their former classifications due to lack of appropriate vacancies.
46. "Salaried employee" shall mean an employee who regularly receives each pay period a predetermined amount of compensation. In general, this base salary will not be reduced because of variations in the quality or quantity of work performed. However, unpaid suspensions can be issued pursuant to Personnel Rule 1.3.2(B)
47. "Scholarship" shall mean funds used to assist employees with education expenses paid to colleges, universities, and vocational institutions by issuing advance and/or reimbursement payments to the employee or directly to the educational institution.
48. "Seattle Human Resources Director" shall mean the head of the Seattle Department of Human Resources, or his or her designee.
49. "Sexual harassment" includes but is not limited to unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the 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.
50. "Standing" shall mean the classification in which an employee accrues service credit for layoff purposes.
51. "Supervisor file" shall mean files maintained by the employee's supervisor which may include, but are not limited to, documents or electronic files reflecting workplace or performance expectations, the employee's performance or conduct, communications between employee and supervisor, and counseling efforts and discipline. A supervisor file shall not contain confidential employee medical information.
52. "Suspension" shall mean the temporary discontinuation without pay of an employee from employment for a specified period of time, for justifiable cause.

53. "Transfer" shall mean the movement of an employee within the same employing unit from one position to another position in the same class or with the same maximum pay rate.
54. "Trial service" shall mean a 12-month trial period of employment for a regular employee who has completed a probation period and who is subsequently appointed via promotion or transfer to a position in another classification, except that the trial period may be extended in accordance with the Seattle Municipal Code and these Rules.
55. "Trial service employee" shall mean an employee who has not yet completed a period of trial service.
56. "Verbal warning" shall mean a verbal notification from the appointing authority or designated management representative to an employee that specified activities or conduct are inappropriate for the work place, that performance standards have not been met, and/or that a violation of work place rules or policies has occurred; and that continuation thereof will result in more severe discipline, up to and including discharge.
57. "Veteran" shall mean one who has received an honorable discharge or received a discharge for medical reasons with an honorable record, where applicable, and who has served in at least one of the following capacities: (1) As a member in any branch of the armed forces of the United States, including the national guard and armed forces reserves, and has fulfilled his or her initial military service obligation; (2) As a member of the women's air forces service pilots; (3) As a member of the armed forces reserves, national guard, or coast guard, and has been called into federal service by a presidential select reserve call up for at least one hundred eighty cumulative days; (4) As a civil service crewmember with service aboard a U.S. army transport service or U.S. naval transportation service vessel in oceangoing service from December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946; (5) As a member of the Philippine armed forces/scouts during the period of armed conflict from December 7, 1941, through August 15, 1945; or (6) A United States documented merchant mariner with service aboard an oceangoing vessel operated by the department of defense, or its agents, from both June 25, 1950, through July 27, 1953, in Korean territorial waters and from August 5, 1964, through May 7, 1975, in Vietnam territorial waters, and who received a military commendation.
58. "Workweek" shall mean a designated block of 168 hours within which an employee's work schedule is contained.
59. "Written reprimand" shall mean a written notification from the appointing authority or designated management representative to an employee that specified

activities or conduct are inappropriate for the work place, that performances standards have not been met, and/or that a violation of work place rules or policies, and that continuation thereof will result in more severe discipline, up to and including discharge.

### **Preamble.3 Application of Personnel Rules**

All Personnel Rules shall be applied to City employees as described below, except where subchapters to these Rules provide otherwise.

- A. The Personnel Rules apply to all regularly appointed employees.
- B. For regularly appointed employees who are represented under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, the Personnel Rules shall prevail except where they conflict with the employee's collective bargaining agreement, any memoranda or agreement or understanding signed pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement, or any established and recognized practice relative to the members of the bargaining unit.
- C. The Personnel Rules do not apply to individuals who are hired under the terms of a grant that includes provisions that conflict with this Rule, nor do they apply to individuals hired under contract to the City. These individuals are subject to all applicable federal, state and City laws.
- D. Except for Chapter 11, the Personnel Rules do not apply to individuals hired by the City on a temporary, intermittent, or seasonal basis, or for a work schedule of fewer than 20 hours per week, nor do they apply to individuals hired under contract to the City. These individuals are subject to all applicable federal, state and City laws.
- E. Appointing authorities may establish written policies and procedures for the implementation of the Personnel Rules to facilitate the management of the personnel system within their employing units, provided that such policies and procedures do not conflict with the provisions of the Personnel Rules.