



**Regular Meeting Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, December 15, 2022 - 8:30AM**  
**In Person and Via Teams**  
**Agenda**

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance
3. Public Comment
4. Brown & Brown Insurance Renewal 2023 - Bryan Dunn
5. [Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from November 17, 2022](#)
6. Finance Manager's Report
  - a. [Board Approval of Payables](#)
7. 2023 Final Budget Presentation
  - a. [Resolution B-1478 Rate Increase 2023](#)
8. [Resolution B-1477 Sole Source List, repealing B-1404](#)
9. General Manager's Report
10. [Operations Manager's Report](#)
11. [Engineering Manager's Report](#)
12. [Information Technology Manager's Report](#)
13. Office Manager's Report
14. [Human Resources Manager's Report](#)
  - a. [Resolution B-1479 Sick Leave and Retirement Provisions, repealing B-1474](#)
  - b. [Approval of the 2023 Employee Handbook](#)
15. Other Business
  - a. Acknowledgment of Employee Wages Increases
  - b. Commissioner Barton WASWD update
  - c. Next Commissioners Meeting January 19, 2023
16. Public Comment
17. Adjourn



**LAKESWOOD WATER DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
November 17, 2022  
Boardroom & Via Microsoft Teams**

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

President Korsmo called the Regular Meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

**2. ATTENDANCE**

Present at the meeting: Commissioners J. Korsmo, G. Rediske, and G. Barton; General Manager R. Black; Engineering Manager M. Meyer; Finance Manager P. Mendoza; HR Manager B. Levo; IT Manager C. Fast; and Administrative Assistant J. Clark.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kris Koffman shared he attended the meeting to learn what we are doing with the District and the budget.

**4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM THE 10/11/2022 SPECIAL MEETING & 10/20/22 REGULAR MEETING.**

Commissioner Barton noted that on page 2, Section a. Pumping Department, Paragraph 2, the wording needed to be changed from two wells a year to two well pumps and motors for clarification. Meeting minutes now reflect "replacing one to two well pumps and motors a year."

**COMMISSIONER REDISKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 11, 2022, SPECIAL MEETING WITH CHANGES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARTON. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**COMMISSIONER BARTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 20, 2022, REGULAR MEETING, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER REDISKE. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Philip Mendoza, Finance Manager, presented the October 2022 financials to the Board. He shared that retail sales in October 2022 were 23.65% higher than budgeted and 3.49% lower YTD. Wholesale water sales are 6.02% higher than budgeted and 1.04% higher YTD. Operating revenue is 19.5% higher than budgeted and 1.3% lower YTD. Pumping operations is 45.64% over budget and 1% under budget YTD; Water Treatment operations are 25.41% under budget and 25.9% under budget YTD. Transmission and Distribution operations is 29.79% under budget and 14.03% under budget YTD. Total operating expense is 1.09% under budget and 4% under budget YTD.

**a. Approval of Payables**

Disbursements made from the General Ledger Fund for checks number 46756 through 46873 totaling \$1,170,518.50, salary direct deposits totaling \$186,664.12, payroll taxes totaling \$66,118.23, and other electronic payments totaling \$384,381.63 for a total of \$1,807,682.48 were presented to the Board for approval.

**COMMISSIONER REDISKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PAYABLES AS LISTED. COMMISSIONER BARTON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**6. 2023 BUDGET UPDATE**

General Manager Black shared that this has been a challenging budget year in his 27 years as General Manager, he is proud of the staff and their hard work and efforts to stay within the parameters the Board has shared. This year's theme is "Minimizing PFAS Impacts While Delivering on Customer Expectations." One of the biggest challenges is being on our own to address PFAS issues. We have applied to different agencies for grant funding; we will know if we will receive the funding in the spring of 2023.

The 2023 expenses are down just under \$100k from 2022, showing that we worked hard to stay within the operating and maintenance functions. The revenue forecasting is down compared to 2022 due to diminished use by customers.

Philip Mendoza, Finance Manager, presented the P&L budget and highlighted some of the major changes; we integrated a 6.67% rate increase to the retail water revenue. This transitions to \$10.6 M from \$10.3 M in 2022. The \$318K more in the budget does show that the 6.67% doesn't cover the increase itself; it is only about a 3% increase.

Commissioner Barton inquired whether we were being conservative or wishful. Finance Manager Mendoza shared we are being realistic; when we first started, we were under \$700K, then October and September were up around \$300K. General Manager Black shared a few additional points; we saw the effects of reduced water sales even though we had a 6.67% rate increase; the increase in revenue did not come in enough to see the level of increase in revenue due to the decline in water sales. We then looked at the decrease in water use in the last five years. We were conservative in what revenue sales will be. In the last couple of months, the revenue sales have picked up more like 4%, and we are using that as a baseline.

Finance Manager Mendoza shared that Wholesale Water sales are projected at \$5.7M with the true-up and the addition of Spanaway Water with 1.5 mgd. The Operating Expenses are up from \$4.7M to \$6.1M due to an increase in vendor fees, power cost increases, and the addition of Spanaway Water and the power needs. Admin & General Expenses have increased from transitioning our 10% overhead on capital projects to 5%. The other change is Engineering Manager Meyer's position was 90%(Capital) and 10% (Admin/Gen) and now is more of 60% (Admin/Gen) and 40% (Capital) due to more studies & planning that are not building up an asset, planning for PFAS/PFOA.

Maintenance Expenses there are no real significant changes. We tried to drill down the expenses, resulting in only a slight increase of \$2.024M to \$2.040M.

Net Operating & Maintenance Expense \$11.8M/2023 from \$9.95M/2022.  
 Net Operating Revenue is \$5.9M/2023 from \$6.1M/2022.

\*Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)

General Manager Black shared two options for funding the PFAS mitigations, we anticipate the projects will cost around \$5M. We will not know until we find out if we will need to treat iron and manganese. We will know more once we drill the wells, and we will also learn more once we find out about the grant applications.

Scenario 1: Revenue bonds

- Significant changes in scenario 1 to accommodate a lower rate increase.
- Borrowing occurs every year instead of every two years; it will put pressure on cash flow management and staff by issuing bonds every year. This allows for the reduction of rates to 7% for 2023.
- 2023 results in significantly less borrowing, and the District will need to figure out what to do for 2024's funding situation (whether through grants, bonds, WIFIA, etc.) as soon as more information is available.

FIVE-YEAR RATE FORECAST (total, weighted)		8.11%				
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Annual Increase % - Weighted Average	6.67%	11.39%	8.76%	6.87%	6.87%	
General %	7.00%	14.00%	10.00%	7.25%	7.25%	
R&R %	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	
Combined Debt Coverage Ratio (target 2.0)	2.23	2.35	2.28	2.41	2.39	
Debt Issues (Gross)	5,000,000	6,200,000	8,800,000	4,500,000	8,500,000	
Total Ending Cash Balances	9,311,037	7,640,264	10,419,372	9,772,000	16,371,457	
Days of Operating Expenses (180 target)	380	311	418	380	615	
Average Bi-Monthly Bill of 5/8" Mtr w/ 1500cf	\$ 56.67	\$ 61.95	\$ 66.74	\$ 71.12	\$ 75.78	
Bi-Monthly Bill Difference 1500cf	\$ 3.42	\$ 5.29	\$ 4.79	\$ 4.37	\$ 4.66	

Scenario 2: Revenue bonds + WIFA.

- We would borrow a minimum of \$20M to address the PFAS projects. The first payment wouldn't be until 2033. Funding would be through 2072. This would allow the District to maintain the 7% rate increase until 2026 it would go up to 7.25%.
- 2033 – 2072 would be higher rate increases

FIVE-YEAR RATE FORECAST (total, weighted)		6.68%				
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Annual Increase % - Weighted Average	6.67%	6.67%	6.68%	6.68%	6.68%	
General %	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	
R&R %	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	
Combined Debt Coverage Ratio (target 2.0)	2.23	2.41	2.38	2.59	2.64	
Debt Issues (Gross)	5,000,000	2,000,000	5,300,000	2,000,000	2,500,000	
WIFIA Borrowing	0	4,117,286	3,697,356	3,555,011	1,978,410	
Total Ending Cash Balances	9,311,037	7,431,359	10,201,736	10,458,759	13,212,991	
Days of Operating Expenses (180 target)	380	303	411	408	499	
Average Bi-Monthly Bill of 5/8" Mtr w/ 1500cf	\$ 56.67	\$ 60.30	\$ 64.17	\$ 68.29	\$ 72.68	
Bi-Monthly Bill Difference 1500cf	\$ 3.42	\$ 3.64	\$ 3.87	\$ 4.12	\$ 4.39	

\*\*WIFIA Borrowing assumes more than just borrowing for PFAS/PFOA project and aggregates a number of projects

Finance Manager Mendoza shared that we would still need to have some revenue bonds for some of our capital projects since WIFIA would only cover up to 49% of the project. WIFIA has an application fee of \$125K to review the applications so they know the project can be built and finished.

General Manager Black asked the Board if they would like to decide during the meeting the following:

- Revenue Bonds only
- Revenue Bonds and WIFIA
- Wait until spring to decide once more information becomes available regarding grants and iron/manganese.

General Manager Black shared that the District will need to replace three tanks in fourteen years. During that time, the tanks will be replaced over a seven-year period. This might be the optimal time to use WIFIA funds to cover those projects.

Commissioner Korsmo likes the idea of a WIFIA line of credit option; only use what you need. He also understands getting revenue bonds, where we are paying on money that we are not using and paying interest fees and not making enough interest that we are being charged. We are starting off with \$11.8M and ending with \$9M. Do we need \$5M, or do we need \$2M or none? If our reserves are \$6M, I prefer not to borrow and pay for it only if we use it.

Finance Manager Mendoza shared that we are targeting \$6.2M in reserves based on our financial policies. July is when we would start dipping down below \$6.2M. We do have specific projects that we will need to carry over. We are able to borrow a lot less. We have it set using the target rate modeling and rate target specific.

If we can get rid of the PFOA projects, we can go back to the 7% rate increases.

General Manager shared that it takes a year to apply for WIFIA; if we wait until August 2023, we will know more if we have grant funding. September is the application accepted month. If they have extra funding, we can apply anytime.

Commissioners would like to wait until spring before deciding on the option of revenue bonds only or revenue bonds with WIFIA. They would like to see if any grants are awarded.

General Manager would like to go with option one and earmark the \$125k for the WIFIA application if needed and the 6.67% rate increase.

Commissioner Barton would like us to work closely with our local legislators to determine if they can help secure funding.

Engineering Manager Meyer provided a Capital projects update that the price increase for the backhoe is \$20K more than budgeted. Remove the \$25K Ten Year Master Plan for Office Facility because the City of Lakewood states that everything will need to go through permits, and we no longer benefit from having one. The vehicle replacement program change reduces the fleet by two Ford Explorers rather than one Ford Explorer.

There were no modifications to the projects.

We are not planning on filling the three vacancies for 2023; we have one position in the budget for a field worker if necessary mid-year if construction projects increase. The other is the cost of living and merit increases. It is very difficult to find qualified staff and keep staff; this is an across-the-country issue, particularly hard for water districts. This will keep us current with other districts. Medical and dental have gone down from a 6% to 2.9% increase, and the Principal life insurance has no rate increase.

HR Manger Levo shared the changes for the retirement program:

We examined the practices of our peers with respect to sick leave payouts for separating employees and provide the following options for your consideration:

**Option A:**

Upon separation, employees with a minimum of two years of service to the District will receive 25 percent of their sick leave at their current rate of pay.

**Option B:**

Employees with at least five years of service will receive payment for their sick leave at their current rate of pay up to 480 hours.

**Option C:**

Separating employees will receive a percentage of the sick leave at their current rate of pay based on the following years of service schedule:

- 0 – 2 years: 0%
- 3 – 6 years: 25%
- 7 – 14 years: 50%
- 15 – 24 years: 75%
- 25+ years: 100%

General Manager Black’s recommendation is Option C, and it would be effective January 1, 2023, for all new employees; current employees would be grandfathered in.

Commissioners approve Option C as presented.

**7. GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT**

Randall Black, General Manager, provided his report and inquired if any Commissioners had any questions.

**8. OPERATIONS REPORT**

Ian Black, Operations Manager, was absent; please see his report.

## **9. ENGINEERING MANAGER'S REPORT**

Marshall Meyer, Engineering Manager, shared that things are proceeding well with the equipment operating well. F-2 Well was inspected for the first time since 1983 and will be test-pumped after Thanksgiving. Commissioner Rediske, there is no column for pool pumping. Do they go a year without pumping to the swimming pools? It would be nice if it showed up once or twice a year to see.

Commissioner Barton inquired how often we test the GAC system. Engineering Manager Meyer, each GAC vessel has four sample points; we sample at different sample points each month. We currently have no breakthroughs in terms of what is being delivered to customers at that facility. We have detections in the first vessel (we have well below the SAL), but by the time it goes through the second vessel, there are no detections.

Commissioner Barton inquired if there is a way only to replace what is in the incoming vessel and protect the second vessel and maybe the GAC can last longer and save us money. Engineering Manager Meyer, one of the complications with that idea is you would only be monitoring one vessel. By the time you detect, you might be exceeding the SAL level. We run the vessels in series, and then we will replace that first volume of carbon. We will have whatever is left in the second vessel. That will then become the lead so that you maximize each vessel. We do multiple monthly samples from different locations, either top, middle, or bottom level creating a good rotation cycle. We always take it from the finish going out to the customer. Commissioner Barton said we have a good plan to get the samples and save money for the District. Engineering Manager Meyer is very proud of the staff for being mindful and efficient in saving the District money.

The Commissioners really appreciate the reports the managers provide; they are very thorough.

## **11. IT MANAGER REPORT**

IT Manager Fast shared a brief report; there was one minor cyber security issue, a staff member clicked on the spam email that IT Manager Fast sends out monthly. The staff member has completed the cyber security training.

### **a. Resolution #B-1476 Cross Connection Control Program**

General Manager Black recapped the discussion of changes to the Cross Connection program adding in the compulsory testing and new fees accompanying the testing at the last meeting. The Board approved the notice to be sent to the customers for the 60-day notice and to bring back the revised resolution. The letter was mailed out, and there were some calls regarding the letter needing to be less technical and clearer. The staff has acknowledged this and will work on writing less technically when writing future letters. Customer service staff will review letters in the future.

This amendment is to Resolution B-1432, adding the compulsory testing, fees, and the 48-hour notice. Commissioners had no additional questions.

**MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION B-1476 CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM BY COMMISSIONER REDISKE, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER BARTON. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **12. HR MANAGER'S REPORT**

HR Manager Levo asked the Commissioners if they were comfortable with the recruiting schedule for the General Manager that was presented at the last meeting. Commissioners all agreed that they were. She also confirmed that their one-on-one meetings are still good for next month; again, they all agreed.

### **Other Business:**

- a. General Manager Black shared that Finance Manager Mendoza has been accepted into the AWWA Transformative Water Leadership Academy. This is a high honor to be accepted into this program. There were 150 applicants, and he was selected as one of the fifty participants.

Commissioner Rediske asked if it was made up of water management or just finance. Mr. Mendoza shared it is all water management fields. He is teamed up with engineers, project managers, water conservationists, water districts, wholesale water, and municipalities from the West Coast. The Board congratulated Mr. Medoza on this great accomplishment.

- b. Commissioner Barton provided a brief update on the WASWD Legislative Committee. Public Trust Work Fund is lobbying for funds and to keep all of its funding. He attended a bio-solids training on regulations; he shared it was beneficial training. He shared with the attendees the water supply side and focused on any level of PFAS in biosolids being applied in protected areas.
- c. General Manager Black shared a letter that he received regarding a petition being distributed about PFAS; the petition had many unfounded statements which are not true. The District only distributes safe water and follows the State Action Levels.

Commissioner Rediske & Commissioner Korsmo share the District has been very transparent and up-front with the customers regarding PFAS.

General Manager Black will prepare responses to the statements and speak with our legal counsel and invite the petitioner to a meeting with a Commissioner and himself to go over the information to clarify any misunderstandings.

- d. Our next Commissioner's meeting will be on December 15, 2022, at 8:30 AM.

## **12. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Koffman asked for clarification that the two Ponders wells can operate at full capacity without putting any more PFAS in the water with the GAC system treating the water. Engineering Manager Meyer confirmed that this is correct. Mr. Koffman also shared that his father-in-law was president of AWWA in 1957. He comes from a family of water workers.



**13. ADJOURN**

President Korsmo adjourned the meeting at 5:08 PM.

**LAKWOOD WATER DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**BY:**

**BY:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**ITS PRESIDENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**ITS VICE PRESIDENT**

**BY:**

**BY:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**ITS SECRETARY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DISTRICT SECRETARY (DATE)**

We, the undersigned Board of Commissioners of the Lakewood Water District  
Pierce County, Washington, do hereby certify that the merchandise or services  
hereinafter specified have been received and checks numbering 46874 through  
46900, 45401 through 45456 and all electronic payments for this period are hereby approved for payment in the sum of  
\$3,508,130.21 this 15th day of December 2022.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Korsmo

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Rediske

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Barton

\_\_\_\_\_  
General Manager

Check no.	Vendor Name	Payment Description	Amount
46874	Michael G Malaier, Trustee	Payroll 11/11/22	825.00
46875	WA State Support	Payroll 11/11/22	195.50
46876	ADT Commercial	Final - 8019 Wash Blvd Monitoring	283.67
46877	Airgas USA LLC	(2) Acetylene Rentals	23.87
46878	Alvis, Ryan	Reimburse Uniform	237.91
46879	American Landscape Svc	11/22 Well Sites & Main Office Landscaping Svcs	6,924.50
46880	Associated Petroleum Products	(350) Ga Unleaded & (100) Ga Diesel	1,861.54
46881	Atec Systems Inc	(4) PRV Valves - Well G-3 - Scotts Well Manganese	3,195.00
46882	Berschauer Construction	Pay App #6 - Office Steel Bldg - Job #806	4,624.94
46883	Capital Heating & Cooling	Thermostat & Water Heater Check/Diagnose	227.80
46884	Caselle	12/22 Maint & Support	3,547.50
46885	Centurylink	(1) Site Svcs	110.98
46886	Chicago Title Insurance Comp	(6) Subdiv Guarantees & Conveyance Fee - Woodland Est	2,700.95
46887	Christian Fast	Reimbursement - Office Monitor Purchase	252.99
46888	Cintas	(2) Boxes Nitrile Gloves & Weekly Svcs 11/2/22 & 11/9/22	431.04
46889	Core & Main	Inventory - Parts & Brass Bushings	13,402.10
46890	Elmhurst Mutual Power & Light	WTME - Lakewood Water Monitors - 4116 Brookdale Rd	2,393.42
46891	Eurofins - Eaton Analytical	10/31/22 & 11/1/22 PFAS Sampling	3,900.00
46892	Fastenal Company	(84) Cans Blue Locate Paint & (700) Assorted Ear Plugs	522.32
46893	Gordon, Thomas, Honeywell	03/22 & 09/22 City of Lakewood Franchise	605.00
46894	Grainger	DI Reducing Cplgs/DI Flange/Hole Saws/Cell Twr Key	743.12
46895	Jordan Daulbaugh	Reimbursement - Uniform	156.03
46896	K and D Services	Flagging Svcs - Woodland Estates	1,247.44
46897	Kuker-Rankin	(4) Notebooks (Field Staff) (2) Bundles Wood Stakes	53.67
46898	Lakewood Hardware & Paint	PVC Pipe/Flexible Couplings/Brass Nipples/Drill Bits	127.35
46899	Lowes Companies Inc	Flashing Sealer/Hole Saw/Lumber & Tools/Couplers	399.91
46900	Marten Law	10/22 PFAS Svcs	57,567.03
45401*	McClains Soil Supply	(4) Dump Fees - Dirt & Debris	160.00
45402	Miles Resources	(9.50) Tons - Haul Asphalt	135.75
45403	Mooses Auto Tech	Trk# 43 - Replaced Battery	316.50
45404	Multicare Centers	(1) EBT and (1) DOT Exam	346.00
45405	Pacific Groundwater Group	08/22 Abitibi Eval - 09/22 R-2 Rehab - 09/22 Aquifer E	1,760.00
45406	Pape & Sons Construction	Pay App #3 - Generators - FEMA Grant	193,254.86
45407	Pierce County Sewer	10/22 - 11900 Grav Lk Dr & 8100 Wash Blvd Sewer Chgs	44.12
45408	Pro Call Center	10/22 After Hours Svcs	138.57
45409	Puget Sound Energy	(1) Utility Svc	51.21
45410	Quest	11/1/22 - 10/31/23 Cloud Connect & Managed Svcs	720.00
45411	Rainier Supply	P-1 & P-2 CL2 Generator - Steilacoom Tank	600.05
45412	Seattle Ace	Heater/Fasteners/Bolt Eye w/Nut/Angle Broom	271.13
45413	Sprague Pest Solutions	10/22 Pest Control Services	104.50
45414	Staples	Office Supplies - incl. 2023 Annual Calendar Order	332.22
45415	Star Rentals	Replaced Diaphragm Pump - R-2 Well	2,069.71
45416	Stronghold Armored Truck	10/22 Armored Truck Svcs	375.00
45417	Superior Saw & Supply	(2) Sharpen Steel Bits	26.47
45418	United Rentals	(2) Gas Meter Detectors	1,947.00
45419	Utilities Underground	(239) 10/22 Locates	308.31
45420	Verizon Wireless	10/22 SCADA Data Charges	998.74
45421	Water Management Labs	(32) Coliform Tests (2) TTHM (2) HAA5 (1) Manganese	1,611.00
45422	Zoro	(2) Brushless Grinders	522.06
45426	Associated Petroleum Products	(450) Ga Unleaded and (45.2) Ga Diesel	1,951.82
45427	Bledsoe, Carrie	Reimbursement - Education	595.00
45428	Bullard, Chris	Reimbursement - Uniform	304.63
45429	Ceccanti Inc	Pay App #1 WTME Connection - Spanaway	318,600.30
45430	Centurylink	Internet Svcs - 8 Sites	678.73
45431	Cintas Corporation #461	11/15/22 & 11/21/22 Weekly Svcs	280.34
45432	Conсор North America Inc	Eng Svcs - 10/22 Lake Steilacoom Dr Ph 2 R&R	684.00
45433	Core & Main	Mtr Yokes/Mtr Vlvs/Angle Mtrs/DbI Strp Sddls/Brs Bushing	23,267.65
45434	Day Wireless Systems	11/22 Radio Service	636.41
45435	Ferguson Enterprises LLC	(12) 2 1/2 inch Hydrant Diffusers	594.00
45436	Grainger	(6) 90 Elbow Sockets/(4) Male Adptrs/(2) Unions	167.37
45437	Gray & Osbourne Inc	Eng Svcs - Naomilawn, Newgrove, & Highland R&R	815.47
45438	Guardian Security Systems	11/15/22 Service Call - Front Door	500.51
45439	H D Fowler Co Inc	Inventory - (24) Meter Box Lids	427.11
45440	Hach Company Inc	(6) Re-Agent Chlorine Vials	510.51

45441 Holroyd Co Inc	(60) Yards Crushed Rock	1,881.00
45442 Inslee Best Doezie & Ryder PS	10/22 Woodland Estates, General Svcs, Condemnations	3,494.82
45443 Lea, Jacob	Reimbursement - Uniform	252.46
45444 Marsh, Tyler	Reimbursement - Uniform	20.89
45445 Mooses Auto Tech	Trk# 37 Repair A/C Fan & Switches	558.84
45446 Napa Auto Parts	Oil & Windshield Washer Fluid	228.49
45447 Open Works	11/22 Janitorial Services	1,997.51
45448 Pacific Groundwater Group	10/22 R-2 Well Construction & Testing	8,241.00
45449 Pape Machinery	Repair 410J Backhoe	4,722.04
45450 Parametrix	10/22 96th St & Front St - R&R Project	1,970.49
45451 Pierce County Auditor	(1) Claim of Lien	18.00
45452 Robinson, Lucas	Reimbursement - Uniform	174.91
45453 State Auditors Office	2021 Financial & Accountability Audit	17,647.20
45454 Town of Steilacoom	11/22 View Rd Electric & Sewer; Steilacoom ROW Permit	5,652.19
45455 Water Management Labs	(18) Total Coliform Tests - (1) Full In-Organic Test	728.00
45456 Zoro	(6) Cut off Wheels & (2) 20V Ion Batteries	383.47

**Sub-Total**

**710,638.94**

November Payroll

**188,520.61**

November Payroll Taxes (PMT# 632 & PMT# 640)

**66,224.08**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Other Electronic Payment</b>	
11/14/2022	PMT# 633 - WA Deferred Comp	3,586.75
11/14/2022	PMT# 634 - WA PERS	22,525.64
11/14/2022	PMT# 635 - CEP Enterprises LLC	4,360.25
11/17/2022	PMT# 636 - EmGovPower	500.00
11/17/2022	PMT# 637 - RH2 Engineering Inc	6,634.31
11/17/2022	PMT# 638 - Sir Speedy	6,563.53
11/17/2022	PMT# 639 - Sir Speedy	3,396.35
11/21/2022	PMT# 641 - Aflac	365.57
11/21/2022	PMT# 642 - WA Deferred Comp	3,586.75
11/21/2022	PMT# 643 - Delta Dental	3,890.95
11/21/2022	PMT# 644 - Principal Insurance	2,855.87
11/21/2022	PMT# 645 - Regence	55,267.49
11/21/2022	PMT# 646 - WA PERS	22,490.35

Bond Pmt (2014) - Prin and Int	447,475.00
Bond Pmt (2017) - Interest Only	136,356.25
Bond Pmt (2019A) - Prin and Int	785,525.00
Bond Pmt (2019B) - Interest Only	167,550.00
Bond Pmt (2021A) - Prin and Int	310,775.00
Bond Pmt (2021B) - Prin and Int	478,095.00
B&O Tax	71,447.93
Paymentech/Merchant Fees (NOV)	6,155.20
Xpress Bill Pay Fee (NOV)	3,343.39
US Bank CC (Less Power)	15,105.59
US Bank CC Power Costs	71,444.23

**2,542,746.58**

**GRAND TOTAL**

**3,508,130.21**

*\*Please note that Check No. 45401-45456 is not sequential to Check No. 46900 from the previous month; the check stock was inadvertently skipped previously and is being used currently*

**LAKWOOD WATER DISTRICT  
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**RESOLUTION NO. B-1478**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF LAKEWOOD WATER DISTRICT  
ADOPTING AN OVERALL, WEIGHTED 6.67 PERCENT WATER RATE INCREASE  
AS OUTLINED IN THE 2023 BUDGET, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2023.**

**WHEREAS**, the Commissioners of the District, in accordance with RCW 57.08.081, have the authority and responsibility to establish rates and charges for the District; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commissioners of the District have caused to be completed an analysis of the District's fiscal needs for the future; and

**WHEREAS**, the five-year capital budget was considered; and

**WHEREAS**, the District's rate model analysis showed that revenues are inadequate to properly provide for increased operation and maintenance costs, system replacements, additions and betterment, and to allow for sufficient reserves consistent with the District's adopted financial policies, unless a recommended overall, weighted 6.67 percent rate increase as outlined in the 2023 Budget is made effective January 1, 2023, with the first billings reflecting the increase to be on or after March 1, 2023. This overall, weighted increase consists of a 6.0 percent increase in the R&R fixed fee based on meter size to fund the District's 50-year R&R (Replacement and Rehabilitation) Program as well as a rate increase of 7.0 percent for both the volume charge and the base charge to fund general operation, maintenance, and other capital projects. This rate increase is equal to the rate forecasted for 2022 in the previous year's budget.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:**

SECTION 1. The Board of Commissioners of Lakewood Water District hereby adopts and approves by resolution a rate increase as outlined in the 2023 Budget and above for all active accounts; it further hereby adopts and approves the following revised rate structure:

Effective January 1, 2023, rates shall include an increase by an overall, weighted 6.67 percent for most residential ratepayers; the actual rate increase percentage will vary according to customer meter size. The first billings reflecting the increase will be received on or after March 1, 2023.

**Lakewood Water District Rates for Active Accounts**

<b>Base Charge and Water Consumption</b>	<b>Current Rates (2022)</b>	<b>New Rates (2022)</b>
Base Charge	\$8.88 (incl's 800 cu ft)	\$9.50 (incl's 800 cu ft)
0-800 cubic feet	\$0 (included in Base Charge)	\$0 (included in Base Charge)
801-2000 cubic feet	\$1.88/ccf	\$2.01/ccf
2001 and over	\$2.56/ccf	\$2.74/ccf

<b>R&amp;R Fixed Fee Per Meter Size</b>	<b>Current Rates</b>	<b>New Rates</b>
Meter Size	Fixed Fee	Fixed Fee
5/8"	\$ 31.21	\$ 33.08
1"	\$ 34.32	\$ 36.38
1.5"	\$ 43.68	\$ 46.30
2"	\$ 56.17	\$ 59.54
3"	\$ 90.50	\$ 95.93
4"	\$ 343.28	\$ 363.88
6"	\$ 436.90	\$ 463.11
8"	\$ 905.02	\$ 959.32
10"	\$1,185.89	\$1,257.04
12"	\$1,404.33	\$1,488.59

SECTION 2. According to standard District practice, the District will use all means necessary and appropriate to inform all ratepayers of this resolution and water rate increase. Be it known, a letter will be sent to all rate payers the first week of January 2023; this letter will be posted to the District's website at [www.lakewoodwater.org](http://www.lakewoodwater.org).

ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of Lakewood Water District, Pierce County, Washington at the regular public meeting thereof held the 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022.

LAKEWOOD WATER DISTRICT

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and President

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and Vice-President

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and Secretary

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Secretary

**LAKWOOD WATER DISTRICT  
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**RESOLUTION NO B-1477**

**THIS RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAKEWOOD WATER DISTRICT, PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON, IS ESTABLISHED AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE STATE AUDITOR THAT THE DISTRICT ADOPT A LIST OF SOLE SOURCE OR LAKEWOOD WATER DISTRICT SPECIFIED, MATERIALS AND SPECIAL MARKET CONDITION VENDOR, AND REPEALS RESOLUTION NO. B-1140, B-1366, AND B-1477.**

**WHEREAS**, on occasions it has been necessary to make purchases from a Sole Source, or a Lakewood Water District specified special market condition vendor for certain materials or services, this Resolution establishes a Sole Source and special market condition listing of vendors.

**NOW THEREFORE:**

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That Lakewood Water District adopts the attached “Sole Source and Special Market Condition List” of vendors to supply Lakewood Water District with specified materials or services; and on a routine basis.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The General Manager is charged with the responsibility of maintaining the Sole Source and Special Market Condition List and keeping it current. Any changes or additions shall be approved by the Board by motion before they take effect.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That the reasoning behind Lakewood Water District specifying these items is as follows—

1. It allows the District to maintain a small and limited parts replacement inventory.
2. It minimizes extensive personnel training for installations, operation, and maintenance.
3. It negates maintaining a multiple new materials inventory, thus tying up cash flow that could be used to better advantage.
4. It ensures the fair and efficient allocation of public resources.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That the Lakewood Water District adopts the attached Sole Source List of Lakewood Water District Specified Materials Resolution, for the reasons so stated.

ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of Lakewood Water District, Pierce County, Washington at the regular public meeting thereof held the 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022.

LAKEWOOD WATER DISTRICT

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and President

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and Vice-President

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and Secretary

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Secretary

**Lakewood Water District  
Sole Source and Special Market Conditions List  
Adopted by Resolution B-1477**

This list includes but is not limited to:

- ATECH FILTER SYSTEMS
- AVK HYDRANTS & VALVES
- CARGIL SALT
- CLA VAL
- CLORTEC; WALLACE & TIERMAN; MICROCLOR
- DART
- HOLT SERVICES INC.
- MUELLER HYDRANTS
- MUELLER VALVES
- PROMINENT
- PUMPTECH LLC
- S&B INC (EQUIPMENT)
- S&B (IT)
- SAF
- SENSUS METERS
- YASKAWA or SIEMENS SINAMICS VFDs





**Operations Manager's Report**  
 December 15, 2022  
 Board of Commissioners Meeting

**OPERATIONS**

Work ORDERS & PM's

- 323 Billing/Office Field Service Orders
- 184 Field Work Orders Elements
- 00 Fleet Service Orders
- 684 Total Service Orders

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS – Debbie

- 134 Delinquent Accounts
- 29 Paid on Door Hangers or on Disconnect
- 105 Services Disconnected
- 93 Paid on Disconnect
- 12 Remained Disconnected at the end of the month

LOCATES- Debbie

- 233 Locate Requests Received
- 13 Requests were out of LWD Service Area
- 00 Locates were submitted by LWD
- 05 Cancelled Locates
- 215 Locates Completed
- 215 Total amounts owed

**Right of Way Permit: 0**

**Water Availability Letters: 8**

11/1/2022	GRIGORASH SHORT PLAT	11313 LOCH LN DR	11/22/22	\$ 130.00			R/SHORT PLAT
11/3/2022	DD ON FOREST GROVE/MORRIS	10125 115TH ST SW	11/22/22	\$ 130.00			R/RENOVATE
11/4/2022	ALVARADO DETACHED GARAGE	11206 HUGGINS MEYER RD	11/22/22	\$ 130.00			R/NEW
11/7/2022	AMERICAN LAKE TOWNHOMES	15206 PORTLAND AVE SW	11/22/22	\$ 130.00			R/NEW CONST
11/15/2022	MARCH PLAZA STOREFRONT	6101 100TH ST SW	11/28/22	\$ 130.00			C/REMODEL
11/21/2022	ADULT FAMILY HOME	11003 114TH AVE SW		\$ 130.00			R/REMODEL
11/22/2022	2ND STORY DECK	6404 75TH ST W		\$ 130.00			R/ADDITION
11/30/2022	GREYHAWK CROSSING	11210 MILITARY RD SW					R/NEW CONST

**MAINTENANCE**

Bobby Gaskin – Department Head

**NEW SERVICES:**

1 – 2” x 2” Domestic and (1) – 1” x 1” Irrigation installed at the Avalon Project 96<sup>th</sup> and STW

**MAINS MAINTENANCE**

Replaced broken sample station @ 107<sup>th</sup> St SW & Butte Dr. SW

**JOBS**

Job #841 Avalon Project - \*’ X8” – Fire Tapp and -4” Fire Line Connection.

**SERVICE MAINTENANCE**

None to report this month

**VALVE MAINT.**

None to report this month

**VALVE OPERATION CHECKS**

Performed 178 valve operations checks this month.

**HYDRANT MAINTENANCE**

Straightened up hydrant # 12H4 inside Steilacoom Lake Park, Cleared Hydrant drain holes on 14H3 at Nixon Ave SW and Gramercy Pl.

**HYDRANT REPLACEMENT:**

None to report this month.

**METER MAINT.**

None to report This month

**FLUSHING SEASON:**

Cancelled due to PFOS in Oakbrook

**LEAK DETECTION REPAIR**

None to report this month

**GROUND MAINT.**

Pressure washed around the Picnic Benches, graded out area around new Warehouse, and installed Racks inside the warehouse.

**CITY FRANCHISE PROJECTS**

None to report this month

**OPEN METER BOX CHECKS**

524 for this month

## **IDLE METER CHECKS**

51 Completed

## **TRAINING:**

None to report this month

## **CAPITAL & R & R PROJECTS – Operations Manager Projects**

### **Design Projects:**

We have started the design process on several new projects. We are working with The City of Lakewood on the Hipkins road project, and we will be having KPG Psomas designing that 6100' of 12" DIP to replace the existing. We have engaged RH2 engineers to design Francis Folsom project which will encompass several smaller streets including a small portion of Lake City Blvd heading towards the lake, and a portion of Kenwood and Edgewood. And another project replacing undersized main in 121<sup>st</sup> Street Winona and Lawndale. We will be designing at least one more for construction in 2024.

### **Front Street / 96<sup>th</sup> Main Improvements: Job#: 781**

11-1-2022 The City has reissued a permit for this project with fees totaling \$17,000 dollars this is better than the fees initially calculated but still higher than we have ever seen on an R & R project. Perhaps this is something that we could address with the City council during the district City workshop, but I will leave this in the hands of the GM and Board.



**12-1-2022: We have held off paying for the permit and moving the project forward waiting on the workshop between LWD and the City of Lakewood. We are in hope we can get all the information necessary to calculate these fees in advance, so we understand the magnitude while in the design process. We are also hoping that we can get the city to take a look at their pavement ranking at present the average road in Lakewood has been assigned a 76 out a 100 ranking this seems fairly high and we would like to understand more about how this number was reached. We are hopeful that we can get some adjustments to make the costs more palatable for the work we need to do to continually upgrade our system.**

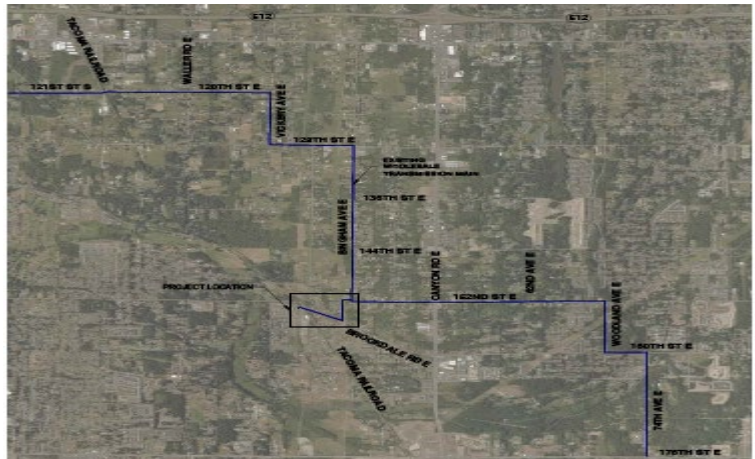
### **Scott well site GAC and Iron and Manganese Treatment # 757, # 758, and #778**

10-6-2022: We have been working with the City on permitting, and we are finalizing the structural details with the Building manufacturer. So, we are in hopes the permit will be complete in next week or so, and in this process the building contractor will get the go ahead to move on the building package. We will have to see where we are at in their Que to see when the delivery can be scheduled. Ceccanti is getting ready to start the new foundation and the like and get this project under way.

**12-1-2022: The Backup Generator for the Scotts G-1 and G-2 Sites has arrived. We are having the contractor price the work to set it and wire up the Automatic Transfer Switch. The Steel building is on Site and the final calculations are into the City of Lakewood on the structural design and assuming the numbers jive we will get our permit for the G-1 Building work.**

**Spanaway Spur Project – WTME connection # 777**

11-1-2022 This project has been underway since the 17<sup>th</sup> of October. The main is being installed on Brookdale at night, and on the private easement during the day. We have had a few issues along the way but not bad in general, we ran in to an alignment issue with the Tacoma Power High voltage poles; they were not buried more than 6’ so we were scheduled to dig in front of them, but Tacoma power is telling us that that would require an \$11,000.00 per night pole holding fee for the 2 nights that we would be working around them. We have adjusted our alignment to avoid the poles and move out in the street further, this will cost more in restoration, but less than the pole holding and the delay to make for those arrangements. We lost a night last night but will be back on track tonight.



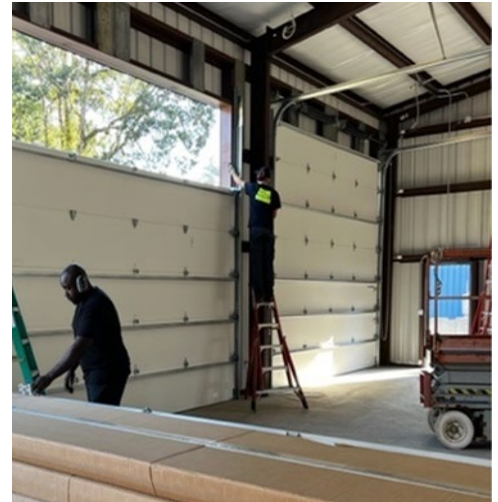
**12-1-2022: The contractor is scheduled to make The Connection to the Spanaway System on Monday the 5<sup>th</sup> and the connection to the WTME at Bingham later that week. This will allow water to be delivered to Spanaway manually. The SCADA and control components are being delivered tomorrow and we are hoping that by the end of the month we will have not only the manual capacity to deliver, but also our full SCADA compliment in place. The clean-up and planting and paving operations will have to wait for weather openings to be completed.**



**LWD Steel Building Project #0806:**

11-1-2022 The final inspection is complete, and a small punch list has been given to the contractor we anticipate they will complete this this week. We will be installing some shelving and them moving in hopefully this week or next.

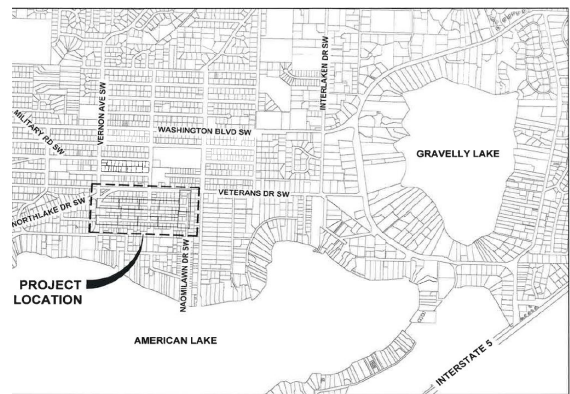
**12-1-2022: Projects is completed and finalized by L&I for the electrical and approved for occupancy. We are now placing racks and kitting out the building so we can start utilizing this. We have paving contractor coming in mid-month weather dependent to grade and pave the approaches to the building.**



**Naomi Lawn, New Grove, Highland Water Main Replacement Job (719)**

10-6-2022: Pape and Sons is scheduled to start this project on the 1<sup>st</sup> week of November. We anticipate this project lasting roughly months depending on weather. Pre con for this job has not been set as of this time.

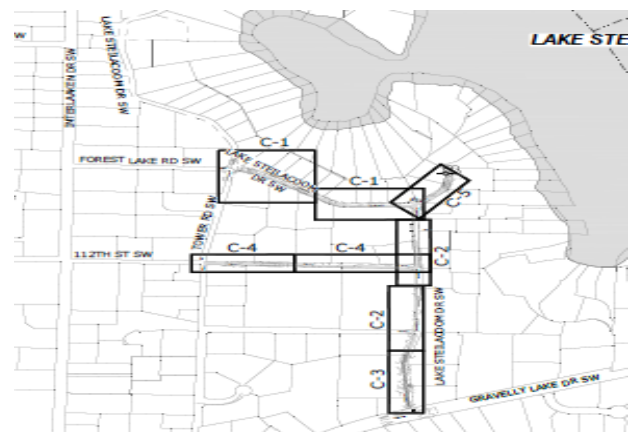
**12-1-2022: Pape and Sons has begun work on the project and have placed over 1500 feet of 8” main through the end of November. We are anticipating this project being under construction through early March.**



**Lake Steilacoom Drive SA Phase 2: Job (799)**

10-6-2022: work for this project is scheduled to start in early November. This project will be finishing up in late January or February. This project will require a lot of traffic control and moving people around the work, but we are confident H-Con will be able to perform well and meet or exceed or timeframe for completion.

**12-1-2022: Work on this project has been moved to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January. This fits our Budget well, as well as the contractors schedule. We are hoping to set a Preconstruction meeting with them on the 8<sup>Th</sup> so there is plenty prior to start.**





**Engineering Manager's Report**  
December 15, 2022  
Board of Commissioners Meeting

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**Source of Supply**

**Operations**

1. Total demands are approximately 10 million gallons per day, including roughly 4 million gallons a day to wholesale partners.
2. 83 percent of total supply capacity is online; 12 percent is offline due to PFAS, 5 percent is offline due to mechanical issues.
  - a. Mechanical Issues - We are continuing to work with the supplier to diagnose the N-3 pump and motor's cause of failure. The P-1R Well had a motor failure and has been pulled for replacement. The motor is under warranty and the replacement is currently being ordered.
  - b. PFAS - I-3, O-2, O-3, and U-1 wells out of service due to PFAS.

**Maintenance**

1. Field crews continue to work on preventative maintenance tasks.
2. Completed monthly lake and stream monitoring tasks, which support our water rights perfection process.
3. One blower motor at the Ponders stripping tower site had to be serviced due to bearings being worn. It is now repaired and reinstalled.
4. The pumping department is now fully using the new computerized maintenance management system, which automatically assigns and tracks preventative maintenance tasks as well as repairs. The new system is a very large improvement from the previous system - being significantly easier to use and has much better reporting capabilities.

**Capital Projects**

1. The N-1 replacement motor was installed and has been running strong since August. The N-3 Well motor is still being diagnosed at the supplier's facility.
2. R-2 Well Drilling
  - a. Development activities at the new R-2 Well were completed and measured performance of the well was improved from the previous efforts completed in May. Final evaluation is still being completed, but the hydrogeologist believes we can count on a flow rate of 500 gpm from the well and it can run at the same time as the R-1 Well. We are moving forward with selecting a pump and related equipment to complete the well facility. Additional budget to complete construction is included in the draft budget for 2023.
  - a. Holt Services has finished drilling the well to a depth of 600 feet.
  - b. Started with 24-inch diameter casing, driven to approximately 100 feet depth; 20-inch casing was installed to an approximate depth of 300 feet, the remaining is 16-inch casing.



Completed R-2 Wellhead

3. Holt Services has completed cleaning, inspection, and testing of the F-2 Well. The existing equipment has been in use since 1982 and the well had not been cleaned since that time.
4. Redevelopment and expansion of the P-2 Well will take place after rehabilitation of the F-2 Well. These projects will accomplish two goals – expanding our supply capacity and replacing two of the District’s oldest remaining pumps and motors. If successful, we will be able to produce more water from these sources as was the case for the S-2 Well. The work at the P-2 Well is anticipated to take place early in 2023 based on limited crew availability from Well Drillers.
5. Emergency Generators and Well Improvements project –
  - a. Contract was awarded to Pape & Sons at the March 17, 2022, Board Meeting.
  - b. Site work including flexible couplings on the well piping began in October and now complete for all five sites.
  - c. Generators are suffering from supply chain issues and are currently anticipated to be delivered in August 2023.
6. Abitibi Well Evaluation
  - a. Two bids were received for this project on September 1, 2022. Holt Services was the low bidder and was awarded the contract. The current schedule provided by Holt Services is to mobilize crews on December 12<sup>th</sup>. Work is anticipated to continue through December.
7. We continue to work with Senator Murray’s office and EPA regarding the grant funds we’ve received for two new groundwater wells to help offset the sources impacted by PFAS. EPA, who is administering the funds, has published its final guidelines on the program. Based on the final guidelines, the District may be eligible for a waiver of the cost-share requirements and is being explored further. These funds will be used for the proposed K-3 and G-4 Wells. To meet the Federal funding requirements proposals for some historical preservation and environmental studies were solicited, reviewed, and scored. We have been able to enter into professional services agreements and the work is now underway. Following completion of these reports, we will submit those along with other application materials to finalize the funding agreement.
8. We have some very good news to report on our Department of Commerce grant applications. We were informed on December 5, 2022, that the four project applications we submitted were ranked numbers 3, 4, 5, and 6 on the program’s (DCCA program) list of projects. To secure funding, the DCCA program projects need to be approved in the State’s 2023-2025 capital budget, anticipated to be determined by September 2023. We will continue to stay engaged and monitor the progress of funding for these projects and keep the Board updated. In short, this is exactly where we’d hope to be at this point though.
9. We had a large push in November to complete and submit four applications to the State Department of Health’s Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program. This is the program that will be used to award grant funds from the Infrastructure and Jobs Act. We submitted applications totaling a request for a total of approximately \$18.17 million for the replacement of five wells. The timeline for the DWSRF program is to have a list of proposed projects to be funded at the end of January 2023. We anticipate hearing some initial indications before that, however. A total of 44 applications were received for the program, four from the District. A tremendous thank you goes to Michelle Kohler and Philip Mendoza in our Finance Department for their work to gather the financial information and complete the application forms. It was no small effort and they made it a priority so that everything was submitted by the deadline.

## Water Quality

### Operations

1. The field crew completed monthly water quality samples.
2. PFAS testing continues throughout the system.
3. Some operational changes were recently made to improve the effectiveness of the iron and manganese filter system at the Deepwood Well and appears to have improved the water quality. The system is continuing to be monitored for effectiveness.

### Maintenance

1. Field crews continue to work on preventative maintenance tasks.

### Capital Projects

1. Investigative water quality tests were conducted for the new R-2 Well and fortunately there were only very low levels of iron and manganese found, so it looks like we'll have good water quality similar to the R-1 Well and won't need treatment for this new well.
2. Scotts well site treatment project - Both treatment facilities have gone through startup and are in operation.
3. EPA released its guidance document on how to conduct a lead service line inventory in early August. Water systems need to complete an inventory of our service lines by October 26, 2024. We are working on a strategy to complete our inventory in a cost-effective manner. Some very positive news was presented recently by the state department of health. In early December, they reported that galvanized service lines downstream of leaded goosenecks do NOT need to be replaced as was previously presented by EPA and other agencies. This represents a potentially significant cost savings for the District as we have not found any lead service lines in the District but have many galvanized service lines and have found some leaded goosenecks randomly throughout the system.

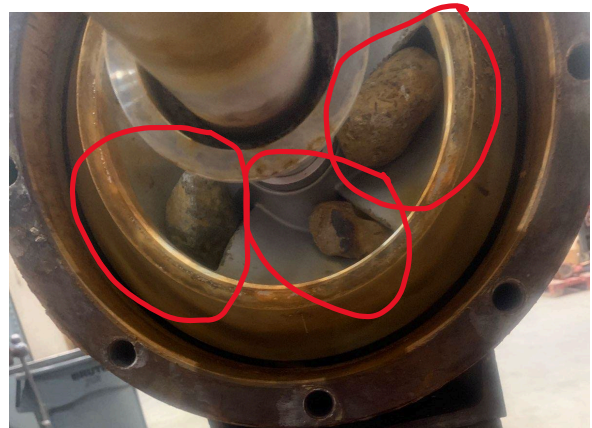
## Pumping

### Operations

1. 100 percent of pump station capacity is online. Wholesale pump stations are supplying approximately 4 MGD.

### Maintenance

1. Field crews continue to work on preventative maintenance tasks. Repairs to remove rocks in the impeller of one of the Wholesale Booster Pump Station 1 pumps are complete. We are working with PumpTech to schedule the pump reinstallation. We anticipate other pumps at this station are in a similar state and will be inspected and repaired in a sequence that does not decrease our flow capacity from the station.



Picture of rocks wedged in impeller vanes of BPS1 Pump



## Capital Projects

1. ShakeMonitor sensors for the Steilacoom Boulevard site have been ordered and are currently anticipated to arrive in December. Installation will not require interruption of service to any of our facilities. The sensors will detect and report the structural condition of each of the three buildings and the tank. This information will be accessible remotely so that staff can be dispatched efficiently throughout the system where the largest needs are following an earthquake.

## Storage

### Operations

1. 100 percent of storage capacity is online.

### Maintenance

1. Field crews continue to work on preventative maintenance tasks.
2. The Pumping Crew did a tremendous job with the piping repair at the Steilacoom Boulevard Reservoir. They were able to perform the repairs and begin refilling the reservoir in less than a day. The Reservoir is now back in service and the hydraulic pressure surging issue is resolved.

## Capital Projects

1. Steilacoom Boulevard Tank Seismic Retrofits
  - a. The Steilacoom Boulevard Seismic Retrofit project is completed and back in service.



Tank with shell stiffeners around exterior; with intermediate and topcoat in progress, with topcoat nearly complete (Left to Right).



**IT Manager's Report**  
December 15, 2022  
Board of Commissioners Meeting

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**CYBER SECURITY UPDATE**

There are 0 Cyber Security Issue to report.

- All Penetration Testing results for November came back with zero findings.
- The November Spam testing campaign resulted in 0 employees clicking on the test link.
- All operations networks are patched up to date and report no suspicious activity.
- All production devices and networks are patched up to date and reporting no suspicious activity.
- No user accounts have been flagged for suspicious activity.
- No malware has been detected on District equipment.

**TECHNOLOGY UPDATE**

**ElementsXS**

The ElementsXS training for Pumping staff is in progress. Focus has moved to the Caselle Integration and historical data from Lucity. Novotx (ElementsXS Developer) has completed their portion of the integration. We are still waiting on Caselle to complete changes to accommodate the Elements integration.

**CELL TOWER UPDATE**

Waiting on Dish to return executed agreements for 3 sites. Inslee-Best is completing the executable agreement for Dish at the Oakbrook site. I expect these to be completed and executed by the end of December.

**CROSS CONNECTION UPDATE**

314	Assemblies Tested
02	New Applications
08	New Installations
00	Assemblies Replaced
19	Repairs
06	Removals
4653	Existing installations permitted
314	Test Reports Completed & Entered
04	Disconnects for non-compliance

16 Staff members (14 Field and 2 Office) underwent CCCS training and will be taking the CCCS exam over the next few weeks. Teri, Bobbie, Debbie, and Rod have passed their CCCS exams as of 12/7/2022.



**HR Manager's Report**  
December 15, 2022  
Board of Commissioners Meeting

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**Retirement Policy Changes**

At the November Board Meeting, the Board requested to move forward with a new policy framework for sick leave payouts at separation, effective January 01, 2023, for employees hired after that date. The updated resolution, B-1479, will repeal and replace B-1474, and is included for Board signature.

**2023 Employee Handbook**

As a best practice, employee handbooks should be updated and approved once per calendar year, at a minimum, or more often if substantial changes or changes in legislation occur. The 2023 Employee Handbook includes the following changes:

**Sick Leave Payout**

The Handbook now includes the changes to the "retirement" policy or sick leave payout policy.

**Paid Family & Medical Leave Program (PFML)**

The Handbook includes the changes to PFML premiums for 2023 and has been updated to include new legislation on types of qualifying leave and waiting week.

A full copy of the Employee Handbook is included.

**LAKWOOD WATER DISTRICT  
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**RESOLUTION NO. B-1479**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LAKEWOOD WATER DISTRICT, PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON, UPDATING THE DISTRICT'S SICK LEAVE POLICY, SUPERCEDING AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO. B-1474, B-1439.**

**WHEREAS**, the District Board of Commissioners previously authorized and approved sick leave benefits for District employees, as set forth in Resolution No. B-1439, adopted by the Board on April 20, 2017; and

**WHEREAS**, subsequent to the adoption of Resolution No. B-1439, the District Board of Commissioners by motion during its regular meeting held on July 16, 2020, adopted a revised Employee Handbook ("Handbook"), which Handbook included revisions to the District's sick leave policy to reflect then-newly adopted RCW 49.46.210 and Chapter 296-128 WAC, relating to legally-mandated sick leave benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, consistent with the Washington State Auditor's recommendation, the District Board of Commissioners has determined it appropriate to further amend its sick leave policy, as it pertains to the conversion of sick leave to vacation leave for retiring employees, to clarify the leave cash out provisions related thereto; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners repealed and replaced Resolution No. B-1439 in its entirety with this Resolution No. B-1474; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners has determined it appropriate to further amend the sick leave policy authorized by Resolution No. B-1474 as it pertains to future employees of the District; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of Lakewood Water District of Pierce County, Washington, as follows:

**Section 1. Sick Leave Payout Policy:** The following Sick Leave Policy is hereby established for District employees:

**SICK LEAVE**

All employees are eligible for paid sick leave, in accordance with RCW 49.46.210. The District also provides additional sick leave benefits beyond what is required by law. Combined, regular full-time employees shall accrue 3.85 hours per pay period, for a total of 100 hours of sick leave per calendar year. Please see the sick leave provisions for each type described in detail below.

## Washington Paid Sick Leave

Consistent with RCW 49.46.210 and Chapter 296-128 WAC, the District offers the following sick leave benefits mandated by law.

All employees are entitled to Washington Paid Sick Leave (WPSL) benefits and earn one hour for every 40 hours worked. For full-time employees who normally work a 40-hour workweek, this equates to 52 hours per calendar year; however, this number will vary, depending upon the actual number of hours, including overtime, worked by an employee.

WPSL benefits will begin accruing as of the employee's hire date and are eligible for use as soon as they are accrued. At the end of the employee's first calendar year of employment, sick leave benefits will be calculated and tracked as of January 01 of each calendar year.

Non-exempt employees may take their WPSL benefits in 15-minute increments; exempt employees are typically not required to report absences of less than a full day. Employees may carry over up to 40 hours of accrued WPSL from one calendar year to the next. WPSL which exceeds this maximum carryover will be converted to ASL and administered in accordance with the ASL policy set forth below.

WPSL is paid at the employee's regular base rate of pay.

Employees may use their accrued WPSL benefits for any absence due to the following reasons:

- The employee's own illness, injury, or health condition, to accommodate the need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a health condition, or preventative medical care.
- The employee's care for a family member with an illness, injury, or health condition, or to care for a family member who needs medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a health condition, or to care for a family member who needs preventative medical care.
- The District is closed by order of public official for any health-related reason, or where the employee's child's school or daycare is closed for such a reason.
- Absences covered by the District's Domestic Violence Leave Policy.

Employees should request to use their WPSL benefits as far in advance as possible. This generally means an employee should provide notice at least 10 days in advance of any planned or otherwise foreseeable absence, such as a planned medical appointment or procedure, and at least one hour prior to the employee's shift for any unforeseeable or emergent absence. If such notice is not practicable under the circumstances, the employee should provide notice as soon as practicable.

The District may require an employee to provide proof of illness, injury, or health condition from a qualified health care provider for absences of more than three consecutive days, unless such verification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense to the employee, as established pursuant to Washington State regulation. If an employee believes the required verification will

result in an unreasonable burden or expense, the employee should notify the District, preferably in writing, of this and provide an explanation that (i) the employee's use of the sick leave is for one of the reasons listed above and (ii) how the verification requirement will result in an undue burden or expense.

Upon receipt of such notice from the employee, the District will consider the employee's explanation and proceed in accordance with the process set forth in WAC 296-128-660. Otherwise, failure to provide the required verification may result in a loss of leave benefits for that work period and/or may result in further disciplinary action.

If an employee feels they are being discriminated or retaliated against because of their lawful use of WPSL benefits, the employee should contact Human Resources or the General Manager. If the employee is not satisfied with the District's response, the employee may contact the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries:

Online: [www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights](http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights)

Call: 1-866-219-7321

Visit: [www.lni.wa.gov/Offices](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Offices)

Email: [ESgeneral@lni.wa.gov](mailto:ESgeneral@lni.wa.gov)

WPSL benefits are not cashed out upon termination of employment. However, if a former employee is rehired by the District within 12 months of their termination date, the District shall reinstate the employee's previously-accrued WPSL benefits.

### Additional Sick Leave

In addition to and separate from the WPSL benefits provided above, all regular full-time employees earn a total of 48 hours per calendar year of Additional Sick Leave (ASL). Regular part-time employees shall receive ASL benefits on a prorated basis, based upon the number of hours their schedule bears to a full-time schedule.

Introductory Period employees begin accruing ASL as of their hire date and will be permitted to use ASL as accrued.

ASL benefits will accrue only when an employee is in paid status, which includes paid leave but does not include unpaid leaves. ASL benefits may not be used until after they are accrued. ASL benefits may be taken in 15-minute increments.

After first exhausting their accrued WPSL benefits, employees may use their ASL benefits for the following reasons:

- The employee's own bona fide illness or injury, including temporary disability caused by pregnancy or childbirth.
- To care for a minor child of the employee with a health condition requiring treatment or supervision.

- To care for the employee's child, spouse, registered domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, domestic partner's parent, sibling, or grandparent who has a serious health condition or an emergency health condition.
- Absences covered by the District's Domestic Violence Leave Policy.
- Other circumstances which may be authorized by the General Manager, at the General Manager's discretion.

ASL benefits are paid at the employee's regular base rate of pay.

Employees should request to use their ASL benefits as far in advance as possible. This generally means that an employee should provide notice at least 10 days in advance of any planned or otherwise foreseeable absence, such as a planned medical appointment or procedure, and at least one hour prior to the employee's shift for any unforeseeable or emergent absence. If such is not practicable under the circumstances, the employee should provide notice as soon as practicable.

The District may require any employee to provide proof of illness, injury, or health condition from a qualified health care provider in connection with the employee's use of ASL benefits. Failure to provide such required verification may result in loss of ASL benefits for that work period and may result in further disciplinary action. Employees who misuse their ASL benefits will be subject to disciplinary action. This medical verification requirement is not subject to the process outlined above for WPSL benefits.

ASL benefits are not cashed out to employees upon termination of employment except at the time of retirement as prescribed in Resolution B-1474.

Temporary employees will not be eligible for or entitled to ASL benefits.

#### Sick Leave Buyback

Regular full-time and part-time employees may accrue and carry over up to 720 hours of sick leave, including the 40-hour maximum of WPSL, as of December 31 of each calendar year. Accrued ASL and WPSL benefits which exceed the maximum accrual may not be carried over into the following calendar year and will be cashed out to the employee at the rate of two hours of sick leave for one hour of compensation (2:1) at the employee's regular base rate of pay.

### Sick Leave Payout

Employees who were hired after January 01, 2023 and separate from service after successfully completing their Introductory Period will receive a percentage of their accrued sick leave at their current rate of pay based on the following years of service schedule:

<b>Completed Years of Service</b>	<b>Sick Leave Percentage</b>
0 through 2	0%
3 through 6	25%
7 through 14	50%
15 through 24	75%
25+	100%

### Misuse of Benefit

Any employee deemed to have abused sick leave privileges by falsification or misrepresentation may be subject to disciplinary action.

**Section 3. Sick Leave Payout for Separating Employees.** The Board hereby adopts the following Sick Leave Payout Provisions for Separating District Employees:

#### Sick Leave Payout for Separating Employees

Separating employees who were hired after January 01, 2023 will receive a percentage of their accrued sick leave at their current rate of pay, provided they have successfully completed their Introductory Period, based on their years of service. The schedule can be found in the Sick Leave section of this Handbook.

Separating employees who were hired prior to January 01, 2023 will not be paid for accrued but unused sick leave unless the employee meets the criteria for retirement. Please see the next section for more information on retiree sick pay.

#### Resolution B-1474 – Sick Leave Provisions for Retirees

Provided that an employee who was hired prior to January 01, 2023 has given at least two years written notice of their intent to retire, Resolution B-1474 allows an employee within two years of their retirement, upon approval from the General Manager, to convert accrued but unused sick leave benefits which exceed 480 hours into vacation leave, at the rate of one vacation hour for every two sick leave hours.

Sick leave converted into vacation leave under this policy may be used over a two-year period at the rate of seven and one half (7 ½) days per year in addition to the employee's regular vacation leave.



Within 90 days of an employee's retirement, the General Manager may, at the General Manager's sole discretion, authorize the employee to use any accrued sick leave, if convenient to the District and to the employee.

At the time of retirement, all accrued sick leave up to 480 hours shall be paid to the employee at their current hourly rate of pay. The employee may elect to receive this payment in one lump sum as of the designated retirement date or to remain on the District's payroll and to receive the sick leave cash out in regular installments based on the employee's normal rate of pay. Any sick leave in excess of 480 hours as of the retirement date shall be paid to the employee at a 2:1 ratio (two sick leave hours for one paid hour) at the current hourly rate of pay.

**Section 4. Amendment to Handbook.** District staff is directed to revise the District Employee Handbook accordingly, to reflect the policies adopted by this Resolution, and to distribute the amended policy to all existing District employees.

**Section 5. No Further Amendments.** Except as specifically amended herein, the remainder of District employment policies and procedures remain unaltered and in full force and affect.

**Section 6. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage.

ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of Lakewood Water District, Pierce County, Washington at the regular public meeting thereof held the 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022.

LAKWOOD WATER DISTRICT

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and President

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and Vice-President

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner and Secretary

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Secretary



The  team



The Employee Handbook  
January 2023

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## **Mission Statement**

Lakewood Water District will provide its customers with water service that meets or exceeds all water quality standards, maintaining policies and practices that benefit the health and welfare of the community.

## **Service Promise**

The Lakewood Water District is constantly striving to effectively provide the best customer service possible by way of personal contact, indirectly through the actions of the District, or through correspondence. Each employee plays a key role in maintaining this objective and is responsible to search for new ways to improve the quality and/or quantity of service to our customers.

## **WELCOME TO THE DISTRICT**

Welcome to Lakewood Water District (“the District”). If you are a new employee, the District welcomes you and hopes your experience with us will be rewarding. If you are a current employee, the District wishes to express its sincere appreciation for your continued valued service.

Lakewood Water District is a special purpose district founded in June 1943 and serves an area in Pierce County, Washington. The District’s authority to operate originates from Titles 56 and 57 of the Revised Code of Washington. The District has over 16,800 water connections providing service to more than 60,000 retail customers in Lakewood, Washington. Additionally, the District has also become a regional provider of wholesale water, serving the Town of Steilacoom, Summit Water & Supply Company, Washington Water, Firgrove Mutual Water, and Spanaway Water Company, and approximately 55,000 wholesale customers.

We own and operate 256 miles of water mains, 13 water tanks, 32 wells, and six water treatment facilities. Our tanks have a total storage capacity of 27,300,000 gallons of water.

## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

As you will learn, our main goals and aspirations are always water quality and customer service. The quality of our service is directly attributable to the care that is taken by our employees. YOU are our most important resource, and we want to provide you with the tools necessary to do the best job possible. Additionally, we are committed to creating a positive work environment.

Therefore, it is important to begin by describing what this Employee Handbook is, as well as what it is not.

This Employee Handbook has been prepared to introduce you to the District and is intended to be a source of information and general statement of the District's personnel policies and procedures. It summarizes some of the benefits employees may receive and some of their duties and responsibilities as an employee.

This Employee Handbook is presented as a matter of information only. It is not a contract between the District and any of its employees, and it should not be interpreted as making any promises of specific treatment in specific situations.

It is a “living” document. As the District continues to grow, employment policies and benefits may change with time or they may need to be clarified, amended, supplemented, or rescinded.

Therefore, the District reserves the right to modify, rescind, delete, or add to the provisions of this Handbook as well as any other personnel policies, benefits, and practices as the District deems necessary and appropriate. Any changes, additions, or deletions to this Handbook must be in writing and must be expressly authorized and issued by Lakewood Water District to be valid. Employees will be notified of any changes to this Employee Handbook as they occur.

This Employee Handbook supersedes all previous handbooks, any prior written and oral policies, statements, or understandings on these subjects as well as any District Resolutions that conflict or are inconsistent with the subjects covered herein. Consult Resolution No. B-1354 for a list of resolutions repealed by this Handbook.

This Handbook is not your only source of information on employment-related issues. Although this Employee Handbook will probably be the best place to start in finding answers to questions, you may, from time to time, have questions that it does not answer. In those situations, you should talk with your immediate supervisor, Human Resources, or the General Manager.

It is the District's goal to serve its customers to the best of its ability and at a reasonable cost. As an integral part of this organization, your success in your job is vital to attaining this goal. We trust our relationship will be mutually rewarding and beneficial.

Again, welcome!

## **ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW**

The District has a relatively flat organizational structure. A three-member Board of Commissioners governs the District. Each Board member is elected by voters to serve a six-year term. The Board, acting as a body, sets the general policies for operation. The day-to-day function of the District is administered by the General Manager, a position appointed by the Board.

Assisted by six senior managers, the General Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the entire District, including the administration and implementation of Board-approved policies, resolutions, goals, and objectives. The General Manager's direct report staff also includes an Administrative Assistant, who provides administrative support to the General Manager, Board of Commissioners, and other senior management staff.

Senior managers support the overall mission of the District by overseeing the functions of their respective departments, and may be assisted by one or more supervisors or other direct report staff. Within a department, there may be a designated Department Head and Lead who distribute work assignments, train and coach staff, and may assume other supervisory duties or responsibilities as assigned.

The District is organized into the following departments:

- 💧 Administration
- 💧 Customer Service
- 💧 Engineering
- 💧 Finance
- 💧 Human Resources
- 💧 IT
- 💧 Operations & Maintenance
- 💧 Pumping & Water Treatment

The Operations & Maintenance and Pumping & Water Treatment departments perform field-related activities in support of our mission to provide clean, safe, and reliable drinking water to our customers. Field employees are responsible for the on-site maintenance and operation of the District's water distribution and treatment systems, physical plants, tanks, and reservoirs.

The Customer Service department supports the customer service function of the District including responding to customer questions and concerns, starting and stopping water service, performing billing functions, and managing customer accounts, payments, delinquencies, disconnections, and other activities.

The Engineering department is responsible for planning, design, and construction management improvements to the District's water distribution, storage, and treatment systems. It also plays a key role in emergency planning and response.

The Finance department is responsible for the planning, management, and oversight of the finance and accounting activities of the District, including professional accounting, financial recordkeeping, payroll, accounts receivable and payable, wholesale operations, and cash, debt, and investment management.

The IT department supports the management, planning, operation, and maintenance of all Information Technology systems throughout the District, including technology infrastructure, assets, and cybersecurity to ensure reliable, 24/7 operation of all components of the District's IT systems.

The Human Resources department is responsible for developing, implementing, and administering human resources policies, procedures, and programs related to recruitment and selection, compliance, classification and compensation, benefits and leave administration, performance management, employee relations, recognition and retention, and training.

## **Supervisors**

The term “supervisor” is used interchangeably throughout this Handbook and is applicable to those in a supervisory role with the titles of Department Head, Manager, and General Manager. Supervisors monitor, direct, coach, counsel, discipline, and evaluate work performance. Employees are encouraged to work with their supervisor to resolve any workplace issues they encounter, get clarification on things that may affect their job, or talk through concerns that may occur. An effective relationship between employees and their supervisors ensures the best environment for the achievement of both individual and District goals.

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The District is an equal opportunity employer (EEO). The District does not tolerate discrimination and provides equal employment opportunities without regard to race or traits historically associated or perceived to be associated with race, including but not limited to hair texture and protective hairstyles (e.g., afros, braids, dreadlocks, and twists), sex, color, national origin, creed, citizenship or immigration status, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, veteran status, sensory, mental or physical disability, use of a trained dog guide or service animal, genetic information, HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis C status, or any other legally protected status.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, discharge, reduction in force, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training. We comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment.

The District believes in and practices equal opportunity. All employees are responsible for supporting the concept of equal opportunity and diversity and assisting the District in meeting its objectives. Any District employee who is found to have violated the District's strict policy against any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Americans With Disabilities Act and Washington Law Against Discrimination**

The District is committed to complying with the disability discrimination laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Washington Laws Against Discrimination (WLAD), and ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis. This includes providing reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals who have a disability that impacts their ability to perform the essential functions of their job.

Any employee who believes that they have a disability that requires accommodation should notify Human Resources as soon as possible after the disability becomes known to the employee, and before the impacts of the disability gives rise to performance issues. Upon notification, the District will engage in what is commonly referred to as an “interactive process” with the employee.

As part of the interactive process, the District may request additional information from the employee, such as a completed medical certification and medical accommodation form from the employee’s treating healthcare provider, so the District may verify the existence of a disability and determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of their job.

A “reasonable accommodation” is one that does not cause an undue hardship for the District. The District can make no guarantee or assurances as to specific accommodations, and all requests for accommodation must be addressed on a case-by-case basis based on the circumstances.

### **Pregnancy Accommodation**

The District will accommodate pregnant employees in accordance with applicable law. A pregnant employee is entitled to the following accommodations:

- 💧 A lifting restriction limited to 17 pounds.
- 💧 Flexible restroom breaks.
- 💧 Making seating available and/or allowing the employee to sit more frequently.

These accommodations will be provided without the need for medical certification. Additional accommodations will also be considered based on medical need provided such accommodation(s) do not cause an undue hardship for the District. In such cases, the District may require a medical certification as part of the accommodation process.

A pregnant employee seeking accommodation should notify Human Resources of such which will initiate an “interactive process” with the employee to determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation(s) may be extended.

An employee will not suffer any tangible adverse employment action or otherwise be denied applicable employment opportunities as a result of a request for, declination of, or use of a pregnancy accommodation.

### **Accommodation of Religious Beliefs**

The District will also reasonably accommodate the sincerely-held religious beliefs of an employee, unless the beliefs preclude the employee from being about to perform the

essential functions of their job or the accommodation would result in undue hardship for the District.

## **Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination**

The District is committed to providing a workplace that is free of verbal, physical, and visual forms of harassment, including conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment, so everyone can work in a productive, respectful, and professional environment. In keeping with this commitment, the District will not tolerate harassment of employees by anyone.

Harassment in employment based on sex, race or traits historically associated or perceived to be associated with race, color, national origin, creed, citizenship or immigration status, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, use of a trained dog guide or service animal, genetic information, HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis C status, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law is strictly prohibited.

The District does not tolerate harassment by anyone in the workplace, whether by commissioners, supervisors, coworkers, or third parties such as vendors, contractors, or customer, nor does it consider conduct that violates this policy to fall within the course and scope of District employment or to be the direct consequence of the performance of one's employment duties and responsibilities.

Employees who violate this policy are subject to discipline as outlined in Corrective and Disciplinary Actions section of this Handbook. Additionally, the law may in certain situations also result in personal liability for individuals who engage in unlawful harassment.

### **What is Harassment?**

#### Sexual Harassment Defined

Applicable federal and state laws generally define sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- 💧 Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- 💧 Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions that affect the individual.
- 💧 The conduct interferes with an employee's work or causes an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment includes harassment based on another person's gender or harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth, or other related medical conditions. It also includes harassment of another employee of the same gender as the harasser. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following types of behavior:

- 💧 Unwelcome sexual advances, like requests for dates or propositions for sexual favors.
- 💧 Excessive one-sided, romantic attention in the form of love letters, telephone calls, e-mails, or gifts.
- 💧 Offering or conditioning an employment benefit, such as a raise, a promotion, or a special job assignment, in exchange for sexual favors.
- 💧 Making or threatening reprisals or changing performance expectations after an employee has turned down a sexual advance.
- 💧 Visual or physical conduct, like leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, calendars, or posters in the workplace.
- 💧 Verbal or written communications or conduct (including emails or other electronic documents), such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, teasing, and jokes of a sexual nature.
- 💧 Graphic verbal or written comments (including emails or other electronic documents) about an individual's sex life or body, or suggestive or obscene letters, emails, notes, or invitations.
- 💧 Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual.
- 💧 Retaliatory actions against an employee who reports harassment or threatens to report harassment.
- 💧 Unwelcome physical contact, including pats, hugs, brushes, touches, shoulder rubs, assaults, or impeding or blocking normal movements.

### **Other Types of Workplace Harassment**

Prohibited harassment based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, age, marital or veteran status, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, the presence or any sensory, mental, or physical disability or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law includes behaviors similar to sexual



harassment. Examples of behaviors that may be considered harassment include, but are not limited to:

- 💧 Written or verbal conduct such as threats, jokes, epithets, derogatory comments, or slurs.
- 💧 Visual conduct such as derogatory posters, photographs, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
- 💧 Physical contact or conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or blocking movement.
- 💧 Retaliatory actions against an employee who reports harassment or threatens to report harassment.

Prohibited activity subject to District anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies includes conduct, messages, or communications sent or received in-person or through electronic or voice communication systems, or through any other electronic means. This includes any personal communications sent using District equipment. The use of information systems (including email and internet) for the display of sexually explicit images, messages, off color jokes, or anything that may be construed by a reasonable person as harassment or showing disrespect for others, is strictly prohibited.

This policy is also violated if an employee is fired, denied a job, or denied some other employment benefit because the employee refused to grant sexual favors, complained about harassment, or assisted in an investigation of harassment.

The District is committed to taking reasonable steps to prevent harassment from occurring and will take immediate and appropriate action when unlawful harassment is reported. To do this, however, the District needs the cooperation of all employees at all levels.

### **What to Do If Harassment Occurs**

Each employee is responsible for reporting and adhering to this policy. If an employee feels that a violation of this policy has occurred, they should use the complaint resolution process set forth below. The District's complaint procedure provides for prompt, thorough, and objective investigation of alleged discrimination, including harassment and workplace bullying.

Employees should never tolerate inappropriate behavior. There may be situations when an employee should consider making their feelings known to the offending employee. In many cases, if an employee makes their feelings known to the offending person(s), tells the offender that the conduct is not appropriate and asks them to stop, this may resolve the situation.

However, this is not a required step to the complaint resolution process and, if any employee is not comfortable doing this, the employee is encouraged to promptly report any offending behavior, whether such behavior is directed towards them personally or toward other employees of the District, to their immediate supervisor, Human Resources, the General Manager, or any other manager with whom the employee feels comfortable reporting.

Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal or retaliation. This condition applies regardless of whether the employee articulating the concern is the employee towards whom the conduct is directed. Employees are urged to report concerns about discrimination or harassment before behaviors become severe or pervasive as the District prefers to stop discrimination or harassment before it arises to the level of a violation of the anti-discrimination laws.

Supervisors and managers who know or receive reports of offending behavior are to promptly notify Human Resources or the General Manager, unless the General Manager is the subject of the complaint, in which case the supervisor should notify Human Resources or the President of the Board of Commissioners, so that appropriate action can be taken.

The District will appropriately investigate all claims of harassment. Complaints of discrimination or harassment will be handled with sensitivity, discretion, and confidentiality to the extent allowed by the circumstances and the law. Generally, this means the allegations of discrimination or harassment are shared with those who have a need to know, so the District can conduct an effective investigation and take appropriate action to prevent any further violation of this policy. We ask all involved personnel to refrain from discussing the matter with other employees or those outside the investigative process to protect the complainant, witnesses, and integrity of the information.

The complainant will usually be requested to provide as many details as possible, such as:

- 💧 What happened
- 💧 When it happened
- 💧 Where it happened
- 💧 Person(s) involved
- 💧 Name of witness(es), if any
- 💧 What action was taken by the victim
- 💧 Whether the victim's actions resolved the situation

Persons with relevant information will usually be interviewed. During the investigation, steps may be taken, when appropriate, to minimize contact between the complainant and

the subject of the complaint. After the investigation is completed, the results of the investigation will be shared with the complainant, the subject of the complaint, and if the District deems it appropriate under the particular circumstances, other employees directly concerned with the incident.

If the District concludes unlawful harassment has occurred, prompt and effective remedial action will be taken. This may include discipline of the subject and/or other actions to remedy the effects of the harassment and to prevent further harassment as determined appropriate by the District.

Complaints of harassment that are found, following investigation, to be knowingly false are a violation of these procedures, and the complainant will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All complaints will be taken seriously. Every effort will be made to complete investigations in a timely and sensitive manner and to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible.

### **Retaliation is Prohibited**

Any form of retaliation, including but not limited to, questioning of or derogatory comments, threats, intimidation, or actual harm against individuals making harassment complaints, witnesses, or any other involved employees, is against the District's policy and is strictly prohibited. Retaliatory activities will be treated as a separate violation of this policy and may subject the individual to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

No action will be taken against any employee who in good faith files a complaint of harassment or who assists in the investigation of such complaint by providing information.

Employees who believe they have been retaliated against for having reporting harassment or participated in an investigation of a harassment complaint are urged to promptly notify Human Resources or the General Manager so their concerns may be investigated. Appropriate corrective measures will be taken if allegations of retaliation are substantiated.

### **Corrective and Disciplinary Actions**

Every employee has the duty and the responsibility to be aware of and abide by existing rules and policies. Employees also have the responsibility to perform their duties to the best of their ability and to the standards contained in their job description or as otherwise established by their supervisor.

The District supports the use of corrective action and progressive discipline to address issues such as poor work performance, violation of policies, or other misconduct. The process is designed to provide corrective action to improve and prevent a recurrence of

undesirable behavior or performance issues and has been designed to be consistent with organizational values, best practices, and employment laws.

No regular employee shall be disciplined or discharged except for just cause, which shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. The District, where appropriate, will generally apply the following progressive discipline process:

- Verbal written warning
- Written warning
- Final warning
- Suspension without pay
- Discharge for just cause

However, where warranted by the nature and/or severity of the offense, the District may, in its discretion, initiate discipline at an “advanced step” of the discipline process, up to and including termination. In addition, counseling and special evaluations including performance improvement plans, may be part of the discipline process, as the District in its sole discretion deems appropriate.

The District shall document each step of the discipline process and provide a copy of such documentation to the subject employee. The subject employee will be required to sign such documentation and to acknowledge that the employee has received a copy of the documentation and understands the nature of the documented disciplinary action. The employee’s signed acknowledgment does not constitute an admission or agreement with the action. Documentation pertaining to disciplinary action will be maintained in the subject employee’s personnel file. Within five days of signing any disciplinary documentation, the subject employee may prepare a written response to or rebuttal of such disciplinary documentation, which response or rebuttal shall be maintained in the employee’s personnel file upon the employee’s request.

Employees who have not yet successfully completed their Introductory Period are not “regular” employees, and this policy does not apply to such employees. This policy also does not apply to Temporary employees. All Introductory Period employees are “at will” and may be disciplined or discharged at any time and for any reason, with or without cause, in the District’s sole discretion.

### **Dispute Resolution**

The District recognizes the importance of settling employee disputes and concerns promptly and fairly in the interest of maintaining continued good relations with its employees. The District believes that undisclosed problems are likely to remain unresolved and lead to impaired working relationships, dissatisfaction with working conditions, and a decline in operational efficiency.

Employees are encouraged to resolve less serious concerns and misunderstandings informally by discussing any issues directly with the party involved. Sometimes a two-way dialogue does not adequately resolve an issue, or an employee may be uncomfortable bringing the concern to the party involved. The District has established the following dispute resolution policy to help govern issues raised by employees relating to the interpretation, application, or breach of employment policies and/or practices.

The District will endeavor to resolve these concerns as promptly, fairly, and thoroughly as possible in accordance with the following procedure.

### Step One

An employee who has a question or concern relating to the interpretation, application, or breach of any District employment practice and/or policy should discuss it informally with their supervisor or Human Resources within five working days of the occurrence becoming a concern or creating a question. Within two working days of this informal conference, the immediate supervisor and/or Human Resources will give the employee a verbal answer or solution to the concern.

### Step Two

If the concern is not resolved verbally in Step One, the employee may reduce the concern to writing within three working days of the supervisor's verbal answer. The employee must set forth in detail the nature of the concern, the specific policy or practice at issue, and the remedy requested. Employees should submit written grievances to their applicable Department Head or Manager.

The Department Head or Manager, in consultation with Human Resources, will meet with the employee within three working days to discuss the concern. The Department Head, Manager, or designee, in consultation with Human Resources, will provide a written reply within five working days from such meeting.

### Step Three

If the grievance is not settled in Step Two, the employee may appeal such reply to the General Manager. The appeal must be made within three (3) working days of the employee's receipt of the written reply. The appeal must be in writing and include (1) a copy of the appealed reply from the applicable Department Head or Manager, (2) a copy of the employee's written concern; and (3) a statement advising the General Manager that the employee desires to proceed to Step Three of this Dispute Resolution Policy.

Within five days of receipt of the employee's appeal, the General Manager and/or Human Resources will meet with the employee to discuss the employee's concern; if the General

Manager or Human Resources is not mutually available to meet within such time, this deadline may be extended.

Within five days of the parties' meeting, the General Manager will provide a written reply to the concern.

#### Step Four

The General Manager's determination will be final unless the employee appeals such determination to the Board of Commissioners within three (3) working days of the employee's receipt of such determination. The appeal must be in writing and include (1) a copy of all written determinations under the preceding steps; (2) a copy of the employee's written concern; and (3) a statement advising the Board of Commissioners that the employee desires to proceed to Step Four of this Dispute Resolution Policy.

The required appeal materials should be delivered to the Administrative Assistant, who will place the appeal on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board of Commissioners meeting. If such appeal is received by the Administrative Assistant less than 48 hours prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting, (1) the appeal will be postponed until the next immediately following regular Board meeting; or (2) at the Board's sole discretion, the appeal will be postponed until a special meeting may be called to address the appeal. Such special meeting shall not be scheduled any later than the next immediately following regular Board meeting.

At the hearing before the Board, the employee will have an opportunity to present to the Board evidence in support of the reported concern. The District will have the opportunity to present its rebuttal. The Board will have the authority to allow and/or limit witnesses, testimony, and/or evidence to be presented by the aggrieved employee at the hearing and to otherwise determine all procedural matters at the hearing.

Once both the employee and the District have presented their arguments to the Board to the Board's satisfaction, the grievance hearing will be closed and no further evidence or testimony will be received except with the express consent of the Board. Within fifteen (15) working days of the closure of the hearing, the Board will provide the employee and the District with a written decision. In such determination, the Board may uphold, reverse, or modify the District's earlier decision(s), in the Board's sole discretion. The Board's determination will be final.

#### **Whistleblower Protection Act**

We want employees to report improper governmental actions within our operation. We will protect those who report such improper actions in good faith and in accordance with the District's policies and procedures against retaliatory actions. An "improper action" includes any act by any District official or employee that is a violation of any law or rule, abuse of

authority, of danger to the public health or safety, or a gross waste of public funds. An "improper action" does not include personnel actions taken by the District's management.

If you wish to report any improper governmental action, submit such report in writing to the General Manager. If the General Manager is the subject of your report, you should make your report to any member of the Board of Commissioners. In addition, you may report improper governmental action to the:

***Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney***

Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney  
Pierce County Courthouse  
930 Tacoma Avenue South  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
(253)798-7400

***Pierce County Council***

Pierce County Council Chambers  
930 Tacoma Avenue South  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
(253)798-7777

Except in the case of immediate threat to persons or property, you must submit a written report of improper governmental action to the General Manager before you provide information of such action to a person who is not a public official, or a person listed in this section. If you fail to do so, you will not be protected under the whistleblower law. The District will promptly investigate all reports made pursuant to this policy. The District will keep your identity confidential to the extent possible under the law unless you authorize disclosure in writing. You may be advised of the results of the investigation; however, any personnel actions taken as a result of the investigation may be kept confidential.

If you believe you have been the subject of retaliatory action for reporting an improper governmental action, you may obtain the following relief:

- 💧 Provide the Board of Commissioners with a written notice of the charge of retaliatory action within 30 days after the occurrence of the alleged retaliatory action specifying the alleged retaliatory action and the relief requested. The District will respond to your charge and request for relief within 30 days.
- 💧 If you are not satisfied with the District's response, you may request a hearing to establish a retaliatory action occurred and to obtain relief. You must make your request within 15 days of the delivery of the response or within 15 days of the last day on which the District could respond.

- Within five days of your request for a hearing, the District will apply to the State Office of Administrative Hearings for an adjudicative proceeding before an administrative law judge. In order for you to prevail, the evidence presented by you must outweigh the evidence presented by the District. The administrative law judge will issue a final decision within 45 days of your request for a hearing unless such time period is extended by the administrative law judge.

If the decision is in your favor, you may be granted relief as follows:

- Reinstatement with or without back pay:
- Injunctive relief to return you to the position you held before and to prevent recurrence of retaliatory action:
- Cost and reasonable attorney's fees; and/or
- The imposition of a civil penalty personally upon the retaliator(s) of up to \$3,000.00 payable by each person who has retaliated against you. The administrative law judge may also recommend to the District that the offending person(s) be suspended without pay or dismissed. All penalties recovered shall be paid to the local government administrative hearing account generated pursuant to RCW 42.41.060.

## **EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

### **Recruiting and Hiring**

The District believes that hiring qualified employees contributes to the overall success of its operations. In all of its internal and external recruitment and selection efforts, the District makes every effort to ensure equal employment opportunity (EEO) for all individuals and it abides by the EEO and nondiscrimination provisions of all applicable federal, state, and local laws. Once the need to open and fill new or existing positions has been identified, and to ensure the District hires the most qualified candidates for its open positions, the District generally follows the following hiring process.

### **Job Posting and Recruitment Advertising**

Job openings are generally posted to the District's website as well as advertised externally. Positions are typically "open until filled" unless specified otherwise. All job openings will remain posted until the position is filled or a decision to close the opening has been made.



## **Applications for Employment**

Initially, resumes may be all that is requested from interested candidates for a particular job opening. However, candidates will also be required to submit a completed application as part of the hiring process. More detail will be provided by Human Resources during the recruiting and hiring process.

## **Internal Candidates**

Employees who feel they meet the minimum qualifications may apply for job openings. To be considered a candidate, employees should complete and submit all required documentation as listed in the job posting. Internal candidates will be granted an interview; candidates who are not selected will be notified by Human Resources.

## **Interview Process**

Human Resources and the applicable manager will work together to screen applications and resumes prior to scheduling interviews. Initial phone screens may be conducted by Human Resources as part of the screening process. Structured interviews are typically conducted by a panel made up of District employees, designated by Human Resources, the applicable manager, and/or the General Manager.

Interview questions are generally compiled by Human Resources and reviewed by the interview panel prior to the interview. Human Resources will track, document, and retain all applications and resumes received and results of interviews conducted in accordance with state and federal retention guidelines, and notify candidates not selected for District job openings.

## **Reference Checks and Job Offers**

References will be checked for top candidates. Based on the results received, a decision will be made, and a candidate selected. Human Resources will contact the candidate to extend the offer of employment contingent upon satisfactory completion of a criminal background check and any other conditions to employment that may be applicable, including but not limited to a negative drug screening result.

## **Criminal Background Checks**

Human Resources will conduct a criminal background check through a third-party service as part of a conditional job offer. The nature and scope of the background check will depend upon the position involved. Background checks may also be conducted on employees being promoted under certain circumstances and when deemed necessary or appropriate by the District.

General background checks for all positions will include:

- 💧 **Social Security Verification** to validate the candidate's Social Security number, date of birth, and former addresses.
- 💧 **Prior Employment Verification** to confirm a candidate's listed prior employment, including dates of employment, position held, and additional information available pertaining to performance rating, reason for departure, and eligibility for rehire. This verification will generally be run on the past two employers or the previous five years, whichever comes first.
- 💧 **Personal and Professional References** provided by a candidate.
- 💧 **Criminal History Checks** for final candidates and promoted employees. A candidate's or employee's criminal history will not automatically disqualify that candidate or employee from consideration for an employment position. Rather, a candidate's or employee's criminal history will be considered only to the extent that such history is job-related for the position in question and is consistent with business necessity.

The District generally limits its criminal history checks to convictions occurring no later than the past ten years. The District does not inquire about non-pending arrest records. In determining whether such conviction(s) disqualifies an applicant or employee from an employment position, the District will consider the following factors, among others:

- The nature and gravity of the subject offense or conduct.
- The time that has passed since the offense or conduct and/or completion of the correlating sentence.
- The nature of the job held or sought.

If the District identifies a criminal history that is potentially disqualifying, it will notify the affected individual that they may be excluded because of criminal history and afford that individual an opportunity to provide any information that they believe mitigates against an exclusion from consideration before disqualifying that individual.

- 💧 **Employment Eligibility**, to be provided within three business days of hire or rehire. All new employees are required to present to the District documentation sufficiently establishing their identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to sign an INS Form I-9.

The following additional background searches may be required if applicable to the position:

- 💧 **Motor Vehicle Records.** The District reserves the right to periodically verify that a candidate or existing employee holds a valid driver's license, to investigate the employee's driving record, and to request from the employee, a third-party consumer reporting agency, and/or appropriate governing agency a copy of the employee's current driving abstract (Motor Vehicle Report). Towards this end, candidates and employees are expected to comply with any such request from the District, including but not limited to executing any required consent forms.
- 💧 **Credit History.** The District will not inquire about information that bears on an candidate's or employee's creditworthiness, credit standing, or credit capacity unless such credit history is, in the District's good faith determination, substantially related to the job for which the applicant or employee is being considered or is otherwise required by law. The District shall notify those candidates and/or employees being considered for the position, in writing and in advance, of its intent to conduct a credit check and the reasons for conducting such check.
- 💧 **Educational Verification.** The District may verify a candidate's reported educational history, including the institutions attended, years attended, and the degree/diploma received.

## **Orientation**

On the first day of employment, or otherwise as soon as practically possible thereafter, each new employee will complete an orientation process with Human Resources, and other designated District staff.

## **Employee Classifications**

Employment status is categorized to make distinctions in benefits and other employment conditions. Employees may be considered full-time, part-time, temporary, or introductory. The following definitions apply:

### Regular Full-Time

Employees who have successfully completed their Introductory Period and are regularly scheduled to work 40 hours or more per week. Regular full-time employees are eligible for District benefits, subject to any specific requirements of an applicable benefit plan.

### Regular Part-Time

Employees who have successfully completed their Introductory Period and are regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week. Regular part-time employees are typically eligible for District time off benefits on a prorated basis and may also be eligible to participate in other District benefits, as defined by the applicable policy or plan.

### Temporary

Employees who are hired for a pre-established period, and usually on a short-term basis. Temporary employees may work a full-time or part-time schedule. Temporary employees are ineligible for District benefits (except as otherwise provided by law) or holiday pay and are classified as “at will” employees.

### Introductory Period

Employees in their initial, one-year Introductory Period with the District; employment during this time is classified as “at will.”

### Exempt

An employee who meets the qualifications of exemption as determined by federal and state salary and duties tests are exempt from the overtime pay requirements under federal and state wage laws.

### Non-Exempt

An employee who is non-exempt from the overtime pay requirements under federal and state law is paid an hourly wage and entitled to overtime for hours worked over 40 per week, at a minimum. The District also pays non-exempt employees overtime for time actually worked by the employee outside of their normal shift.

### **Introductory Period**

The first year of employment from the most recent date of hire is considered an Introductory Period for all employees. An employee’s employment during the Introductory Period is classified as being “at will,” meaning the District may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without “cause,” and with or without prior notice.

The work of new employees is monitored closely during the Introductory Period. A decision is made prior to the end of the Introductory Period regarding continued employment. The District may elect to extend the Introductory Period if it determines that circumstances have not yet provided an adequate opportunity to evaluate performance, the employee is

on a Performance Improvement Plan, or the circumstances otherwise warrant such extension. The District shall conduct performance evaluations of each Introductory Period employee in line with the practices outlined in the Performance Evaluations section of this Handbook.

Upon satisfactory completion of the first six months of the Introductory Period, an employee may be eligible for a merit increase, at the sole discretion of the General Manager. Introductory Period employees may begin using their accrued sick leave as it is earned, in accordance with the District's Sick Leave policy. Employees may begin using their accrued vacation leave after the first six months of employment. Please see these respective policies for further information.

Upon satisfactory completion of the Introductory Period, an employee becomes a regular employee of the District. All employees, regardless of classification, status, or length of service, are expected to meet and maintain District standards for job performance and behavior.

### **Job Descriptions**

Each budgeted position in the District's organizational structure will be described in writing by a job description. Each employee when hired will be provided with a copy of the job description for their position. Additionally, when an employee changes positions, the employee will be provided with a copy of the job description covering the new position. At a minimum, job descriptions will typically include:

- ◆ Position title
- ◆ FLSA Status
- ◆ Title of immediate supervisor
- ◆ Titles of positions supervised, if any
- ◆ A brief summary of the major objectives of the job
- ◆ Examples of essential duties and responsibilities
- ◆ Desired qualifications with respect to previous experience and special knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the essential functions of the position

### **Employee Personnel Files**

The District maintains personnel records for all employees. The confidentiality of personnel records is respected within the District; however, some of the information

contained in personnel files may constitute discoverable public records under the Public Records Disclosure Act (Chapter 42.17 RCW) and the District therefore cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality of these records.

Those personnel records which are exempt from the Public Records Disclosure Act will be available to members of the management team, on a need-to-know basis, but otherwise will not be released without an employee's prior written consent.

During the year, written citations for excellence or for corrective action may be prepared by your supervisor for your personnel file. Such citations may be used for the consideration of commendation, promotion, personnel or corrective action, and/or termination of employment.

### Access to Personnel Files

Employees may examine their personnel file at the District office by making an appointment with Human Resources to view such personnel file at a mutually convenient time. Supervised viewing of employee files is restricted to the Human Resources office. The employee may be permitted to make copies of the information contained in their personnel file, but may not at any time remove, request, or require the removal of any documents contained in the personnel file. The employee may submit a written rebuttal to any of the information included in the personnel file, which will also be maintained within the file. The District reserves the sole right to maintain its employees' personnel files in a manner that it deems fit and reasonable.

### Change in Personal Information

To keep these records complete and up to date, it is essential that all employees, including those on medical leave of absence, notify Human Resources of any changes to the following information within 30 days of said change:

- 💧 Name
- 💧 Marital Status
- 💧 Change in number of dependents
- 💧 Emergency Contact
- 💧 Change in number of tax exemptions
- 💧 Change in direct deposit
- 💧 Change in beneficiary
- 💧 Job-related physical or other limitations that impact employment
- 💧 Newly earned certifications or documentations of additional training
- 💧 Change in Driver's License or CDL status
- 💧 Notification of misdemeanor or felony convictions

- 💧 Traffic-related infractions that may affect the employee's eligibility to drive as part of their job or as required for CDL
- 💧 Other information having a bearing on employment

Certain change requests should be made electronically in Caselle in the Leave Requests section:

- 💧 Address
- 💧 Phone Number(s)

### **Employment of Relatives**

To promote fair employment practices and to avoid the reality or appearance of improper influence, favor, or conflict of interest, the District discourages the practice of hiring a relative of, or individuals involved in a dating or cohabitating relationship with, a regular employee of the District.

Such a person will not be hired as a regular District employee under any of the following circumstances:

- 💧 Where one of the parties would have authority (or practical power) to supervise, appoint, remove, or discipline the other.
- 💧 Where one party would handle confidential material that creates improper or inappropriate access to that material by the other.
- 💧 Where one party would be responsible for auditing the work of the other or performing any payroll or benefits determination for the other.
- 💧 Where both parties would report to the same immediate supervisor.
- 💧 Where other circumstances might lead to potential conflict among the parties or conflict between the interest of one or both parties and the best interests of the District.
- 💧 Where one of the parties is a policy-level official of the District.

For the same reasons and for reasons of confidentiality, the District will not hire a close relative of a policy-level official of any agency or organization currently dealing with the District or which could be reasonably expected to deal with the District in the future.

Existing employees will not be transferred or appointed to any position where the employee would enter a workplace relationship not permitted for new employees under

this policy. However, the General Manager may approve such appointment or transfer when it is deemed by the General Manager to be in the best interest of the District and not likely to result in an actual conflict of interest.

When a real or potential conflict of interest occurs between employees due to nepotism or fraternization, the District, in the District's sole discretion, may transfer or terminate one of the employees.

## **Separation of Employment**

Separation of employment may be either voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary termination includes resignations, retirements, and layoffs due to work or staff reductions. Involuntary separation is a termination by the District. Employees who resign or retire in lieu of termination will not be eligible for rehire, sick leave payout, or other retirement benefits.

### Resignation

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to end employment with the District. To facilitate a smooth transition out of the organization, the District requests it be notified as soon as possible and encourages separating employees to provide a minimum of two weeks' notice in writing. Human Resources will confirm all written notices in writing within 24 hours whenever possible.

Employees who do not provide advance notice or fail to work the remaining two weeks may be ineligible for rehire.

### Retirement

Pursuant to Resolution No. B-1474, the District requests that it be provided written notification of retirement from the District two years prior to retirement or, if such notice is not possible due to unforeseen or emergency circumstances, as soon as reasonably possible.

Employees who were hired prior to January 01, 2023, who provide their two-year intent to retire notification must also submit in writing their intention to accept their final accrued but unused sick leave time as one lump sum payout or to remain on the District's payroll and receive their sick leave cash out in regular installments based on the employee's regular rate of pay, as allowed in Resolution B-1474. For more information on B-1474 and sick leave payout provisions for retirees, please see the designated section below.

### Job Abandonment

Unless on approved leave, employees who fail to report to work or contact their supervisor for three consecutive workdays are considered to have abandoned their position without notice, effective at the end of their normal shift on the third day. Supervisors must notify



Human Resources at the expiration of the third workday so to initiate the paperwork to terminate the employment relationship. Employees who are separated due to job abandonment are ineligible for rehire.

### Involuntary Termination

Employees who successfully complete their Introductory Period are classified as regular employees. Regular employees are not considered to be employed “at will,” and as such will be terminated only for just cause, to be determined on a case-by-case basis. More information on the disciplinary process can be found in the Corrective and Disciplinary Actions section of this Handbook.

### Layoff or Reduction in Force

In certain circumstances, the District in its discretion may separate an employee’s or group of employees’ employment due to a reduction in force or lack of work. Employees subject to a layoff and/or reduction in force are considered to have voluntarily separated employment and will generally be eligible for, but not guaranteed, rehire.

### Return of District Property

An employee whose employment with the District is separated for any reason is required to return all District property in the employee’s possession, including but not limited to all District keys, technology, clothing provided by the District, equipment, etc., to their immediate supervisor or Human Resources prior to leaving the District. All District property must be returned in good condition, normal wear and tear expected.

### Exit Interviews

Employees who leave the District may be requested to participate in an exit interview with Human Resources and/or General Manager. The purpose of the exit interview is to help the District gain valuable insight and feedback. The information provided may be used to help the District evaluate the current processes and allow for future improvements.

The subjects to be covered on or prior to the employee’s last day of employment include:

- 💧 Final paycheck and payout eligibility for vacation and sick leave
- 💧 Mailing address verification for W-2 information
- 💧 Review of benefits status and COBRA
- 💧 Return of all District property
- 💧 Opportunity for to discuss the reason(s) for leaving and provide constructive feedback designed to improve the District

### Final Payment of Wages for Separating Employees

Employees whose employment has been terminated, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, shall be paid for all hours worked up to the date of termination at the next regularly scheduled payday.

### Vacation Leave Payout for Separating Employees

Separating employees will be paid 100 percent of their accrued but unused vacation leave on the next regularly scheduled pay day following the effective date of the employee's termination at their regular rate of pay, in accordance with the District's normal payroll practices and schedule.

If an employee fails to provide a two weeks' notice of resignation, the employee will forfeit the payment of accrued but unused vacation leave.

Employees who have not successfully completed their Introductory Period are not entitled to accrued vacation leave payout.

### Sick Leave Payout for Separating Employees

Separating employees who were hired after January 01, 2023 will receive a percentage of their accrued sick leave at their current rate of pay based on their years of service, provided they have successfully completed their Introductory Period. The schedule can be found in the Sick Leave section of this Handbook.

Separating employees who were hired prior to January 01, 2023 will not be paid for accrued but unused sick leave unless the employee meets the criteria for retirement. Please see the next section for more information on retiree sick pay.

### Resolution B-1479 – Sick Leave Provisions for Retirees

Provided that an employee has given at least two years written notice of their intent to retire and were hired prior to January 01, 2023, Resolution B-1479 allows an employee within two years of their retirement, upon approval from the General Manager, to convert accrued but unused sick leave benefits which exceed 480 hours into vacation leave, at the rate of one vacation hour for every two sick leave hours.

Sick leave converted into vacation leave under this policy may be used over a two-year period at the rate of seven and one half (7 ½) days per year in addition to the employee's regular vacation leave.

Within 90 days of an employee's retirement, the General Manager may, in the General Manager's sole discretion, authorize the employee to use any accrued sick leave, if convenient to the District and to the employee.

At the time of retirement, all accrued sick leave up to 480 hours shall be paid to the employee at their current hourly rate of pay. The employee may elect to receive this payment in one lump sum as of the designated retirement date or to remain on the District's payroll and to receive the sick leave cash out in regular installments based on the employee's normal rate of pay. Any sick leave in excess of 480 hours as of the retirement date shall be paid to the employee at a 2:1 ratio (two sick leave hours for one paid hour) at the current hourly rate of pay.

#### Post Separation Health Benefits

Health insurance coverage terminates on the last day of the month in which the employee's employment is separated. Employees will be required to pay their share, if applicable, of any medical or dental premiums through the end of the month. Separating employees may be eligible to continue coverage under the District group health plans, at their expense, under the Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act (COBRA); COBRA information will be provided by the District's third-party administrator at the time of separation.

#### Rehire

Only former employees who ended their employment in good standing will be considered for rehire. An application should be submitted to Human Resources; the candidate must meet all minimum qualifications and requirements for the position. However, an offer of reemployment is not guaranteed.

A rehired employee will not retain former seniority and will be given a new service start date. The only exception to this policy shall be for separation due to military service. In such cases, credit will be given for the length of past employment.

#### Ineligibility for Rehire

A candidate or employee who is involuntarily terminated or who resigns in lieu of termination will be ineligible for rehire.

#### Employment References

All employment reference requests will be processed through Human Resources. Any employee who is contacted for reference information regarding a current or former District employee must forward that request to Human Resources. As a general business practice, a signed release authorizing the release of employment information is preferred. As allowed by state law, the District will respond in good faith to direct questions from prospective employers. Information given may include dates of employment, positions and dates held, and rehire eligibility. In cases where a separation agreement may be in place, the District will follow the terms of the agreement unless otherwise required by law.

## **WORKPLACE CONDUCT**

### **General Code of Conduct**

The achievement of the District's goals to provide clean, reliable drinking water and excellent customer service to our customers is dependent upon teamwork between all employees of the District. Because professionalism, respect, and support are key ingredients to success, significant importance is placed upon promoting ideas aimed at achieving and maintaining the spirit of teamwork and cooperation among staff.

People working together must abide by certain rules of conduct to maintain good, healthy working relationships. The District relies on good judgement and a sense of responsibility as the principal sources of guidance for conducting day-to-day activities and has adopted rules governing employee behavior, some of which are referred to elsewhere in this Handbook. Conduct that is dishonest, immoral, illegal, or disruptive to the operation of the District will not be tolerated. It is impossible to list all examples of misconduct. Employees are expected to conduct themselves as a responsible adult and good citizen.

Employees who engage in unacceptable conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The District reserves the right to be the sole judge of an employee's conduct on the job. Examples of unacceptable conduct can include, but are not limited to:

- 💧 Theft, unauthorized use, abuse, misuse, or destruction of any property belonging to the District, an employee of the District, or any job site.
- 💧 Possession of firearms, other weapons, or explosives on District premises or property or in District vehicles.
- 💧 Violation of District policies (e.g., Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policy, Drug and Alcohol Policy, or other policy).
- 💧 Misrepresenting or withholding pertinent facts in securing and maintaining District employment.
- 💧 Unauthorized release of private or confidential information.
- 💧 Failure to report defective work or an attempt to cover up defective work.
- 💧 Failure to properly secure District facilities or property.
- 💧 Poor workmanship, neglect of duties, willful or deliberate restriction of work output, abusive use of tools or supplies, or causing them to be discarded due to carelessness.

- 💧 Intentional falsification of records or paperwork required in the transaction of District business, including timesheets; or any other acts of dishonesty or deceit.
- 💧 Inability, inefficiency, negligence, or insubordination, including a refusal or failure to perform assigned work except when unsafe conditions exist or when performing assigned task would be in violation of federal, state, or local law.
- 💧 Violation of safety rules, including failure to observe safety practices and instructions or wear required PPE; negligence that results in injury to others.
- 💧 Failure to timely report to the immediate supervisor an on-the-job injury or accident involving an employee, equipment, property, or visitor.
- 💧 Absence without proper notification, excessive absenteeism, habitual tardiness.
- 💧 Threats or acts of violence, intimidation, or harassment.
- 💧 Inappropriate or unprofessional communication, both verbal and non-verbal, including berating, belittling, bullying, or cursing of another employee, in the workplace or while representing the District.
- 💧 Wasting time or loitering during work hours, or leaving the work area or stopping work early without the permission of a supervisor; sleeping while on the job.
- 💧 Other violations of specific policies

While this information may help in providing guidance for employee actions, it is, again, illustrative only. The District retains the discretion to implement disciplinary action as it deems appropriate under the circumstances. Employees are urged to use reasonable judgment and to seek supervisor advice in doubtful or unclear situations.

### **Personal Conduct**

All employees are representatives of the District during work hours or whenever they are in uniform and should conduct themselves in a professional, ethical manner. During any on-the-job contact with the public, employees are required to be polite, pleasant, and neat in appearance. When an employee feels they may be losing control of their temper, they should refer the matter to their supervisor immediately. The District will not tolerate the use of offensive language or gestures by its employees. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Employees are prohibited from having any monetary interest whatsoever, whether directly or indirectly, in any contract, purchase of materials or equipment, or activity paid for with

District funds. Employees are further prohibited from selling or bartering anything of value to or from the District or to or from a contractor supplying labor or materials to the District. Any such sale or barter must be immediately reported to the General Manager or to the Board of Commissioners.

Employees may not accept or solicit, directly or on behalf of others, any service from any person, firm, or corporation having dealings of any kind with the District. An employee may not accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, favor, loan, entertainment, or other thing of monetary value of any kind from any person, firm, or corporation having dealings with the District when such acceptance would conflict or make the appearance of a conflict with the performance of the employee's duties.

A conflict or appearance of a conflict shall be deemed to exist whenever a reasonable and prudent person would believe that such was given for the purpose of obtaining special consideration or influence. If an employee is given or offered any gift, favor, loan, or thing of value of any kind which could be reasonably construed to cause a conflict of interest, the employee must immediately report such activity to the General Manager or to the Board of Commissioners. The failure to report a potential conflict of interest will be grounds for disciplinary action.

### **Recommendations of Contractors, Vendors, or Suppliers**

On occasion, District employees may be asked by its customers to recommend a contractor, vendor, or supplier. It is the policy of the District not to make such recommendations to ensure equal treatment for, and lack of favoritism towards, any contractor, vendor, or supplier.

Notwithstanding this policy, the District may maintain and/or update lists of contractors or vendors that make themselves available for providing water system-related labor, services, and/or materials. The District's inclusion of any contractor, vendor, or supplier on such a list does not constitute an endorsement of or comment about that contractor, vendor, or supplier. Any such list prepared by the District shall include a notation or legend that disclaims any endorsement of the listed contractors, vendors, or suppliers by the District.

If asked for a recommendation of a contractor, vendor, or supplier, you should advise the customer it is the District's policy not to make any recommendations of contractors, vendors, or suppliers. To the extent a list of contractors, vendors, or suppliers has been compiled by the District, you may instruct the customer to contact the District office to receive a copy of such list with the understanding the list is not a recommendation of or comment about the listed contractors, vendors, or suppliers.

## **Non-Solicitation**

It is the District's objective to provide a comfortable work environment that allows employees to complete their tasks with the least amount of interruptions or disruptions. Accordingly, non-employees are not allowed to come upon the District's premises for the purpose of any form of solicitation or literature distribution. This policy is to restrain third parties or strangers from soliciting or handing out materials for political, union, charitable, or similar activities.

Employees are prohibited from distributing any form of literature or other materials in their work area and are also prohibited from soliciting for any cause during their assigned working time.

## **Outside Employment**

Employees may engage in outside employment only to the extent that it does not interfere with the performance of their duties for the District or otherwise produce a conflict of interest. To avoid even the appearance of a conflict, employees are generally prohibited from performing work involving or impacting or providing consultant services regarding the District's water systems.

A violation of this policy should be immediately reported to the General Manager; provided, if the General Manager is the alleged violator, such violation should be reported to the presiding officer of the Board of Commissioners.

## **Disclosure of Information**

No District employee may disclose confidential information gained by reasons of the employee's position, except in the exercise of the District's Whistleblower Protection procedures. Employees may not use confidential information for personal gain or benefit.

## **News Releases and Media Relations**

The currently appointed spokesperson for the District is the General Manager. News releases and press statements representing District policy, positions, and information are approved in advance by the General Manager or the General Manager's designee. The General Manager has overall authority and responsibility to ensure dissemination of public information and is responsible for responding to the news media when information is requested. Employees should refer all inquiries from the news media to the General Manager unless the employee has been directed to do otherwise.

## **Confidentiality**

District employees have access to highly confidential and proprietary information, including information about the District. Examples include information about customers, financial positions, employees, human resources records, payroll records, legal documents, and business plan data. This information belongs to the District and is accessible to employees through the course of their employment at the District. It may not be copied, reproduced, or disseminated by District employees except in the course of their normal business duties, for District purposes only.

### Customers

The District's customers trust us with confidential information. Disclosing this information without authorization would have a materially adverse impact on the District's integrity and on the District's relationships with its customers. Employees may not disclose any information pertaining to the District or its customers without prior explicit approval of their manager or the General Manager.

No District records or information including, without limitation, documents, files, records, computer files, and similar materials may be removed from the District's premises without permission from the General Manager except in the ordinary course of performing duties on behalf of the District. Additionally, the contents of the District records or information otherwise obtained in regard to business may not be disclosed to anyone except where required for a business purpose.

Employees are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for revealing confidential information. The exception to the above policy is when disclosure is required by laws such as the Public Records Act RCW 42.56 or by court order.

### Employees

The District recognizes its employees' right to privacy. In achieving this goal, the District adopts these basic principles:

- 💧 The collection of employee information will be limited to information the District needs for business and legal purposes.
- 💧 The confidentiality of all personnel information in the District's records will be maintained except when otherwise required by law. Notwithstanding the foregoing, personnel information may be shared between District supervisors on a need-to-know basis.
- 💧 Internal access to employee records will be limited to those employees having an authorized, business-related need-to-know. Access may also be given to third parties, including government agencies, because of a court order or subpoena as well as requested and processed under the Public Records Act RCW 42.56.



- 💧 The District will generally decline to release personal information to outside sources without written approval unless otherwise legally required to do so. Verifications of employment dates and position title may be provided without written approval.
- 💧 All employees involved in recordkeeping will be required to follow these policies and practices. Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Employee Communications**

District management is committed to keeping its employees current with job-related information. Since communication is a two-way street, it is also each employee's responsibility to try to stay informed. The District welcomes employee feedback, suggestions, and opinions, and seeks open and honest communication between employees and management.

## **WORKPLACE POLICIES**

### **Appearance and Work Attire**

Employees are expected to dress neatly and appropriately for the type of work they are doing, and to present a positive, professional image of the District to the public.

Overly casual attire is not appropriate for the office environment. Clothing should be maintained in good condition and as the work environment permits, clean and free from tears, holes, and visible stains. Clothing should be comfortable and not restrict the employee from physically performing their work. Shoes should fit snugly to the foot (no flip flops) and be professional in appearance.

Safety-related clothing and accessories such as boots, vests, hard hats, and other personal protective equipment will be worn when safety policies, procedures, practices, or guidelines require it, when it is warranted, or when it is required by a supervisor.

All field staff are required to wear District-identifying clothing and to have their identification cards available to customers for verification. For security reasons, employees should not allow anyone to use their District-provided clothing.

All employees should ensure their personal hygiene does not offend others and does not detract from providing high quality service. When using fragrances, employees should be aware of others who are sensitive to odors and limit their use of fragrances, after shave, scented lotions and hand creams, and related products.

Because appropriate attire is determined by the nature of work performed, employees are expected to dress according to the requirements of their positions as determined by their respective supervisor. If a supervisor feels an employee's attire is inappropriate, they may ask the employee to return home to change into appropriate attire before continuing their workday. Employees who are sent home will not be compensated for the time away from work. Employees are encouraged to consult their supervisor if they have questions as to what constitutes appropriate attire.

The District complies with federal, state, and local safety requirements and anti-discrimination laws and will make reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities and employees whose religious beliefs and practices require accommodation.

## **Uniform Policy**

It is important for our staff to be clearly identifiable as representatives of Lakewood Water District to the public we serve. Therefore, in accordance with Resolution No. B-1267, the District provides an annual allowance or stipend for each employee for appropriate and/or necessary uniform or safety items as outlined in the District's Uniform Policy.

The basic parameters are as follows:

### Annual Stipend Amounts

#### Current Field Employees:

- Stipend Amount: \$500.00
- Items may include:
  - Uniform shirts, tee-shirts, sweatshirts, safety shirts
  - Jackets
  - Rubber Boots
  - ANSI-approved steel- or composite-toed work boots
  - Rain gear
  - Overalls
  - Coveralls
  - Workpants

#### New Field Employees:

- Stipend Amount: \$300.00, upon approval
- Items may include:
  - ANSI-approved steel- or composite-toed work boots
  - ANSI-approved rain gear, high-visibility only
  - Rubber boots

- 💧 Office-based Employees:
  - Stipend Amount: \$150.00
  - Items may include:
    - Uniform shirts, tee-shirts, sweatshirts, vests, jackets
  
- 💧 Management Employees:
  - Stipend Amount: \$150.00
  - Items may include:
    - Field or Office Employee items as listed above
    - Specialty shirts

Consult Human Resources for more details. The District's full Uniform Policy can be found in the HR Library on SharePoint.

## **District Property**

### General Use of District Property

All District property, equipment, and services shall be used exclusively for District purposes. Employees shall not use the premises, vehicles, equipment, or tools of the District for personal purposes at any time. Any violation of this policy must be reported immediately to the General Manager or other member of senior management, unless the General Manager or senior management staff is the alleged violator of this policy, in which case the violation should be reported to the presiding officer of the Board of Commissioners. A found violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

### Operation of District Vehicles

The District provides vehicles to allow employees to drive on District business and reimburses employees for business use of personal vehicles according to the guidelines below.

Employees operating their own vehicle for District business must carry automobile liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage per Washington State minimum requirements as currently set forth in Chapters 46.29 and 46.30 RCW as may be amended from time to time. Employees should consult with their personal insurance agent to determine whether a special endorsement for Business Use is appropriate or necessary in connection with their use of their personal vehicle for District business. Employees must provide the District with proof of insurance upon initial employment and/or assumption of driving duties and periodically thereafter as requested by the District.

Employees may not drive any vehicles for District business without prior approval of their supervisor. Non-employee, non-business passengers are prohibited from riding in District vehicles or in the employee's personal vehicle while on District business without prior approval from the General Manager.

Employees must not drive and must promptly notify their immediate supervisor and/or request accommodation when any physical or mental impairment causes the employee to be unable to drive safely. This prohibition includes but is not limited to circumstances in which the employee is temporarily unable to operate a vehicle safely or legally because of injury, illness, or medication. In the case of medication, an employee should consult with the employee's medical treatment provider or pharmacist to determine whether the medication may impact or impair the employee's ability to safely operate a vehicle and must promptly notify their immediate supervisor if the medication impairs the employee's ability to safely drive.

Employees who are on call and respond to after-hours call outs will be provided a District vehicle so they can respond to emergency call outs.

Employees who drive a vehicle on District business must exercise due diligence, drive safely and without distraction, and maintain the security of the vehicle and its contents. As required by Washington State law, seat belts must always be worn while driving or riding in a District vehicle or on District business.

Employees are strictly prohibited from using cellular phones while operating a motor vehicle, including talking, texting, emailing, and web browsing. Employees should safely pull over prior to using a cell phone for any purpose.

Employees must report any accident, theft, or damage involving a District vehicle or the employee's personal vehicle to their supervisor if such accident, theft, or damage occurs while the employee is using the vehicle for District business purposes, regardless of the extent of damage or lack of injuries. Such reports must be made as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours after the incident. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with authorities in the event of an accident.

Employees are prohibited from operating any District vehicle at any time or operate any personal vehicle while on District business while using, consuming, or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The District has a zero-tolerance policy prohibiting operators of vehicles from drinking alcohol or consuming illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on District time or conducting business. Please refer to the District's Drug and Alcohol policy.

#### Driver's License Requirements

Employees operating a District vehicle or their own vehicle for District business are required to have and maintain a valid Washington State Driver's License.

Employees who drive on District business are required to promptly inform their supervisor of any changes that may affect either their legal ability to drive or their continued insurability. If an employee's license is revoked, suspended, lost, or is in any other way not current or valid or in the employee's possession, the employee must notify their supervisor and Human Resources. Notifications of a change in status must be made by the end of the next business day following the receipt of the notice of the suspension, cancellation, loss of privilege, disqualification, or requirement to use an ignition interlock device. Employees will be suspended from driving duties until proof of a valid Washington State driver's license is provided to Human Resources.

Employees may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, if they fail to notify their supervisor and Human Resources by the next business day of a change in driver's license status or the duration of license suspension, revocation, or inability to drive which affects their prolonged ability to perform the essential functions of their position.

Any driving infractions or fines that are incurred as a result of an employee's driving are the responsibility of the driver.

For employees who drive on District business, the District reserves the right to periodically verify such employee holds a valid driver's license and to request from the employee and/or appropriate governing agency a copy of the employee's current driving abstract (Motor Vehicle Report).

#### Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Requirements

Employees who hold a CDL are required by law to notify their supervisor and Human Resources within two business days if their license is suspended, revoked, or canceled, or if they are disqualified from driving. Employees are also required to report, in writing within 30 business days, any convictions for any moving traffic violations. This is true no matter what type of vehicle an employee was driving, including their personal vehicle. Employees who receive an out-of-state traffic conviction are also required to notify the Department of Licensing. The required report form can be obtained from Human Resources.

Loss of an employee's CDL may impact their ability to perform the essential functions of their position where a CDL is required. Employees should understand that some infractions obtained while driving their personal vehicle may impact their ability to maintain their CDL. For instance, employees cannot drive a commercial vehicle if they are required to have an interlock device on all vehicles they drive. For more information about situations that will impact the status of an employee's CDL please refer to the Washington State Commercial Driver Guide available at [www.dol.wa.gov](http://www.dol.wa.gov) or call the FMCSA Information Line at 1-800-832-5660.

Employees who fail to notify their supervisor and Human Resources of a CDL status change, according to the requirement above, or loss of a CDL where it is required by the position, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees who hold a CDL must pass a Department of Transportation (DOT) physical and carry a medical examiner's certificate at all times when driving. The medical examiner's certificate must be renewed every two years and a copy given to Human Resources for the employee's driver qualification file.

The District recognizes the importance of allowing employees opportunities to maintain their skill set and safety awareness when operating CDL vehicles. The District will pay for the required medical certification/physical and CDL license fee for employees who hold a CDL and who choose to maintain their CDL.

The District will obtain each CDL driver's motor vehicle record (MVR) at least once every 12 months. Please see the Commercial Driver's License section of this Handbook for more information related to CDL holders.

### Securing District Vehicles

Precautions must be followed when using District vehicles. Employees who have exited a vehicle to perform a routine task, e.g., turning valves, must keep the operating vehicle within their sight at all times. If the vehicle is not within sight, it must remain off, locked, and keys secured by the employee. Please see the District's Vehicle and Equipment Security Policy for a detailed description regarding this topic.

### Mileage Reimbursement

Employees who use their personal vehicle for approved business purposes will receive a mileage allowance equal to the Internal Revenue Service optional mileage allowance for such usage. This allowance is to compensate for the cost of gasoline, oil, depreciation, and insurance, including any deductible obligations. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the District provides a District vehicle but the employee chooses to use the employee's personal vehicle in lieu of the District vehicle, mileage for the employee's personal vehicle use will not be reimbursed.

## **Technology Usage**

### General Usage

The District's technology systems are the exclusive property of the District, and the use thereof should be limited to District business and purposes. Occasional personal use of District equipment and systems will be allowed so long as such use occurs during non-work time, is not excessive, does not interfere with the employee's or others' work duties, and otherwise does not violate any District policy or work rule.

Unacceptable and/or inappropriate non-work-related activities, including the downloading, viewing, or sending of insulting, disruptive, offensive, derogatory, profane, or discriminatory messages are strictly prohibited. Examples of forbidden transmissions include, but are not limited to:

- 💧 Sexually explicit messages, cartoons, or jokes
- 💧 Sexual propositions or love letters
- 💧 Ethnic or racial slurs
- 💧 Any other message that can be construed to be harmful to morale, harassment, or disparagement of others based on their gender, race, age, national origin, religion, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, disability, or any other class protected by law

All system passwords and encryption keys must be made available to the District. Employees are prohibited from generating unauthorized passwords or encryption keys on their computers. The creation of unauthorized password-protected files will be grounds for disciplinary action, and any files protected by unauthorized password or encryption keys will be subject to review by the District. Employees are further prohibited from using others' authorized passwords or keys encryption to gain access to files to which the employee has not been given access.

Using District owned and/or provided equipment, supplies, and programs to solicit outside business ventures for personal, political, or religious uses is strictly prohibited.

There is a real possibility of infecting our systems with viruses, which could render our system inoperable and/or destroy District data. Therefore, no software or files including but not limited to shareware, freeware, patches, or demos are to be downloaded without prior written permission from the IT Manager or General Manager.

Any abuse of the privilege to access and use the District's electronic systems may result in immediate loss of such privilege and may result in disciplinary action.

The District's Technology Usage Policy can be found in the HR Library on SharePoint.

#### Personal Phone Calls and Text Messages

The District realizes that employees may need to make and receive personal phone calls or text messages while at work. Such calls and texts should be held to a minimum and should not interfere with an employee's productivity or cause a disruption in the workplace or for coworkers.

Unauthorized use of phones, including long distance charges to the District, is discouraged with the exception of emergency situations. From time to time, the District monitors incoming and outgoing phone usage.

Personal cell phones should be set to a low volume setting or vibrate to minimize disruption to others. Personal cell phone calls and text messages should generally be limited to meal and rest breaks to the greatest extent possible.

Employees who have excessive personal phone usage may be subject to disciplinary action.

### Personal Photocopies

Personal use of the District's photocopiers is limited and employees must pay for any personal photocopies, at a rate of ten cents per page, payable to the District.

### Monitoring Systems

The District takes the safety of its employees and facilities seriously. In order to protect District property, promote security, and protect the health, welfare, and safety of District employees and visitors, the District uses video surveillance and electronic monitoring equipment on District property and in its buildings as permitted by law.

Systems in place include, but are not limited to:

- 💧 Video monitoring systems
- 💧 Computer usage monitoring
- 💧 Telephone, email, and internet usage logs
- 💧 Building access control
- 💧 Motion sensor alarms

While monitoring systems are in place for the District and the employees' protection and use, there are occasions where electronic systems fail. Employees should not rely on any one system to be effective and to be recording or monitoring 100% of the time.

### Privacy

The District respects the individual privacy of its employees; however all employees should understand and be aware they have no right to or expectation of privacy regarding the use of District technologies of any type. The District may monitor the electronic usage of its employees from time to time, including email and text communications and internet histories, in its sole discretion.

This is particularly true because, as a public entity, the District is governed by the Washington State Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW, and has a legal obligation to



maintain and release upon request written and electronic documents and data that constitute a “public record” and are not otherwise exempt from public disclosure.

As a public employee, you should assume that email messages, other electronic communications, and documents created or received on District compute systems may be considered a public record subject to disclosure or discovery in the event of litigation.

All information stored on and/or transmitted by District-provided equipment, supplies, and programs always remain the exclusive property of the District, and the District may monitor and review such information at any time.

## **Performance Evaluations**

It is the District’s general policy to conduct performance evaluations on a quarterly basis to provide routine check-in times with the employee to monitor and assist with the employee’s success and progress. Regular performance evaluations provide the employee and the supervisor with an opportunity to discuss the key elements of performance management: clarity of expectations, goals, feedback, support, and resources. Employees are encouraged to use their quarterly check-in to address any employment-related issue or concern they may have.

Performance evaluations will be scheduled by the District in its sole discretion. The District may schedule additional performance evaluations for employees as the District deems necessary. Participation in these performance evaluations is a mandatory term and condition of employment and an employee’s refusal to participate in a performance evaluation as required by the District shall result in disciplinary action. The performance evaluation is part of an employee’s personnel record. Employees will receive a copy of their evaluations upon request.

In addition to performance evaluations, the District may use performance improvement plans (PIPs) when an employee’s performance is deficient and/or requires improvement, as part of the District’s progressive discipline process.

## **COMPENSATION POLICIES**

### **Hours of Work**

#### **Workweek**

The District’s general office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The District’s workweek commences Friday at 12:00 p.m. and ends on the following Friday at 11:59 a.m.

## Work Schedules

Unless otherwise stated, our normal work schedule for full-time employees consists of eight hours per day, 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday. The normal work schedule for part-time employees is typically 30 hours divided over five days but may vary according to the needs of the District and the availability of the employee. Specific schedules vary by department and shall be determined by the General Manager, in consultation with the applicable supervisor, based on operational considerations.

All employees are expected to report to work on time and be ready and prepared to begin work at the start of their workday. Employees may not report to work earlier or stay later without specific advance approval of their supervisor. Employees are expected to be on time and work their assigned schedule.

## **Meal and Rest Breaks**

Full-time office-based employees typically receive one unpaid, prescheduled 60-minute meal break, while full-time field-based employees typically receive one unpaid, prescheduled 30-minute meal break. If an employee is working five or more hours during a scheduled workday, a meal break of at least 30-minutes must be taken. Additionally, if an employee works three or more hours longer than the normal work schedule, the employee will receive an additional 30-minute unpaid meal period.

In addition to meal periods, employees working four or more hours daily earn paid 15-minute rest breaks for each four-hour period worked each day, for a total of 30 minutes during the normal work schedule.

Employees are expected to take their breaks during assigned times, unless their supervisor has determined that the employee's job duties are such that they can take intermittent breaks throughout the workday that total at least 15 minutes for every four hours worked.

## **Lactation Breaks and Accommodation**

The District will provide a reasonable amount of break time to accommodate an employee desiring to express breast milk for the employee's infant child, for up to one year following the child's birth. Employees needing breaks for lactation purposes may use ordinary paid rest breaks and may take another reasonable break time when needed. If possible, the lactation break time should run concurrently with scheduled meal and rest breaks already provided to the employee. For non-exempt employees, if the lactation break time cannot run concurrently with meal and rest breaks already provided or additional time is needed for the employee, the lactation break time will be unpaid.

Employees will be relieved of all work-related duties during any unpaid break. Where unpaid breaks or additional time are required, employees should work with their supervisor

or Human Resources regarding scheduling and reporting the extra break time. Where state law imposes more specific requirements regarding the break time or lactation accommodation, the District will comply with those requirements.

The District will provide employees needing to express breast milk with the use of a room or a private area, other than a bathroom or toilet stall, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public. This location may be the employee's private office, if applicable.

Employees should discuss with their supervisor or Human Resources the location for storage of expressed milk. In addition, employees should contact their supervisor or Human Resources during their pregnancy or before their return to work to identify the need for a lactation area.

## **Flexible Work Schedules**

### Alternative Work Schedules (AWS)

The General Manager may implement work schedules and/or a workweek other than the normal workweek or schedule identified above. These "alternative work schedules" may include, by way of example but not as an exhaustive list, adjusting the field employees' normal start and stop times for winter or summer work, or adopting work schedules other than the traditional eight-hour workday, 40-hour workweek. Non-traditional work schedules might include 4/10s or 9/80s. In such cases, the affected employees will receive advance notice of their new schedule and/or workweek arrangement.

All paid leave benefits accrue at the same defined rate for all eligible employees in proportion to a traditional 40-hour workweek. Leave will be credited against the employee's applicable leave accruals consistent with the time off taken. For example, if an employee takes sick leave on a scheduled nine-hour day, nine hours will be charged to the employee's sick leave balance.

With respect to holidays and floating holidays, non-exempt employees on an alternative work schedule will continue to receive eight hours of paid leave. For holidays, the employee may use accrued vacation leave to supplement the difference between the holiday leave and the employee's total workday, may request to make up the time, may elect to take leave without pay or, with the approval of the General Manager, work the remaining holiday. For floating holidays, the employee may use accrued vacation leave to supplement the difference between the floating holiday leave and the employee's total workday or may request to make up the time. Bereavement and any other paid leaves are also granted based on a traditional eight-hour workday.

For purposes of overtime accrual and calculation, the alternative schedule shall be considered the employee's "normal shift," and the employee shall not receive overtime compensation for having worked over eight (8) hours in a day; rather, overtime shall only

be available to the extent that the employee works more than the employee's normal shift, e.g., working more than 10 hours on a 4/10 schedule or more than nine hours (or eight, as applicable) on a 9/80s schedule.

### Flex-Time Policy

The District may allow, in certain circumstances and in the District's sole discretion and on a pre-arranged basis, non-exempt employees the opportunity to flex their schedules and make up work time that is missed due to personal obligations or other qualifying circumstances, such as making up one hour of time for a holiday falling on a 9/80s work schedule. Employees who need to be absent from work because of a qualifying circumstance may submit a written request to make up missed work time, provided they satisfy the eligibility requirements and procedures outlined in the District's Flex-Time Policy. The policy and request form can be found in the HR Library on SharePoint.

### **Telecommuting**

Telecommuting, also called working remotely or working from home, is an informal work alternative the District may allow as an isolated, limited, or short-term arrangement for employees whose job duties may be reasonably and practicably performed remotely. Not all employees will be qualified to telecommute or will have work that can be handled effectively outside of the office or job site. It is not an employee benefit, but an alternative approach to fulfilling the District's work requirements.

All remote work arrangements must be approved by the employee's supervisor and/or General Manager in advance. Approval is granted on a case-by-case basis, depending on the particular circumstances and District's operational and business needs. Supervisors will work closely with telecommuting employees to ensure the work arrangement benefits both the District and the employee. Telecommuting arrangements may be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the General Manager. The full Telecommuting Policy can be found in the HR Library on SharePoint.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential functions of any position with the District. To operate efficiently, employees need to be at work. Absences and tardiness place a burden on other District employees and have a negative impact on the District's commitment to quality customer service.

### Reporting Absences

It is necessary for employees to report to work regularly and on time. If an employee is unable to report to work or will be late, they should contact their immediate supervisor as soon as they know they will be absent or delayed and prior to their regularly scheduled start time, except in cases of medical emergencies, in which case notice should be

provided as soon as practicable. If that supervisor is unavailable, the employee should contact the next supervisor in the chain of command. If neither of these supervisors are available, the employee should leave a message with the following information:

- 💧 Your name and time/date
- 💧 The reason for being delayed or for not being able to report to work
- 💧 The probable duration of the absence/delay
- 💧 Contact information where you can be reached upon receipt of your message

If an employee becomes ill while at work or needs to leave for some other reason before the end of the workday, they must inform their supervisor. Attendance or tardiness problems as well as failure to call in may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee who fails to report for work or to otherwise call in for three consecutive days will be deemed to have abandoned their job.

#### Attendance During Unusual Conditions

If District management declares the office officially closed due to unusual conditions, all employees who were scheduled to work will be paid for all days that the office is officially closed. Non-exempt employees who are required to report to work on such days will be paid at one-and-one-half (1½) times their normal hourly rate for all hours worked. Those employees required to work on "officially closed" days will be selected by the District's management at the management's sole discretion.

#### Attendance During Inclement Weather

The District has a responsibility to the public during times of disaster or emergency to provide, secure, and maintain water services to the extent possible. In order to carry out this responsibility, it is the policy of the District that all employees make every effort to report to work as required by their supervisor, manager, and/or the General Manager. Employees who are unable to report for work should contact their supervisor no later than one hour from their regularly scheduled start time, if possible.

If an employee is delayed due to what the General Manager has determined to be severe inclement weather, or due to conditions caused by such weather, the employee will be allowed up to one hour to report to work at the beginning of the workday, without a loss or deduction of pay or benefits.

Absences in excess of one hour will be charged against an employee's accrued but unused sick leave, if any, and then against accrued but unused vacation leave. To the extent a non-exempt employee does not have any sick leave or vacation leave, absences in excess of one hour shall be treated as leave without pay. Exempt employees who do not have accrued leave will not be charged for absences of less than a full day.

During inclement weather conditions, employees whose job duties may be reasonably and practicably performed remotely, as determined by the General Manager or the General Manager's designee, may be allowed to work from home, in accordance with the District's Telecommuting section of this Handbook.

Employees who report to work and are dismissed due to dangerous weather conditions and/or office closure, or if the General Manager authorizes employees to stay home due to dangerous weather conditions and/or office closure, the employees will be paid for their regular workday.

The General Manager may also require some employees to work overtime, work different shifts, or perform such job duties outside the scope of the employee's normal job duties until the emergency has been resolved. The General Manager may also recall employees to duty from vacation leave or scheduled time off provided such recall will not result in the employee suffering an economic loss, such as canceling airline or hotel reservations. For purposes of this policy, "economic loss" will not include costs normally considered to be personal expenses or damage that can be covered by insurance.

If any employee is called back from scheduled leave and such employee is unable to take the lost time off during the remainder of the calendar year, the employee will be allowed to carry the "lost" days over to the following calendar year. If an employee is recalled to duty by the General Manager and did not report for duty as directed without a valid reason, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

The General Manager may also authorize employee meals or temporary shelter when such is deemed to be in the best interest of the District when necessary to address emergency conditions.

#### Attendance Beyond Normal Shift

Due to the nature of our business, employees may be asked to work beyond their normal shift on some days, and possibly on some weekends, especially in case of an emergency. For safety purposes, it is the District's general standard that an employee not work more than 16 consecutive hours or more than 20 hours in a consecutive 24-hour period, without taking a rest period of at least eight hours in such 24-hour period. However, employees may be required to work in excess of this standard if an urgent or emergency situation arises, and it would be impractical to stop work or to delay or postpone finishing a project.

If an employee is sent home by the District because of work performed beyond their normal shift, and if this causes the employee not to work hours the employee normally would be scheduled to work the following day, the District shall pay the employee the employee's regular compensation for those hours of the employee's normal schedule not worked by the employee at the directive of the District. In such case, the employee shall be paid for only those hours which the employee was directed not to work by the District.

If the rest period required by the District expires before the end of the employee's normal shift, the employee shall have the option of (i) returning to work for the remainder of the shift; (ii) taking paid vacation leave for the remaining hours of the shift; or (iii) taking the remaining hours of the shift as unpaid leave; provided, that the District reserves the right to deny the employee's request to use leave if it determines that operational needs or demands require the employee's attendance at work. The compensation offered pursuant to this policy is not for "time actually worked," and is not included in any applicable overtime calculation.

By way of illustration purposes only, if an employee is called into work at 8:00 p.m. and works eight hours of overtime (ending at 4:00 a.m.) and is thereafter directed by the District not to return to work until at least 12:00 p.m., the District would pay the employee, at the employee's regular hourly rate, for the "missed" four hours of the employee's normal work schedule (commencing at 8:00 a.m.). If the employee does not wish to return to work at 12:00 p.m., and subject to the District's approval, the employee may take four hours of vacation leave or may take unpaid leave for the remainder of the shift.

## **Overtime**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Washington Minimum Wage Act (WMA) require overtime pay for non-exempt employees, at the rate of one-and-one-half (1½) times an employee's regular rate of pay for hours worked by the employee which exceed 40 hours per workweek. Due to the nature of the District's business, needs may arise from time to time calling for additional work. During these times, the District expects its employees to cooperate with extended work schedules.

The District has elected to go above and beyond the minimum overtime requirements of the FLSA and WMA. In accordance with Resolution No. B-1454, overtime will be paid as outlined below:

- a) Any time actually worked by an employee over eight hours in a workday or worked outside of the employee's normal shift hours during the regular Monday through Friday work schedule, shall be compensated at the rate of one-and-one-half (1½) times the employee's regular rate of pay.

Please note, an employee is not eligible to receive overtime pay where: (i) the employee's request to "flex" their time in accordance with the Flex-Time Policy results in the employee working outside their normal work shift or more than eight hours in a day; or (ii) the District temporarily changes or modifies an employee's normal work shift to meet operational needs. In such cases, the adjusted work shift shall be deemed to be the "normal" work schedule.

- b) The General Manager may implement work schedules other than the regular work schedule defined in this Handbook. For purposes of overtime accrual and calculation, the alternative schedule shall be considered the employee's "normal shift," and the

employee will not receive overtime compensation for having worked over eight hours in a day; rather, overtime shall only be available to the extent the employee works more than their normal shift, e.g., more than 10 hours on a 4/10 schedule.

- c) Any time actually worked by an employee on a Saturday outside of their normal work schedule shall be compensated at the rate of one-and-one-half (1½) times the employee's regular rate of pay.
- d) Any time actually worked by an employee on a Sunday outside of their normal work schedule or on a holiday observed by the District shall be compensated at the rate of two times the employee's regular rate of pay. For purposes of this policy, a holiday observed by the District shall mean the day on which the District's office is closed in observation of the holiday and the official date of the holiday itself.

If an employee is required to work on a holiday that falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the employee will be paid the higher "holiday" overtime rate but will not also be paid the additional "weekend" rate. For example, if an observed holiday falls on a Saturday, the employee will be paid at the holiday rate of two times the employee's regular rate of pay but will not also receive an additional "weekend" premium of one-and-a-half times (1½) the employee's regular rate of pay for working the Saturday.

- e) Time paid for but not actually worked (such as holidays, vacation, or sick leave) shall not count as "time actually worked" for purposes of computing the overtime premium payments set forth in this policy or otherwise required by law.
- f) The premium pay provided pursuant to the District's overtime policy shall be credited towards the District's statutory obligation to pay overtime for more than 40 hours worked in a workweek, as defined by the FLSA and WMA. The premium pay offered by the District is not "compounded" or "stacked," meaning that employees are not paid "double overtime" or "overtime plus premium pay" in any situation.

For example, if an employee works nine hours on a holiday, the employee will receive the holiday overtime rate for the nine hours but would not receive the holiday premium rate plus an additional overtime rate for the one hour worked over the eight-hour threshold.

Similarly, if an employee on a 5/8s schedule works a normal eight-hour shift Monday through Wednesday but on Thursday, works a total of 16 hours, the employee will be paid for eight regular hours and eight overtime hours. If the employee works a normal eight-hour shift on Friday, those hours will be paid at the employee's regular rate of pay.

- g) All overtime must be approved in advance and directed by the General Manager or their designee. Working overtime without such approval may be grounds for disciplinary action.



## **Timesheets**

It is the District's policy to ensure all employees are paid in an accurate and timely manner, in accordance with federal, state, and local laws, and that required reporting records and supporting documentation are managed and accessible for review as prescribed by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Washington Minimum Wage Act (WMA).

The District provides all employees, exempt and non-exempt, with an electronic timesheet. All non-exempt employees must use timesheets to accurately and timely record hours worked, as well as paid leave use. Exempt employees must use timesheets to record paid vacation, sick, and floating holiday leave use. Individual employees are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the information on their timesheets.

Employees should maintain their timesheets daily to ensure an accurate account of all hours worked, including overtime, any paid or unpaid leaves, or holiday pay. All timesheets must be submitted for management approval at the end of each pay period, no later than the end of the workday. All work time must be reported accurately, in 15-minute increments, rounded to the nearest quarter hour.

Time records are the property of the District; employees are not permitted to alter those records without the prior approval of the supervisor or General Manager. Unauthorized tampering, alteration, falsification of any time record, or completing another employee's time record, is strictly prohibited and will subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The District does not allow employees to work "off the clock."

## **Payroll Deductions**

The District may make various voluntary and involuntary payroll deductions each payday to comply with federal and state laws or pertaining to benefit elections. At the end of each calendar year, each employee will be supplied with a personalized Wage and Tax Statement (W-2) form. This statement summarizes income and deductions for the year. Questions regarding these deductions should be directed to Finance or Human Resources.

## **Pay Frequency**

The District operates on a biweekly payroll cycle.

## **Compensation Philosophy**

The District values quality employees and is committed to attracting and retaining a skilled, qualified, and engaged workforce through competitive compensation and benefits packages. The District's compensation philosophy is to "meet" the market, which means District salary ranges are generally +/- five percent of the market average for each position. The District reserves the right to change or modify its compensation policies at any time.

## **Salary Ranges**

It is the District's goal to pay competitive wages as an employer. Salary ranges establish the minimum, midpoint, and maximum pay for a position. Cost-of-Living Adjustments increase the salary range for each position. Merit increases adjust an employee's salary within their salary range. It is the District's policy that employees are not allowed to be paid in excess of the salary range established for their position.

Prior to opening or advertising a vacated position, the District may update the salary range by evaluating comparable positions at other comparable cities or districts. Additionally, the District is committed to conducting comprehensive salary and benefits studies to ensure all District salary ranges and positions are updated and at market. These studies are generally performed once every three to five years.

## **Six-Month Merit Adjustments**

Upon successful completion of the first six months of their Introductory Period, an employee may be eligible for a merit increase, at the sole discretion of the General Manager. The adjustment ranges from \$0.40/hour to \$0.75/hour and varies based on the employee's demonstrated performance and grasp of the position.

## **Annual Merit Adjustments**

A budget is considered for merit increases each year at the District, based on the financial position of the District and subject to approval by the Board of Commissioners during the annual budget process. The standard merit increase range for employees is zero to three percent and is based upon an employee's job performance. Approved merit increases in pay are prospectively applied to eligible employees' salaries at the beginning of the pay period following their anniversary date.

## **Cost-of-Living Adjustments**

Upon Board approval, a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) will be applied to each salary range within the District on January 01 of each year. The COLA is generally determined by applying 100 percent of the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue region, for the June-to-June period, subject to Board approval during the annual budget process. Employees at the maximum of their salary range will be eligible for COLA as approved. Employees above the maximum of their salary range are not eligible for COLA.

## **Limitations of Adjustments**

All increases or adjustments in pay are subject to the applicable salary range maximum. An employee with satisfactory performance may be given a modified annual merit increase

if limited by the ceiling of the pay range. Should an employee's salary exceed the salary range maximum, their salary will be frozen until such time as subsequent Cost-of-Living Adjustments increase the salary range to where the employee is eligible for a pay increase again.

## **On-Call Procedures**

All field employees will be subject to perform on-call duty, as assigned. Employees on-call must be available to resolve customer problems and/or perform emergency maintenance. Per Resolution B-1262, all employees subject to perform on-call duty will be required to remain within a 30-minute travel time to the District's boundary while on call and will carry a District cell phone, tablet, or other equipment allocated for purposes of maintaining contact with the District.

Employees who are on call are prohibited from consuming alcohol or drugs as outlined in the District's Substance Abuse Policy, other than over the counter and/or lawfully prescribed medications, and then only in accordance with the recommended dosage and, in such cases, must still be able to perform duties unimpaired while on call.

## **On-Call Schedule**

For employees performing on-call duties, the on-call schedule for Operations employees runs from 5:30 p.m. on Thursday to 8:00 a.m. the following Thursday. For Pumping employees, the on-call schedule runs from 5:00 p.m. on Thursday to 7:30 a.m. the following Thursday. On weekends, the on-call schedule is broken up into three on-call periods. On-call duty on holiday Fridays will be taken by the employees who were on call the Thursday immediately preceding the holiday. On-call duty on holiday Thursdays will be taken by the employees who were on-call the Wednesday immediately preceding the holiday.

For more details, including on-call duties and compensation, please see the District's current On-Call Policy and Procedures, which can be found in the HR Library on SharePoint.

## **BENEFITS**

### **Holidays**

The District grants 13 paid holidays per year to eligible employees, including both regular and introductory period classifications.

- 💧 New Year's Day
- 💧 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 💧 Presidents' Day

- 💧 Memorial Day
- 💧 Juneteenth
- 💧 Independence Day
- 💧 Labor Day
- 💧 Veterans Day
- 💧 Thanksgiving Day
- 💧 Native American Heritage Day
- 💧 Christmas
- 💧 Two Floating Holidays

Holidays falling on Saturday are observed the preceding Friday. Holidays falling on Sunday are celebrated the following Monday. Regular full-time employees will receive eight hours of holiday pay at their regular rate of pay. Part-time employees shall receive holiday pay on a pro-rated basis, based upon the number of hours the employee would have otherwise been scheduled to work.

Employees also receive two paid floating holidays each year. The floating holidays are added to an employee's floating holiday bank at the beginning of the year and must be used by December 31. Floating holidays are worth eight hours, paid at the employee's regular rate of pay, and are provided on a "use it or lose it" basis. Floating holidays are not carried over into following calendar years and are not paid out upon separation.

Any employee who is required by the District to work on a holiday observed by the District shall be paid at the rate of two times that employee's regular hourly rate.

### **Holidays for Reasons of Faith or Religious Conscience**

Each employee shall also be entitled to two unpaid holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience or an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. An employee, in consultation with the General Manager, may select the days on which the employee desires to take the two unpaid holidays; provided, that such holidays are taken in a manner consistent with the purposes of this leave.

Employees may use their accrued vacation leave or floating holiday in connection with these otherwise unpaid holidays. Requests for an unpaid holiday provided for by this policy should be submitted in writing to the General Manager a minimum of four weeks prior to the requested day. Requests for such holidays shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the specific objective facts and circumstances presented at the time of the request.

The District reserves the right to disallow any holiday request if it would unduly disrupt operations or otherwise impose an undue hardship for the District. For purposes of this policy, “undue hardship” shall have the same meaning established by rule of the Office of Finance Management, as codified in WAC 82-56-020. The unpaid holidays provided herein shall not carry over from one year to the next.

**Vacation**

The District provides vacation leave for the purpose of providing employees with paid time away from work for recreational and relaxation purposes. Vacation leave is accrued and credited each pay period. Regular full-time employees shall earn vacation benefits in accordance with the following schedule:

<b>Completed Years of Service</b>	<b>Per Pay Period Accrual</b>	<b>Hours Per Year</b>
0 through 4	3.69	96 hours
5 through 9	5.23	136 hours
10 through 14	6.15	160 hours
15 through 19	6.77	176 hours
20 through 24	7.38	192 hours
25 or more	8.00	208 hours

Part-time employees shall earn vacation benefits in accordance with the above schedule at a rate commensurate with the total regularly scheduled hours worked per week, e.g., a part-time employee regularly scheduled to work 30 hours per week shall earn vacation benefits at 75 percent of the above full-time schedule. Vacation benefits are paid at the part-time employee's regular hourly rate.

Employees should request to use their vacation benefits as far in advance as possible. Requests are subject to management approval, based on the business needs of the District. Vacation benefits may only be used after they are earned and must be used at a minimum of not less than two hours unless otherwise approved by Management. No more than 10 consecutive days of vacation may be taken by an employee, unless approved by the General Manager or designee.

During the first six months of employment, employees accrue, but are not eligible to use, vacation time. Accrued vacation time is not paid out when an employee terminates their employment during the Introductory Period.

Temporary employees are not entitled to nor accrue vacation benefits unless otherwise authorized by the General Manager or written agreement between the employee and the District.

### Maximum Vacation Bank

Vacation balances may not exceed 320 hours. When an employee reaches the maximum threshold, they will no longer accrue vacation as defined by their place in the vacation accrual schedule until they utilize some of their existing vacation leave.

### Vacation Cash-Out Option

The District allows employees to cash out a portion of their vacation leave one time at the end of each calendar year at 100 percent of its cash value. Employees may cash out, at their regular rate of pay, up to 40 hours, provided the employee maintains a minimum vacation leave balance of 40 hours. Cash-out may not reduce an employee's vacation leave balance below the minimum.

The form to request a vacation leave cash-out can be found in the HR Library of SharePoint. Cash-out requests should be submitted no later than December 01 of each year.

### **Sick Leave**

All employees are eligible for paid sick leave, in accordance with RCW 49.46.210. The District also provides additional sick leave benefits beyond what is required by law. Combined, regular full-time employees shall accrue 3.85 hours per pay period, for a total of 100 hours of sick leave per calendar year. Please see the sick leave provisions for each type described in detail below.

### Washington Paid Sick Leave

Consistent with RCW 49.46.210 and Chapter 296-128 WAC, the District offers the following sick leave benefits mandated by law.

All employees are entitled to Washington Paid Sick Leave (WPSL) benefits and earn one hour for every 40 hours worked. For full-time employees who normally work a 40-hour workweek, this equates to 52 hours per calendar year; however, this number will vary, depending upon the actual number of hours, including overtime, worked by an employee.

WPSL benefits will begin accruing as of the employee's hire date and are eligible for use as soon as they are accrued. At the end of the employee's first calendar year of employment, sick leave benefits will be calculated and tracked as of January 01 of each calendar year.

Non-exempt employees may take their WPSL benefits in 15-minute increments; exempt employees are typically not required to report absences of less than a full day. Employees may carry over up to 40 hours of accrued WPSL from one calendar year to the next. WPSL

which exceeds this maximum carryover will be converted to ASL and administered in accordance with the ASL policy set forth below.

WPSL is paid at the employee's regular base rate of pay.

Employees may use their accrued WPSL benefits for any absence due to the following reasons:

- 💧 The employee's own illness, injury, or health condition, to accommodate the need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a health condition, or preventative medical care.
- 💧 The employee's care for a family member with an illness, injury, or health condition, or to care for a family member who needs medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a health condition, or to care for a family member who needs preventative medical care.
- 💧 The District is closed by order of public official for any health-related reason, or where the employee's child's school or daycare is closed for such a reason.
- 💧 Absences covered by the District's Domestic Violence Leave Policy.

Employees should request to use their WPSL benefits as far in advance as possible. This generally means an employee should provide notice at least 10 days in advance of any planned or otherwise foreseeable absence, such as a planned medical appointment or procedure, and at least one hour prior to the employee's shift for any unforeseeable or emergent absence. If such notice is not practicable under the circumstances, the employee should provide notice as soon as practicable.

The District may require an employee to provide proof of illness, injury, or health condition from a qualified health care provider for absences of more than three consecutive days, unless such verification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense to the employee, as established pursuant to Washington State regulation. If an employee believes the required verification will result in an unreasonable burden or expense, the employee should notify the District, preferably in writing, of this and provide an explanation that (i) the employee's use of the sick leave is for one of the reasons listed above and (ii) how the verification requirement will result in an undue burden or expense.

Upon receipt of such notice from the employee, the District will consider the employee's explanation and proceed in accordance with the process set forth in WAC 296-128-660. Otherwise, failure to provide the required verification may result in a loss of leave benefits for that work period and/or may result in further disciplinary action.

If an employee feels they are being discriminated or retaliated against because of their lawful use of WPSL benefits, the employee should contact Human Resources or the General Manager. If the employee is not satisfied with the District's response, the employee may contact the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries:

Online: [www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights](http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights)

Call: 1-866-219-7321

Visit: [www.lni.wa.gov/Offices](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Offices)

Email: [ESgeneral@lni.wa.gov](mailto:ESgeneral@lni.wa.gov)

WPSL benefits are not cashed out upon termination of employment. However, if a former employee is rehired by the District within 12 months of their termination date, the District shall reinstate the employee's previously-accrued WPSL benefits.

### Additional Sick Leave

In addition to and separate from the WPSL benefits provided above, all regular full-time employees earn a total of 48 hours per calendar year of Additional Sick Leave (ASL). Regular part-time employees shall receive ASL benefits on a prorated basis, based upon the number of hours their schedule bears to a full-time schedule.

Introductory Period employees begin accruing ASL as of their hire date and will be permitted to use ASL as accrued.

ASL benefits will accrue only when an employee is in paid status, which includes paid leave but does not include unpaid leaves. ASL benefits may not be used until after they are accrued. ASL benefits may be taken in 15-minute increments.

After first exhausting their accrued WPSL benefits, employees may use their ASL benefits for the following reasons:

- 💧 The employee's own bona fide illness or injury, including temporary disability caused by pregnancy or childbirth.
- 💧 To care for a minor child of the employee with a health condition requiring treatment or supervision.
- 💧 To care for the employee's child, spouse, registered domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, domestic partner's parent, sibling, or grandparent who has a serious health condition or an emergency health condition.
- 💧 Absences covered by the District's Domestic Violence Leave Policy.



- Other circumstances which may be authorized by the General Manager, in the General Manager's discretion.

ASL benefits are paid at the employee's regular base rate of pay.

Employees should request to use their ASL benefits as far in advance as possible. This generally means that an employee should provide notice at least 10 days in advance of any planned or otherwise foreseeable absence, such as a planned medical appointment or procedure, and at least one hour prior to the employee's shift for any unforeseeable or emergent absence. If such is not practicable under the circumstances, the employee should provide notice as soon as practicable.

The District may require any employee to provide proof of illness, injury, or health condition from a qualified health care provider in connection with the employee's use of ASL benefits. Failure to provide such required verification may result in loss of ASL benefits for that work period and may result in further disciplinary action. Employees who misuse their ASL benefits will be subject to disciplinary action. This medical verification requirement is not subject to the process outlined above for WPSL benefits.

ASL benefits are not cashed out to employees upon termination of employment except at the time of retirement as prescribed in Resolution B-1474.

Temporary employees will not be eligible for or entitled to ASL benefits.

#### Sick Leave Buyback

Regular full-time and part-time employees may accrue and carry over up to 720 hours of sick leave, including the 40-hour maximum of WPSL, as of December 31 of each calendar year. Accrued ASL and WPSL benefits which exceed the maximum accrual may not be carried over into the following calendar year and will be cashed out to the employee at the rate of two hours of sick leave for one hour of compensation (2:1) at the employee's regular base rate of pay.

### Sick Leave Payout

Employees who were hired after January 01, 2023 and separate from service after successfully completing their Introductory Period will receive a percentage of their accrued sick leave at their current rate of pay based on the following years of service schedule:

Completed Years of Service	Sick Leave Percentage
0 through 2	0%
3 through 6	25%
7 through 14	50%
15 through 24	75%
25+	100%

### Misuse of Benefit

Any employee deemed to have abused sick leave privileges by falsification or misrepresentation may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Health and Welfare Benefits**

The District strives to provide the best, most equitable benefits for its employees, in recognition of influence employment benefits have on their economic and personal welfare. The total cost of providing the benefit program is a significant supplement to an employee's pay and should be viewed as additional compensation.

Insurance coverage begins on the first day of the month following an employee's hire date and ends on the last day of the month in which an employee terminates. The District reserves the right to design benefit plan provisions and to add, eliminate, changes, or in other ways modify any discretionary benefits or contribution rates when it is deemed in the District's best interest to do so. Employees receive a summary plan description upon eligibility and enrollment. District plans run from January through December, with open enrollment in December.

Employees should notify Human Resources about any changes in status, including marital status, death, etc. no later than 60 days after the qualifying event.

### Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance

The District has medical, dental, and vision insurance plans for all full-time employees. The plan is discussed in detail in the Summary Plan Description that can be found in the HR Library on SharePoint. The District pays 100 percent of all employee premiums for medical, dental, and vision coverage; and it pays 90 percent of qualified dependent coverage premiums.

The District's plans and the District's contribution rates are subject to change in the District's sole discretion.

#### Life Insurance & Long-Term Disability

The District provides life insurance coverage for all regular full-time employees in the amount of \$50,000 until the age of 65. Per the "Age Reduction Schedule" defined by our carrier, at age 65, life insurance reduces by 25%, and at age 70, an additional 25% reduction occurs.

Additionally, the District provides regular full-time employees with long-term disability benefits as prescribed in the District's long-term disability plan, a copy of which can be found in the HR Library of SharePoint.

#### Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)

COBRA provides employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the District's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; or a dependent child no longer meets eligibility requirements. In order for the District to provide the appropriate notices, it is important for employees to notify Human Resources of any change in status.

Employees or beneficiaries pay the full cost of health coverage at the District's group rate plus an administrative fee. The District's third-party COBRA administrator provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the District's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

For more information, employees should contact Human Resources.

#### Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS)

The District is a member of the Washington Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). All regular full-time and some part-time employees (subject to position) are covered under PERS. Employees have two plan options to choose from within the first 90 days of employment. Should an employee not designate a plan within the 90 days, they will be placed into PERS Plan 2, and will not be able to change it.

Both the District and the employee are required to pay a percentage of the employee's wage into a defined contribution or defined benefit plan. Benefit levels and contribution rates are set by the State of Washington and are subject to change. Vesting information for PERS plans can be found in the Plan Choice Member Handbook available at [www.drs.wa.gov](http://www.drs.wa.gov).

### Deferred Compensation (DCP)

The District offers a Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP), a 457(b)-retirement plan, to its regular employees. DCP allows employees to set aside compensation on a tax-deferred basis for retirement; contributions are subject to annual IRS deferral limits. Participation is voluntary and may be started and stopped at any time within the IRS guidelines. Employees have a variety of investment options and are 100 percent vested on plan entry date. Employees are eligible the first of the month following their date of hire and may stop, start, or change their deferral or investment elections at any time.

### Labor and Industries (L&I) Workers' Compensation Insurance

All employees are covered by and contribute to the State of Washington Workers' Compensation Program. This insurance covers employees when on-the-job injuries or job-related occupational illnesses occur. For qualifying cases, Workers' Compensation will provide partial wage replacement to the employee for workdays lost and medical costs due to job related injuries or illnesses. Both the District and its employees are required by law to make contributions to Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) for industrial insurance based on job classification and the number of hours worked. Current contribution rates for the District and its employees are set by the State of Washington.

### Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is an employer-paid benefit that provides counseling for both personal and work-related issues. The District contracts its EAP through Regence Blue Shield and the EAP is provided to employees and their dependents free of charge.

The EAP provides a full range of counseling and referral services for individual, family, and marital concerns, stress and job-related matters, child and domestic abuse, and legal and financial issues. For more information, please see the Benefits Guide located in the HR Library of SharePoint.

### Workout Facility

To promote the health and wellbeing of its employees, the District provides exercise equipment at its main office. Employees who wish to use the workout facility must sign an Indemnification and Release Form and provide it to Human Resources for placement in the employee's personnel file. To be eligible to use the facility, the following conditions must be met:

- Employees should consult a physician before beginning an exercise program.

- 💧 Prior to using the exercise equipment, employees should make themselves knowledgeable of its proper use.
- 💧 Employees may use the facilities during unpaid time: before work, during a meal break, or after work; using the facilities while on duty is strictly prohibited.
- 💧 No food or drink, except water, is permitted in the workout facility.
- 💧 Proper fitness attire is required. No boots, street shoes, sandals, or bare feet.
- 💧 All weights placed on the equipment must be removed and returned to the proper location on the rack after using them.
- 💧 Users must wipe clean all equipment and surfaces after each use.
- 💧 No horseplay or scuffling.
- 💧 Report all damaged equipment to Human Resources.

## **Employee Recognition Benefits**

### Milestone Years of Service

Pursuant to Resolution B-1456, the District provides a reward system for those employees who are employed by the District for 10 or more years. Employees who have reached these longevity milestones will be awarded a gift card to a place of their choosing or other token of recognition, not to exceed the amount specified below:

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
10	\$75.00
15	\$75.00
20	\$100.00
25	\$100.00
30	\$125.00
35	\$125.00

### Retirement Recognition

An employee who retires from the District in accordance with PERS criteria will be awarded a gift card to a place of their choosing or other token of recognition in the amount or cost not to exceed \$150.00.

### Outstanding Performance Recognition

Employees who demonstrate outstanding performance and productivity may, as determined by the General Manager and with assistance from other management staff, be presented with a recognition award in the form of a gift card or other token of appreciation in accordance with Resolution B-1456. In most cases, the awards will be presented annually on or around an employee recognition meeting or event, e.g., Employee Appreciation Day.

### Employee Suggestion Award Program

The District desires to encourage employee excellence, recognize employee accomplishments, and provide incentives for employee suggestions for better performance of the District's mission. In accordance with Resolution B-1363, the District has established an Employee Suggestion Award Program. The purpose of the policy is to provide a formal program for rewarding suggestions, in accordance with criteria established by the Board. For further information on this program, consult your immediate supervisor or Human Resources.

### **Employee Development Benefits**

The District's most valuable resource is its employees. Continuing education and job-related training is a benefit to the District, its ratepayers, and its employees. Employees are encouraged to participate in workshops, seminars, conferences, classes, and other learning opportunities to improve their job-related skills. The District supports these programs to the extent the budget allows. For tracking purposes, all training and reimbursement requests should go through Human Resources.

### Employee Education Assistance Program – Resolution B-1423

The District has a long-standing practice of promoting from within where appropriate and it considers the training and education of District personnel beneficial to the District, its customers, and District personnel in that it will provide employee growth, improve employee performance, and provide better service to District customers, as well as further strengthen the reputation of the District.

To encourage ongoing learning and development, the District will consider reimbursement or advances for employee continuing education expenses that lead to a degree or certification related to a regular full-time employee's current job duties or a foreseeable future position with the District.

To be considered for a reimbursement or advance, an employee must have been actively employed on a full-time basis for at least 12 months from the reimbursement or advance request, and not be on a leave of absence. A detailed class or curriculum plan must also

be submitted to, and approved by, the General Manager prior to the quarter or semester in which the course(s) will be taken to be considered.

The General Manager has the sole discretion to determine which course(s) are eligible for reimbursement or advance, which consideration includes but is not limited to whether the proposed course is job-related or will otherwise further the District's operational business needs or goals, constituting a benefit to the District. The General Manager's approval is limited to the specific course presented for approval. If an employee makes any changes to the course or makes a substitution without the General Manager's prior approval, the changed or substituted course will not be eligible for reimbursement or advance.

Following the approval of the expense reimbursement or advance for continuing education, the following guidelines shall govern such expense reimbursement or advance:

- 1) In the case of an approved reimbursement, the quarter or semester of continuing education expenses will be paid by the employee. The District will reimburse the employee for approved expenses as provided herein, upon the employee's completion of the course. The employee will be required to provide written verification to the General Manager that the employee received a passing grade in the course, i.e., a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or better, or if the course is pass/fail, verification the employee passed.

Where an employee is unable to pay their continuing education expenses up front, the General Manager may approve an advance for such continuing education expenses. Any such advance will be subject to all terms and conditions set forth in this policy and Resolution B-1423. If any terms or conditions are not met, the employee will be obligated to repay 100 percent of the advance. As an additional condition to the advance, an employee may be required to execute a written reimbursement agreement, in such form as determined by the District.

- 2) The employee will provide written verification to the General Manager after the continuing education expenses subject to reimbursement or advance are incurred, confirming the expenses were actually incurred and paid in full by the employee.

The maximum amount of reimbursement or advance by the District to any individual employee for continuing education expenses is \$5,250.00 per calendar year. Expenses may include tuition, books, and lab or other fees associated with the course. The District will not reimburse employees for supplies, mileage, parking, meals, lodging, or other miscellaneous expenses.

The District reserves the right in its sole discretion to deny any request for payment of tuition or related expenses at any time.

- 3) If an employee is receiving continuing education expense reimbursement or advance from any other source, the employee must disclose this information to the District and will be required to first utilize such other source for the reimbursement or advance of expenses for which the employee was otherwise eligible through the District. The District reimbursement or advance will be limited to the remaining amount of expenses the employee would otherwise be entitled to have reimbursed by the District.
- 4) Poor work performance while attending courses qualifying for continuing education expense reimbursement or advance may prevent reimbursement or advance on future coursework. Class attendance is not an excuse for the poor performance of an employee's employment duties and responsibilities.
- 5) Only courses at licensed, accredited colleges, universities, or technical schools, or other programs as determined by the General Manager, are eligible for reimbursement or advance.

The District's approval of any continuing education expense reimbursement or advance is specifically conditioned and contingent upon the employee remaining employed with the District for a period of at least 36 months following the employee's completion of the last course for which the expense reimbursement or advance was received. By accepting the expense reimbursement or advance, the employee expressly agrees to these terms and acknowledges that the expense reimbursement or advance constitutes a personal benefit to and debt of the employee.

If, for whatever reason, the employee's employment is terminated prior to the expiration of the required 36-month period, the employee will be obligated to repay the expense reimbursement or advance in accordance with the following schedule:

- a. Separation from service of 12 months or less following the completion of any courses – 100 percent repayment
- b. Separation from service between 12 and 24 months following the completion of any courses – 50 percent repayment
- c. Separation from service between 24 and 36 months following the completion of any courses – 25 percent repayment

Notwithstanding the foregoing, an employee whose employment is terminated due to the employee's permanent and/or total disability, as determined by the District, will not be required to repay the reimbursement or advance.

By accepting the tuition reimbursement or advance, the employee authorizes the District to deduct any repayment obligation owed to the District by the employee from the



employee's wages, including but not limited to employee's final paycheck. These repayments may be received by the District by way of deduction from an employee's final payroll check, to include but not limited to, payout of accrued vacation and/or sick leave. Amounts received by an employee as educational assistance benefits pursuant to this policy may be subject to IRS Publication 970. The employee is encouraged to review and seek tax accountant advice on whether amounts received from the District are subject to income tax withholding and may be included in the employee's taxable gross income as required under Internal Revenue Code provisions. (See Publication 970 (2013)).

While educational assistance is expected to enhance employee performance and professional ability, the District makes no representation, expressed or implied, that participation in continuing education, not required as a condition of the employee's job classification or position, will entitle an employee to an automatic advancement, a different job assignment, or pay increase.

#### Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and Training

The District will pay for ongoing job-related training such as conferences, workshops, seminars, and continuing education to retain certifications or designations for its employees. Training requests should be business related, pre-approved by the General Manager, and are subject to budget availability. Employee training events should relate to the employee's current position or are a requirement to maintain professional certifications and licenses. Employees should document what was learned at the event and be prepared to share this information with others upon their return.

An approved Training Request Form should be given to Human Resources for registration and payment. A copy of certificates received from job-related training should be given to Human Resources for placement in the employee's personnel file.

#### Certifications and Licenses

The District is committed to maintaining the quality of its services through the continued professional growth of its employees. Many positions require minimum certifications. Required certifications, licenses, or professional designations are contained within an employee's job description along with any other requirements for their position. If an employee lets a required certification or license lapse, they may be demoted or terminated after extenuating circumstances, if any, are considered.

The District will pay for an employee's required applicable study programs, testing fees, licenses, professional designations, and certifications for the initial attempt to obtain the required certification or license. If an employee fails in the initial attempt to obtain a credential, any subsequent attempts and associated costs will be the employee's responsibility. Once the employee successfully acquires the required credential(s), they

may submit a reimbursement request for the successful attempt along with supporting documentation acceptable to the District.

The District will pay program costs for employees to obtain their CDL Class A when it is a requirement of their position. The District will also pay for the employee's initial physical examination, drug screen, skills and knowledge tests, permit, license, and endorsements on paid time. The District will pay for physical examinations at a medical facility with which the District contracts for CDL physicals. Employees who choose to use another FMCSA certified medical examiner for their CDL physical are responsible for fees exceeding the District's preferred provider cost. Employees will be reimbursed for CDL license renewal fees above their regular license fee.

A copy of certifications and licenses received should be given to Human Resources.

### Professional Associations and Service Organizations

Upon prior approval by the General Manager, the District may pay annual dues for District employees who are affiliated members of professional associations or service organizations that pertain to the main function of their position within the District. Unless specifically approved by the General Manager, the District will not pay for individual membership in addition to District membership. Invoices for annual dues should be approved by the employee's supervisor and the General Manager.

### Professional License Fees

The District will pay for professional licenses and certifications for District employees who carry a Washington state professional license or certification if the employee's position description requires such license or certification, the license is required by law, or if the expense is in the best business interests of the District as determined by the General Manager. Invoices for professional license fees should be approved by the employee's supervisor and the General Manager.

### Tools and Equipment Training

Field employees work with many tools and equipment, ranging from small hand tools to large excavation equipment. Tools and equipment require varying degrees of training and expertise to use correctly and safely. Employees may not use or operate tools and equipment until they have been trained and approved to do so.

Most tools and equipment require only a short orientation or training period. This training is given by more experienced workers as authorized and monitored by Leads, Department Heads, or other supervisors.

Training and demonstration of more complicated equipment is given by assigned staff members or vendors as the equipment is introduced into the work environment. Some

District equipment is considered “high risk” and requires practice time to achieve competency for safe operation. Before operating these types of equipment for work, employees must be evaluated by the appropriate supervisor.

### Other Training

The District has established a cross-training program in order to ensure that the District will have qualified and trained personnel regardless of emergencies, vacations, other employee absences, etc. Employees’ participation in such cross-training program shall be determined by the General Manager, in the General Manager’s discretion.

## **Employee Travel and Expense Reimbursement**

### Attendance and Travel Time for Training

The District encourages participation in workshops, seminars, training, and other educational programs to improve job skills. Participation in programs requiring time off from work and/or per-diem expenses requires approval from the General Manager or designee.

An employee’s normal work schedule may be adjusted to compensate or account for the employee’s attendance at and travel to workshops, seminars, training, and other education programs.

An employee’s time spent attending a pre-approved workshop, seminar, training, or other educational program will be considered compensable time, and employees will be paid for such time.

To the extent such workshop, seminar, training, or other educational program requires non-exempt employees to travel, the compensability of the travel time for non-exempt employees will be subject to the following guidelines:

- (i) Travel time to and from training is considered compensable. When such travel occurs during the employee’s normal or adjusted work schedule, the travel time will be paid at the employee’s regular rate of pay.
- (ii) Travel time outside of an employee’s work schedule, whether normal or adjusted, will be paid at the rate of one-and-one half times the employee’s regular rate of pay on weekdays and Saturdays and two times the employee’s regular rate of pay on Sundays or holidays.
- (iii) If the travel spans more than one workday and involves an overnight stay, the time compensable to the employee will only be that traveling to or from the program location at the appropriate regular, overtime, or double time rate of pay.

- (iv) The employee's normal commute time to and from the District's office to retrieve a District vehicle for travel use is not compensable.
- (v) Travel time includes time needed to drive to and from an airport as well as time at the airport and in flight.

Non-exempt employees are required to accurately track their compensable training and travel time. Exempt employee travel time is compensated by the employee's regular salary and exempt employees are not entitled to overtime or premium pay in connection with their travel.

### Travel Expenses

#### Travel Reimbursement:

Employees directed to use their own personal vehicles for the District's business will be reimbursed for their mileage at the current IRS rate per mile. Such employees will also be reimbursed for any parking, tolls, or ferry expenses incurred while conducting the District's business. They will not be reimbursed for any traffic or parking infractions, fines, or penalties assessed against them.

#### Meals and Lodging:

The District will reimburse employees for reasonable and customary meal and lodging expenses incurred while on District business, with prior District approval. Expenses for meals and lodging exclude alcohol purchases and shall not exceed the IRS-established limit.

All expenses to be reimbursed by the District must be evidenced by a receipt, which shall be supplied to the District within a reasonable time after such expense is incurred, but in no event later than four weeks after said expense was incurred. The District will only reimburse expenses incurred for business purposes. For more information on authorization and procedures for reimbursement, contact your supervisor or the General Manager.

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### **Paid Family and Medical Leave**

The Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD) administers an insurance program under the Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) Act that allows eligible employees to receive partial wage replacement and leave benefits for covered family and medical reasons. This policy provides a summary of the PFML program, but employees may obtain additional information at [www.paidleave.wa.gov](http://www.paidleave.wa.gov). To the extent an issue is not addressed

in this policy, the District will administer this benefit program consistent with applicable statutes and regulations.

### Employee and Employer Premiums

In administering the PFML program, the ESD assesses a premium rate for each District employee, which rate is established by law. For 2022, this rate is 0.8 percent of each employee's gross wages, up to the 2022 Social Security cap (\$160,200). The District currently pays the applicable PFML premium on behalf of its employees and reports and remits such premiums to ESD.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for monetary leave benefits under PFML, an employee must have worked 820 hours in Washington State (for any employer or combination of employers) during the year preceding a PFML claim. Employees are not eligible for job protection under the PFMLA, because the District does not employ at least 50 employees.

Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) benefits, as applicable, may be granted for any of the following reasons:

#### Medical Leave

- The employee's own serious health condition, defined as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider as those terms are defined under the federal Family & Medical Leave Act, which causes the employee to be unable to work; provided, an employee is ineligible for PFML if also receiving workers' compensation time loss benefits due to a workplace injury.

#### Family Leave

- To care for the employee's family member with a serious health condition.
- To care for the employee's child after birth or placement, by adoption or foster care, within 12 months of such birth/placement. In cases of adoption or foster care, the child must be under the age of 18 years.
- During the seven calendar days following the death of a newborn or newly adopted/fostered child whose birth or adoption/placement would have qualified the employee for either medical or family leave.
- For a family member's qualifying military exigency as defined under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act, 29 U.S.C. § 2612(a)(1)(E) and 29 C.F.R. § 825.126(b)(1) – (9).

For purposes of this policy, “family member” means the employee’s:

- 💧 Child (biological, adoptive, foster, stepchild, or child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis, is a legal guardian for, or is a de facto parent)
- 💧 Parents and legal guardians (or spouse’s parents)
- 💧 Siblings
- 💧 Grandchildren
- 💧 Grandparents (or spouse’s grandparents)
- 💧 Spouse or registered domestic partner
- 💧 Any individual who regularly resides in the employee’s home or where the relationship creates the expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care

Registered domestic partner shall have the same meaning as set forth in RCW 26.60.020.

#### Application for Benefits

Applications for PFML benefits are made directly to the ESD. Employees should contact the ESD to commence the application process and/or may refer to the ESD website ([www.paidleave.wa.gov](http://www.paidleave.wa.gov)) for further guidance. The ESD will require the employee to complete its certification form, relating to the employee’s eligibility and qualification for PMFL benefits. Eligibility determinations will be made by the ESD. If approved, the employee will need to file weekly benefit claims with ESD to continue receiving benefits.

#### Employee Notice

An employee must provide written notice to the District of the intent to take PFML.

When the need for PFML is foreseeable (such as for planned medical procedures or the birth of a child), an employee must notify the District of the need for such leave at least 30 days in advance of such leave. If the need for PFML is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable.

The employee’s notice must be in writing, must identify the family or medical nature of the leave, and must contain the anticipated timing and duration of such leave. If an employee fails to provide this required notice, the ESD may deny benefits for the period of time during which the notice was insufficient.

If leave is being taken for the employee's or family member's planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt District operations.

If taking leave intermittently, an employee must notify the District each time PFML is taken so that the District may properly track leave use.

Employees apply directly to the ESD for PFML monetary benefits. An employee must, within five business days of employee's receipt of the same, notify the District of the ESD's determination with respect to such application for benefits, including the amount of any awarded monetary benefits. This is to assist the District's recordkeeping and administrative functions as well as any related paid leave calculations.

### District Notice

A workplace poster prepared by the ESD outlining an employee's rights under the PFMLA has been posted in the employee breakrooms.

Additionally, when an employee is absent for more than seven consecutive days for a reason known to be covered under PFML, the District will provide the employee with a notice of rights on such form prepared by the ESD. Such notice shall be provided the latter of: (i) five business days after the seventh day of absence; or (ii) five business days after the District receives notice that the employee is absent for a covered reason.

### Length of Leave

Employees who qualify for PFML may take up to 12 weeks of family or medical leave or a total of 16 weeks of combined family and medical leave per claim year. An additional two weeks of leave may be available in the event an employee's leave involves their incapacity due to pregnancy. The claim year begins when the employee files a claim for PFML benefits or upon the birth/placement of the employee's child.

PMFL may be taken intermittently subject to the minimum claim requirement of eight consecutive hours.

PMFL is tracked during the claim year, which is the 52-week period commencing on the Sunday of the week in which the employee meets the minimum claim requirement or in which the employee first takes leave due to the birth or placement of the employee's child (as applicable).

### Waiting Period

Monetary PFML benefits, with the exception of leave taken for the birth or placement of a child or military leave, are subject to a seven-day waiting period. This means that for the first seven consecutive days of a PFML claim, the employee may take PFML but shall not receive any PFML monetary benefits. The waiting period for PFML monetary benefits

commences on the Sunday of the week in which an employee claims a minimum of eight consecutive hours of PFML. While no monetary PMFL benefits are paid during the waiting period, the waiting period is credited against the duration of the employee's PFML. During the waiting week, employees may use accrued sick or vacation leave without impacting their Paid Family and Medical Leave benefits.

### Leave Benefits

If approved by ESD, employees on PFML are entitled to monetary benefits through the state program. PFML monetary benefits are calculated based upon a percentage of the employee's average weekly wage. The benefit is generally up to 90 percent of an employee's average weekly wage, with a minimum weekly benefit of \$100 (or the employee's actual average weekly wage, if less) and a maximum weekly benefit of \$1,000 (adjusted annually). Employees may refer to the ESD's website at [www.esd.wa.gov](http://www.esd.wa.gov) for a benefits calculator which may provide an approximate estimate of benefits. The ESD is responsible for calculating and paying the PFML monetary benefits.

District paid time off, including but not limited to sick leave, vacation leave, and/or floating holidays, is non-supplemental to PFML. This means that if an employee uses District paid leave in connection with PFML, other than during the waiting period as described above, the employee must report such leave use to the ESD, and such use will reduce the employee's PMFL monetary benefits.

When an employee is on leave and only receiving PFML benefits, the employee is deemed to be in unpaid status for purposes of District policies and benefit programs; provided, however, that the District will continue to provide the employee's existing health insurance benefits while the employee is on PFML.

### Return to Work Certification

The District may require a return-to-work certification from a health care provider before restoring the employee to work following PFML where the employee has taken leave for the employee's own serious health condition and the employee has been on leave for more than three consecutive days.

Under certain circumstances, such as when it would be unduly burdensome to do so or where the circumstances surrounding District operations and/or the employee's position have changed, the District may deny job reinstatement to an employee returning from PFML.

If an employee taking PFML chooses not to return to work for any reason, the employee should notify the District as soon as possible.



## Questions

Questions regarding this PFML policy should be directed to Human Resources.

## **Pregnancy Disability Leave**

Washington state law provides certain leave rights in connection with pregnancy-related disability and to care for a newborn child. Regardless of whether an employee is eligible for PFML, they are entitled to unpaid pregnancy disability leave for the period of the employee's actual disability due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. For employees eligible for PFML, the pregnancy disability leave provided pursuant to this policy shall run concurrently with the PFML, provided that the employee shall be entitled to additional pregnancy disability leave if the employee's actual disability exceeds the amount of available PFML. All employees seeking leave under this policy should provide written notice of the intended leave dates at least 30 days in advance of the leave or as soon as possible in the case of an emergency. The District will continue to provide health care benefits for the first 16 weeks of leave due to pregnancy or childbirth, when designated as unpaid pregnancy leave. Thereafter, the cost of continued coverage shall be at the employee's expense, pursuant to COBRA, to the extent the leave is unpaid.

Employees returning from such leave are entitled to the same job or similar job unless the District's circumstances have so changed as to make it impossible or unreasonable to do so.

## **Military Leave**

The District will observe all applicable federal and state laws covering its employee's benefits and rights when an employee serves in any branch of the armed forces and is called upon for active duty. Employees should notify their supervisors as soon as they receive an official notice of call or order to active duty. A copy of military orders should be turned in to Human Resources as soon as possible.

## Paid Leave of Twenty-One (21) Days per Year

Employees are entitled to paid military leave for a period of up to 21 calendar days per year measured from October 1 through September 30 or any greater period required by law for performing ordered active-duty training. Leave accruals and employee benefits will continue for the duration of the paid leave.

If the active duty exceeds 21 calendar days, the employee may elect to take any or all available vacation or other accrued paid leave before moving into unpaid status. Any unused leave accruals remaining at the time the unpaid leave begins will be held until the employee returns to active employment with the District. The employee will not earn additional vacation or sick leave during the time of the unpaid leave, nor will the employee be entitled to health insurance benefits except as may be provided for under COBRA.

Reinstatement following active duty shall follow state and federal laws at the time of the return to work.

### Military Family Leave

The Washington State Military Family Leave Act (MFLA), Chapter 49.77 RCW, provides eligible employees that are the spouse of a member of the armed forces, National Guard, or reserves serving in military conflicts up to 15 days of leave per deployment when the military spouse has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty and before deployment or when the military spouse is on leave from deployment (RCW 49.77.030(1)). To qualify for the MFLA leave, an employee must work an average of 20 or more hours per week. An employee seeking to use this leave must notify the District of the intent to use the leave within five business days of receiving official notice of an impending call or order to active duty or of a leave from deployment.

Although the leave is unpaid, an employee may substitute accrued paid leave for the time off.

### **Volunteer Firefighters, Reserve Officers, and Civil Air Patrol Members**

The District recognizes that employees trained in these functions may need to take leave to participate in specialized training or in response to an actual event. Washington state law prohibits employers from discharging or disciplining an employee who serves as a volunteer firefighter or reserve officer because of leave taken related to an alarm of fire, an emergency call, or has been ordered to remain at their position by the commanding authority at the scene. The law also applies to an employee who serves as a civil air patrol member who has taken leave related to an emergency service operation.

### **Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking Leave**

Employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking may take reasonable unpaid leave from work to take care of legal or law enforcement needs or to get medical treatment, social services assistance, or mental health counseling, or to participate in safety/relocation planning. Employees who are qualifying family members of a domestic violence victim are also eligible for leave under this policy. For purposes of this policy, the term “qualifying family member” means child, spouse, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person the employee is dating.

Employees wishing to take leave under this policy must give as much advance notice of the need for the leave as possible. Leave requests must be supported with one or more of the following:

- 💧 A police report indicating that the employee or the employee's qualifying family member was a victim.

- 💧 A court order providing protection to the victim.
- 💧 Documentation from a healthcare provider, advocate, clergy, or attorney.
- 💧 The employee's written statement that the employee or employee's qualifying family member is a victim and needs assistance.

Employees may use their accrued paid time off in connection with the leave provided by this policy.

Upon return from this leave, employees will be reinstated to their same position or another position with substantially equivalent benefits and terms and conditions of employment. For more details, see Human Resources.

### **Bereavement Leave**

A regular full-time employee will be paid up to four days of bereavement leave in the event of a death of the employee's child, parent, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, grandparent, in-law, stepparent, stepchild, or stepsiblings. "Domestic partner" shall have the same meaning as set for in RCW 26.60.020. Additional days may be taken as sick leave in special circumstances as approved by the General Manager. Other circumstances may be authorized by the General Manager, in the General Manager's discretion.

### **Jury Duty Leave**

A regular employee called upon for jury service for any municipal, county, state, or federal court shall advise the District upon receipt of such call. If required to be absent from work for such service, the employee will be reimbursed for any loss of wages for up to five days while actually performing such service; provided, that the employee submits to the District a properly endorsed check or voucher that the employee received for such service.

If the employee's jury duty is expected to extend beyond five days, the employee may request an extension of such paid leave from the General Manager. The General Manager may, in the General Manager's discretion, extend paid jury duty leave up to an additional five days. An employee may also use accrued vacation in connection with such leave. Employees excused from jury duty for one-half day or longer shall return to work directly and work the remainder of the day.

### **Personal Leave of Absence**

After successful completion of their one-year Introductory Period, an employee may apply in writing for a personal leave. This leave is an approved absence without pay. Employees will be responsible for covering premiums for benefits during their approved leave, both for themselves and their dependents. Employees are required to exhaust any accrued

vacation and/or or sick leave, if applicable. The application shall state the reason for the personal leave request and the length of leave requested. Personal leaves may be granted at the sole discretion of the District and shall not exceed three calendar months. No benefits will accrue during the personal leave.

An employee who fails to return to work at the end of the personal leave or who accepts employment elsewhere during the leave without the District's consent, will be considered to have resigned without the required notice.

## **EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The District strives to provide its employees with a safe and healthful workplace. To accomplish this, both management and employees need to make diligent efforts to promote safety. The District has developed and implemented a Health and Safety Program. Employees are expected to give their full skill and attention to the performance of their duties, using the highest standard of care and good judgment. Employees are also expected to follow safety rules and regulations described in the documents making up the District's Health and Safety Program. The District is committed to educating employees about workplace hazards and the proper and safe methods to use in performing job tasks, and general health and safety issues.

### **Accidents**

When an employee is involved in an accident involving property damage or personal injury, they must immediately report it to their supervisor or the General Manager by filling out an accident report form provided by the District. Employees must report all job-related incidents, no matter how minor. Seemingly minor accidents or injuries may require medical attention later.

An injured employee is encouraged to seek medical evaluation and attention as needed. The District will pay the employee's time while receiving medical evaluation and attention provided the evaluation occurs during the employee's normal work schedule, up to and including the remainder of the workday of the injury. Any additional time needed will be covered by paid sick leave and/or accrued vacation unless otherwise provided with General Manager approval.

The General Manager and Human Resources shall be promptly notified of all claims in order to make a timely report to the Department of Labor and Industries. Failure to report accidents may result in a violation of legal requirements and may lead to difficulties in processing insurance and benefit claims. Therefore, failure to report an accident may result in disciplinary action.

If an employee is injured on the job, they may be entitled to benefits under the state Workers' Compensation Law. Employees should contact their immediate supervisor,

Human Resources, or the General Manager with questions about available benefits under the Workers' Compensation Law.

### Return to Work Release

When an employee has been injured, or has been on an extended absence, regardless of whether the injury occurred on or off the job, it may be necessary to verify when the employee is able to return to work. Verification may be needed to determine what limitations, if any, apply to the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of their job duties and to make certain the employee can safely perform all job functions.

Prior to the employee's return to work, a completed District provided Return to Work Release Form is required from the medical provider treating the employee. If the employee returns to work in a temporary limited capacity, then a Transitional Temporary Job Description must be completed and signed off by the employee's health care provider. The District shall make temporary reasonable accommodations based on schedule, available work, and nature of the employee's ability to perform the duties as specified within a Temporary Job Description.

The District reserves the right to require an examination at its expense, performed by a physician of its choice, to determine when the employee can return to work and if they will be capable of performing the essential functions of their position. Human Resources will provide the employee's job description and other available supporting documents to assist medical professionals with the determination of return-to-work qualifications or limitations.

### **Medical or Physical Examinations**

Successful applicants and employees may be required, as a condition of initial employment, transfer, and/or promotion to take a medical examination to establish their fitness to perform their duties without endangering the health and safety of themselves or others if management determines such an examination is appropriate to a position.

Employees may be required to submit to a medical examination on other occasions when the examination is job-related and consistent with business necessity. For example, a medical examination may be required when an employee is exposed to toxic or unhealthful conditions, requests an accommodation for a disability, or has a questionable ability to perform essential job functions due to a medical condition.

Medical examinations required by the District will be at the District's expense and will be performed by a physician or licensed medical facility designated or approved by the District. Medical examinations paid for by the District are the property of the District, and the examination records will be treated as confidential and kept in separate medical files. However, records of specific examinations, if required by law or regulation, will be made available to the employee, persons designated and authorized by the employee, public agencies, relevant insurance companies, or the employee's doctor.

Employees are encouraged but not required to participate in wellness programs and have physical examinations on an annual basis.

### **Tobacco in the Workplace**

In accordance with the Washington Department of Labor and Industries rule WAC 296-800-24005, the District has a tobacco-free policy for all its facilities and District vehicles. There is to be no tobacco products used on District grounds, facilities, vehicles, equipment, or otherwise on duty, including smoking, vaping, or chewing products. Any tobacco use outdoors by vendors, customers, or visitors must be done at least 25 feet from any entrances according to state law; and further, at least that far away from all air in-takes to the building facilities and vehicles so the smoke stays outside of the buildings and vehicles.

The District supports its employees' efforts to stop tobacco use and will reimburse an employee up to \$250.00 for reasonable costs associated with quitting smoking (e.g., medicine, counseling, classes, etc.). An employee seeking such reimbursement should submit to the District written evidence of the expenditure relating to their efforts to quit using tobacco. If the General Manager determines the submitted request for reimbursement is for a cost reasonably related to quitting tobacco use, the District shall reimburse the employee up to \$250.00 for such cost.

### **Seatbelt Policy**

Per Washington State Seatbelt Law, all employees riding in a District vehicle as the operator or passenger are required to wear a seat belt at all times.

### **Workplace Violence**

The District is committed to maintaining a workplace free from violence and threats of violence, and will not tolerate any acts of violence or threats of any kind, whether by District employees, customers, family members, or other members of the public. Violence includes both acts and threats of violence. Examples of misconduct that are considered acts of workplace violence can include, but are not limited to:

- 💧 Threatening injury or damage against a person or property.
- 💧 Fighting or threatening/challenging to fight with another person.
- 💧 Threatening to use a weapon on District property.
- 💧 Abusing or injuring another person.
- 💧 Abusing or damaging property.

- 💧 Using obscene or abusive language or gestures in a threatening manner.
- 💧 Raising voices in a threatening manner.

Because of the potential for misunderstanding, joking about threatened or actual workplace violence is also prohibited.

### Reporting and Responding to Workplace Violence

Any act or threat of violence in the workplace is strictly prohibited and should be reported immediately to Human Resources, the General Manager or other member of senior leadership, regardless of the perceived seriousness of the act or threat. The reporting of an act or threat of violence is not discretionary. All employees are responsible for reporting any acts of intimidation, threats of violence, or acts of violence. Failure to report a known incident shall constitute a violation of this policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action leading up to and including termination.

Upon receiving a report of a violent act or threat that affects the workplace or a District employee, the District will investigate the incident and undertake all measures it deems appropriate to respond to the incident and to protect potentially affected employees. Some situations may require the intervention of local law enforcement agencies. In other situations, the District may deem it appropriate to provide support and guidance to employees so that threats or acts of violence can be recognized and prudently addressed.

The District will promptly respond to all reported incidents of violence by undertaking those measures it deems appropriate.

### Hostile Customers

The District endeavors to provide excellent service to its customers. At times, District employees may be placed in situations in which they are confronted with hostile, violent, or threatening behavior. District customers or other members of the public may become distressed or make threats or commit acts of violence.

Employees who encounter a hostile or threatening customer should not allow themselves to be pulled into an argument or shouting match. Employees should keep distance between themselves and the customer and speak to the person in a calm, steady manner and do their best to resolve the situation.

If a confrontation occurs in the field, employees should inform the customer that they can call the office. If that does not calm the customer down and an employee believes that they are in danger, they should leave the scene and contact their supervisor or other member of management as soon as possible.

If a confrontation occurs in the office, employees should offer to get their supervisor or other member of management.

### Workplace Violence Prevention

Each member of the management team must make safety their highest concern. The General Manager, in conjunction with Human Resources, is charged with the administration of workplace violence prevention measures and responses. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented in their respective departments. Additionally, senior management is responsible for addressing the unique needs of their departments and developing additional preventative measures and responses through procedures and training.

Employees should learn to recognize and respond to behaviors by potential perpetrators that may indicate a risk of violence. Employees must also place safety as the highest concern.

The District may, in its discretion, provide training on workplace safety issues, customer confrontation, crime prevention information, and address security issues involving the workplace and District facilities.

### **Reporting Restraining Orders**

The District requires all employees who obtain protective or restraining orders listing the employer's location as a protected area to provide their supervisor or Human Resources with a copy of the order granted, even if the order is temporary.

### **Prohibition of Possessing Concealed Weapons on District Premises**

Employees are strictly prohibited from possessing in any manner, whether on their person or in their District vehicle, any weapon or firearm regardless of whether the employee has a valid concealed weapon permit.

Concealed weapons should not be brought onto District property. Employees inadvertently bringing weapons onto District property will be required to immediately remove such weapon from District property.

Any violation of this policy should be immediately reported to the General Manager. In the case where the General Manager is the alleged violator of this policy, the violation should be reported to the presiding officer of the Board of Commissioners.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action leading up to and including termination.



## **Workplace Searches**

For the safety of the employees and/or the welfare of the District, the District may search and inspect both District property and personal items brought onto District property. This includes owned or leased facilities, surrounding grounds, and parking areas. Refusal to cooperate in a search, inspection, or investigation constitutes insubordination and “cause” for immediate discharge.

All District property is eligible for search and shall include but is not limited to individual lockers, desks, filing cabinets, and computers. Personal property brought onto District property is subject to search. Employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy as to the District’s premises and/or any property brought thereupon.

The General Manager will immediately report to the appropriate authorities any illegal items that are found.

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The District is committed to protecting the safety, health, and wellbeing of its employees, the public it serves, and all people who come in contact with the District and the services it provides. Recognizing that drug and alcohol abuse pose a direct and significant threat to this goal and to the goal of providing a productive and efficient work environment in which all employees have an opportunity to reach their full potential, the District is committed to ensuring a drug-free work environment for all its employees.

This policy is applicable to all District employees. Employees who operate commercial motor vehicles and hold a commercial driver license (CDL) are also subject to specific drug and alcohol testing as required by federal regulations. Please see the Commercial Driver’s License section of this Handbook for more information on requirements for CDL holders.

The District strictly prohibits the use, purchase, possession, sale, conveyance, distribution, or manufacture of illegal (whether under federal or state law) drugs, intoxicants, controlled substances, and/or drug paraphernalia associated with illegal drug use while on the job, while on District property, while operating District vehicles, or while otherwise representing the District.

The District further prohibits employees from being under the influence of alcohol (defined as having an alcohol concentration level of 0.04 or greater) or controlled substances (any detectable trace in the body system) while on duty.

District employees who are assigned primary on-call duty are expected to immediately respond to a District on-call request and perform District business. Assigned primary on-call personnel may not report for duty and conduct District business when their

performance may be impaired due to alcohol or drug use. Accordingly, assigned primary on-call personnel must refrain from using alcohol or drugs while on-call.

### Prescription or Over-the-Counter Medication

Prescription medications or nonprescription medications are not prohibited when taken in accordance with a lawful prescription, as applicable, and consistent with standard dosage recommendations. Prescription medication means a drug or medication lawfully prescribed under both federal and state law by a physician or other health care provider licensed to prescribe medication for an individual and taken in accordance with the prescription, but specifically excludes, without limitation, medical marijuana, which remains a controlled substance prohibited by federal law.

Employees who are taking a prescription or over-the-counter medication that may impair their ability to perform their duties safely and effectively must notify their supervisor and Human Resources and should provide written notice from their physician or health care provider with respect to the effects of such medication. Depending on the circumstances, employees may be reassigned, prohibited from performing certain tasks, or prohibited from working if they are determined to be unable to perform their jobs safely while taking prescription or nonprescription legal drugs.

The District may, at its discretion, send an employee home if the employee appears impaired by the use of prescription and/or over-the-counter medications and such impairment impacts the employee's ability to safely and/or effectively perform their duties.

### Drug and Alcohol Testing

All District employees shall be subject to reasonable suspicion, post-accident, return to duty, and follow-up substance abuse testing, as follows:

#### Pre-Employment Testing:

Employees hired into a safety-sensitive position or a position requiring the operation of commercial vehicles must pass a drug and alcohol test as a post-offer condition of employment with the District.

#### Reasonable Suspicion:

Where the District has reason to suspect an employee has violated or is presently violating or is otherwise under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the employee may be required to immediately submit to an alcohol or drug analysis test.

A referral for testing will be made on specific and objective facts and reasonable inferences drawn from these facts by supervisory personnel. Among other things, such facts and inferences may be based upon:

- An employee showing signs of impairment, such as, but not limited to, difficulty in maintaining balance, slurred speech, inability to visually focus, or otherwise appearing unable to perform assigned work in a safe and satisfactory manner.
- The smell of alcohol or illicit drugs on the employee's breath or person.
- Abnormal conduct or appearance or erratic behavior while at work or a significant deterioration of work performance.
- A report of alcohol or other drug use provided by a reliable and credible source.

Failure to comply with reasonable suspicion testing requirements will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

 Post-Accident Testing:

Following an accident involving a District vehicle or District equipment, the driver/operator of such vehicle or equipment is required to submit to an alcohol and drug test when:

- 1) The driver receives a citation under state or local law for a moving traffic violation.
- 2) An injury or fatality occurs as a result of the accident.
- 3) The accident results in damage to one or more vehicles or equipment which requires the removal of the vehicle/equipment by towing or otherwise is estimated to exceed \$2,000.
- 4) Management deems it appropriate under the particular circumstances.

Testing will occur as soon as possible but may not exceed eight hours after the accident for alcohol testing and 32 hours after the accident for drug testing. An employee required to take a post-accident alcohol test may not use alcohol for eight hours following the accident, or drugs for 32 hours following the accident, or until a post-accident test is given, whichever comes first.

An employee who is subject to post-accident testing must remain readily available for such testing and may not take any action to interfere with testing or results of testing. Failure to comply with post-accident testing requirements will be grounds for disciplinary action and may result in termination.

💧 Return to Duty Testing:

Employees who have violated this policy, including those who have tested positive on a drug or alcohol test, and who under the District's disciplinary policy can return to work, must test negative prior to being released for duty.

💧 Follow-Up Testing:

An employee who is referred for assistance related to substance abuse is subject to unannounced follow-up testing for a period not to exceed 60 months as directed by a substance abuse professional and the District. The number and frequency of follow-up testing will be determined by the substance abuse professional and the District but will not be less than six tests in the first 12 months following the employee's return to duty.

### Compliance With Testing

Employees who are directed to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test must promptly report to the testing agency. Under most circumstances, this will mean the employee must report for testing no later than one hour after having received notice of the testing.

In reporting for testing, the employee must report to the nearest testing facility and may not make any detours or stops in route to the testing facility. A District representative may accompany the employee to the testing facility where the management deems it appropriate.

The District retains a qualified third-party administrator as its service agent to provide and coordinate the drug and alcohol testing services referenced in this policy. Employees are expected to cooperate with the administrator and to comply with the directives issued by the administrator in administering and coordinating the tests required pursuant to this policy.

A refusal to take a drug and/or alcohol test as required by the District, an undue delay in reporting for testing as instructed by the District, and/or utilizing any means designed to "cheat," adulterate, or substitute the sample or otherwise render a false negative report shall be deemed the equivalent of a positive result, and an employee engaging or assisting in such measures will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### Results and Consequences

Employees who test positive for drugs may request a second test of the remaining portion of the split sample within 72 hours of notification of a positive test result by the medical review officer responsible for receiving and interpreting the drug test.

Employees violating this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. At a minimum, employees who test positive for alcohol or drugs will be immediately removed from safety-sensitive functions and may be suspended without pay pending further evaluation and recommendation from a substance abuse professional (SAP).

Employees who are found to have violated this policy but who are allowed to return to work under the District's disciplinary process will be required to first submit to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) evaluation or other evaluation as required for CDL holders, and receive a one-time opportunity to enter a treatment program if so recommended by an SAP. Upon return to work, the employee will be required to accept and comply with the terms of a "last chance agreement" and will be subject to the follow-up testing requirements as set forth above.

#### Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Treatment

The District considers drug addiction and alcoholism to be treatable diseases. Employees are encouraged to seek treatment voluntarily and to utilize the District-provided EAP before an alcohol or drug abuse problem affects their job performance or employment status and before they are asked to submit to a drug and alcohol test. All alcohol or drug inpatient and outpatient treatment programs paid through the District's health care plan should be accessed through the EAP.

The District will accommodate employees who voluntarily seek treatment for a drug or alcohol addiction before they are requested to submit to a drug and alcohol test and/or are otherwise the subject of an investigation and/or disciplinary action for a potential violation of this or any other policy or other performance issue(s). Assistance will be provided on a confidential basis.

Employees are encouraged to "self-report," and their job status with the District will not be jeopardized as a result of such report; provided the report is made prior to the District requesting a drug and alcohol test from the employee or otherwise initiating an investigation and/or disciplinary action into suspected policy violations or related performance issues. Any employee who self-reports under these guidelines will be given a sufficient opportunity to seek evaluation, education, and/or treatment to establish control over the employee's substance abuse problem. However, self-reporting employees will not be permitted to perform safety-sensitive functions until the District is satisfied the employee has been evaluated and has successfully completed education or treatment requirements recommended by an SAP or other drug and alcohol abuse evaluation expert.

Prior to allowing an employee to return to safety-sensitive functions, the District shall require a return-to-duty test.

## Washington State Law – Decriminalization of Marijuana

Employees are specifically notified that the decriminalization of the possession and private use of a limited amount of marijuana by persons over the age of 21 under Washington state law, shall have no effect or impact upon this policy.

Pursuant to the Controlled Substances Act of 1970, 21 U.S.C. § 801 et seq., “marijuana” remains a “Schedule I” controlled substance, and its possession and/or use is illegal under federal law. Employees should recognize and understand the “legalization” of marijuana under state law (for both medical and recreational purposes) will not excuse or otherwise constitute a “defense” to a positive drug test administered by the District in accordance with this policy. A positive test for marijuana constitutes a violation of this policy and shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Commercial Driver’s Licenses**

Those employees who are required to operate commercial vehicles, and therefore are required to hold a commercial driver’s license (CDL), are subject to additional policies, restrictions, and requirements regarding their employment.

### Pre-Employment Requirements

A job candidate hired into a position that requires a CDL will be required to submit to a post-offer, pre-employment drug and alcohol test. Initial employment is conditioned upon that person satisfactorily passing such test.

Additionally, if a job candidate is to be hired for a position that requires a CDL and has a prior commercial driver history, they must authorize a request from all former employers to release information regarding positive alcohol or drug tests and refusals to be tested for the past two years of employment. This information should be obtained before the person is employed by the District.

If the information is not obtained by the anticipated hire date, and if the person has passed the pre-employment drug and alcohol test (as applicable), the person may be hired, and the requested information must be obtained from the previous employer(s) within 14 calendar days of the date of hire. If the information is not received within the 14 calendar days, the person shall not be permitted to drive commercial vehicles until the information has been received.

If the information does not timely arrive, or if the information obtained from a previous employer(s) indicates either a positive test or a refusal to be tested, or if the employee obstructs or interferes with the release of the information, the employee will not be permitted to drive commercial vehicles and may be terminated.

### Driving Infractions

CDL holders must also report accidents, traffic convictions, license suspensions, and revocations, whether on or off the job, in accordance with United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) requirements. CDL holders are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with their licensing obligations. The District will perform an annual check of the status of each employee's CDL as applicable.

### Drug and Alcohol Testing

CDL holders are also subject to random drug and alcohol testing in accordance with USDOT guidelines.

In addition to the District's Drug and Alcohol Policy set forth above, those employees who are required to have and maintain a CDL in order to perform their duties are further subject to the drug and alcohol testing requirements and regulations established by the USDOT and its designated agencies. District employees holding a CDL or otherwise occupying a safety-sensitive position will be subject to USDOT Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulations, 49 CFR Part 40. To the extent the USDOT policy conflicts with the general policy set forth above, the USDOT policy shall govern employees holding a CDL or otherwise occupying a safety-sensitive position. Employees may request a summary of the USDOT policy from Human Resources.

Additionally, the District is registered with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Clearinghouse and shall comply with the Controlled Substances and Alcohol Use and Testing regulations set forth in 49 CFR Part 382. As part of these requirements, the District will automatically report to the Clearinghouse any of the following events or occurrences:

- 💧 A verified positive, adulterated, or substituted drug test result.
- 💧 An alcohol confirmation test with a concentration of 0.04 or higher.
- 💧 An employee's refusal to submit to a drug or alcohol test.
- 💧 The District's actual knowledge (as defined by 49 CFR § 382.107) of an employee's use of alcohol or controlled substance on duty, within four hours of coming on duty, or prior to post-accident testing.
- 💧 An employee's pre-duty, on-duty, or post-accident use of alcohol as prohibited by 49 CFR §§ 382.207, .205 and .209.
- 💧 An employee's controlled substance use as prohibited by 49 CRFR § 382.213.

- 💧 Verification from an SAP that an employee has successfully completed the return-to-duty process.
- 💧 The employee's negative return-to-duty test.
- 💧 The District's report of completion of any required follow-up testing.

All employees are expected to read and understand the contents of this policy. Any questions regarding the policy should be directed to Human Resources.

## **HANDBOOK RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

### **Effect of Policy**

The policies of the District, as outlined in this Handbook, explain some of the benefits you receive as a District employee and some of the duties and responsibilities we all share. However, the policies are not to be considered an employment contract and do not give rise to contractual rights or obligations. The District may modify, revoke, terminate, or suspend any or all these policies and procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice. If you are uncertain about any policy or procedure, check with your supervisor, Human Resources, or the General Manager.

(Employee Acknowledgment Following, to be signed by Employee)



## **EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I understand the personnel policies contained in this Handbook are intended to be general guidelines only and do not constitute an express or implied employment agreement. I further understand the Handbook does not constitute an employment contract between the District and me. I understand this Handbook supersedes any prior summaries or statements of employment policies and procedures and that no manager, supervisor, or other employee of the District is authorized to make any representation to the contrary unless it is expressed in a written employment contract authorized by the Board of Commissioners.

I further understand the policies and procedures contained herein may be amended, deleted, or revised by the District at any time.

I understand my first year of employment (or my Introductory Period) with the District is "at will" and may be terminated by the District at any time, without cause and without prior notice.

I also understand I have no right to or expectation of privacy with respect to my use of District-provided equipment, supplies, and programs, including but not limited to computer, voice mail, email, text mail, pagers, cell phones, and the Internet. I understand all information contained on District-provided equipment, supplies, and programs remains at all times the exclusive property of the District and that the District may monitor and review my electronic usage and any information transmitted by and/or stored on District-provided equipment at any time. I further understand written and electronic documents generated, received, or stored by me may constitute public records subject to retention and disclosure requirements under Washington State law.

I have read the Employee Handbook and understand my obligation to comply with the rules and procedures set forth therein. Before signing this form, I have asked for and received clarification regarding any of the policies listed in the Handbook I did not understand.

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Date

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District Employee

**PAYCHECK DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION**

I, the undersigned employee, hereby authorize my employer, Lakewood Water District, to deduct from my final paycheck as necessary, any and all debts, charges, and expenses I may owe to the District as of the date of my employment termination, including but not limited to cash or benefit advances provided to me by the District (including but not limited to tuition allowance, to the extent that I fail to comply with the terms and conditions for such allowance), reimbursement for any unreturned District property (including but not limited to District shirts, coats, and other clothing), and all charges incurred by the District as a result of my personal long distance telephone calls or personal cellular phone calls. I understand the District will provide me with an accounting of all deductions made to my final paycheck with my final paycheck, and I expressly authorize all such deductions made by the District.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_