

# **Meridian Township Personnel Policy Manual**



**May 20, 2025**

# THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

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# THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

## **I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Charter Township of Meridian (also referred to as “Meridian Township” and the “Township”). As an employee of the Township, your mission is to serve the people of the community in a friendly, respectful, dedicated, and effective manner so they may fully enjoy an attractive, clean, safe, secure, and enriching environment. All employees contribute to making Meridian Township a community of choice.

The primary purpose of this manual is to introduce new employees to the general work rules, policies, , and benefit plans that cover all Township employees, as well as to serve as a reference for current employees. It is also intended to serve as a communication tool for promoting positive employee relations by providing comprehensive information to employees regarding their employment. This manual does not and cannot provide a policy for every situation that may arise; rather, it is designed to give an overall understanding of Township policies.

This Policy Manual supersedes any and all prior practices and policies of the Township, oral or written. Any and all statements and policies herein are subject to unilateral change in whole or in part by the Township at any time. The Township retains the right to change, modify, suspend, interpret, or cancel in whole or in part any of the published or unpublished Personnel Policies or Procedures of the Township without advance notice, in its sole discretion as approved by the Township Board. Recognition of these rights of the Township is a term and condition of employment and of continued employment.

This manual, or any other written or verbal communication by the Township, is not intended as, and does not create, a contract of employment, either expressed or implied, and does not constitute contracted obligations between the Township and employees unless specifically addressed in a formal employment contract or collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”). Where such documents specifically differ from these policies, then the applicable provision(s) of the subject agreement shall govern.

No person, other than the Township Manager as authorized by the Township Board, has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the provisions of this manual.

### **A. Severability**

If one or more provisions of this manual are superseded by or become in conflict with a formal employment contract, collective bargaining agreement, insurance plan document, federal, state, or local law, or if a provision is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unenforceable or void, then the balance of the manual shall remain in effect.

**B. Distribution and Revisions**

A copy of this manual will be provided to each employee, who will be required to sign a standard form certifying their receipt and review of the manual.

Revisions or updates to the manual will be provided to all employees in either paper form, by email, or by other electronic communication such as posting on the Township website. Employees are expected to review all changes and updates and remain knowledgeable of all current personnel policies. Periodically, employees may be required to sign an update form that they have received and reviewed the manual and changes in policy.

## **II. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (“EEO”) STATEMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Meridian Township is firmly committed to non-discriminatory employment practices for all employees and applicants for employment. The Township will comply with all federal, state, and local laws with respect to the employment relationship. The goal of the Township is to provide a positive work environment that demonstrates respect for human differences and guarantees that all employees are treated with dignity, respect, and professionalism.

Every employee has an obligation to promote an inclusive workplace free from discrimination in all employment activities. Management is responsible and accountable to identify and correct any discriminatory actions and to ensure that non-discrimination policies are followed. The Township is responsible to take prompt and immediate remedial action to maintain a work environment that is free of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation.

Employees are expected to immediately bring forth any concerns about discrimination, retaliation, or harassment in any form, to the attention of management and the Human Resources (“HR”) Director. All allegations are taken seriously, and management is responsible to immediately report concerns to the Human Resources Director for a prompt response and investigation. Please refer to specific employment policies contained in this manual that address compliance.

### **A. Meridian Township Human Relations Ordinance Article I. In General, Section 30-1 Intent**

It is the intent of the Township that no person be denied equal protection of the laws; nor shall any person be denied the enjoyment of their civil or political rights or be discriminated against or harassed because of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, condition of pregnancy, marital status, physical or mental limitation, disability, source of income, familial status, education association, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or HIV status. For more information about the Township’s commitment to non-discrimination, please see the Human Relations Ordinance, which is Chapter 30 in the Township’s Code of Ordinances available online.

### **B. Non-Discrimination and Fair Employment Practices Policy**

The Township shall adhere to a fair chance policy, which limits inquiry into conviction history information on all Township employment applications unless required by state or federal law.

The Township shall make a good faith determination as to which specific positions of employment are of such sensitivity that a criminal background check is warranted or are required by law and shall conduct background checks for these positions only.

If it has been established that a position requires a background check, the Township shall not conduct the check until after the applicant has been provided a conditional offer of employment.

The Township shall consider job-related convictions taking into account the length of time since the offense occurred, such that no person shall be disqualified from employment, solely or in part because of a prior conviction, unless it is a job-related conviction. The Township Human

Resources Department shall conduct an individualized assessment of any job-related conviction record.

**C. Open Door Policy**

It is the Township's desire to provide good working conditions and maintain harmonious working relationships among employees, as well as between employees and management, because doing so helps to ensure the orderly and efficient operation of Township business. In order to correct any work-related problems, the Township must be fully informed about them. Therefore, the Township has an "open door" policy. You are encouraged to discuss concerns or suggestions with your Department Director. If you believe that your Department Director has not, or cannot, adequately address the situation, you are encouraged to discuss it with the Human Resources Director and/or the Township Manager. This procedure should in no way preclude or replace the direct discussions Department Directors have always had on an informal basis with employees.

### **III. EMPLOYMENT**

#### **A. At-Will Employment**

All employees are considered at-will, unless a different status is conferred by a collective bargaining agreement or a specific employment agreement. This means that the employment relationship is for an indefinite period of time and can be terminated at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice by you or the Township. The provisions in this policy manual supersede any and all contrary representations that have been made by either the Township or you. No employee, supervisor, member of management, or other person except the Township Manager, in writing, and approved by the Township Board, has the authority to enter into any employment agreement on behalf of the Township for any specified period of time, pursuant to any particular conditions or to make any agreement contrary to the terms expressed here and in this manual.

#### **B. Training Period**

Up to the first six (6) months of employment is considered to be a period of training. This training period provides intensive training efforts and frequent feedback and written evaluations. You are encouraged to ask questions and seek additional help during this period to better understand your job expectations, policies, procedures, and goals of the department and Township.

#### **C. Hours of Operation**

Township Administrative offices (Municipal Building and Public Safety Building) operate on a regular eight (8) hour day, forty (40) hour work week, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Service Center operates on a regular eight (8) hour day, forty (40) hour work week, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. In the interest of efficiency or special situation, a Director may deviate from the above prescribed hours, with the approval of the Township Manager sufficient to meet the operational needs of the Township.

#### **D. Time Reporting**

The workweek covers seven (7) consecutive days beginning on Saturday at 12:01 am and ending on Friday at 12:00 midnight. The usual workweek period is forty (40) hours.

Overtime is defined as hours worked by a non-exempt employee in excess of forty (40) hours in a workweek and should be recorded to the nearest quarter of an hour. Overtime must be approved in advance by the Director to whom the employee reports. Failure to obtain approval to work overtime may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Employees will submit their bi-weekly timesheets as required by their Director. Each employee is to maintain an accurate daily record of their hours worked. All absences from work schedules should be appropriately recorded.

#### **E. Flexible Work Schedule and Temporary Flexible Work Hours**

Flexible work schedules are those that vary from the regular work schedule of the Township. Prior approval from the Department Director and Human Resources Director must be obtained

before use of a flexible work arrangement. Adjustments to an employee's regular work schedule may be altered on a permanent basis or for an extended period of time, however, the revised schedule must continue to support the operational needs of the department and the Township. If a work schedule changes, a plan for continued fulfillment of work expectations, including how communications with co-workers, customers, and the Director will occur and how to handle departmental needs that arise during the employee's absence, must be addressed. Due to the nature of the work being performed, some options may not be available to all employees.

A permanent or long-term work schedule adjustment must be approved, in writing, by the Department Director and Human Resources Director. All permanent work schedule alterations will be documented in the personnel file and the information provided to payroll for accurate record keeping. Flexible work schedule adjustments may be revised or revoked by the Director, Human Resources Director, or Township Manager as needed.

Flexible work hours are temporary changes in an employee's regular work schedule in order to adjust for an unplanned, short-notice, or special circumstance. When an unforeseen event or special circumstance occurs, the Department Director and Human Resources Director may approve an adjustment to the employee's schedule.

#### **F. Lunch, Rest Periods and Breaks**

The schedule of lunch periods and breaks at Meridian Township is set by the employee's supervisor or Department Director with the goal of providing the least possible disruption to Township operations.

Employee lunch periods are important to employee productivity and employee health. Full-time employees will be provided an unpaid one (1) hour lunch break. The lunch period will not be included in the total time of work per day. Part-time employees working a minimum of six (6) hours per day will be provided an unpaid one-half (1/2) hour lunch break. Non-exempt employees are to be completely relieved of all job duties while on lunch breaks.

Non-exempt employees are permitted a 15-minute rest break for each four hours of work as scheduled or permitted by their supervisor or Director. Non-exempt employees on rest breaks are not required to clock in and clock out because this time is considered "time worked" and is compensable.

#### **G. Impermissible Use of Meal Period and/or Rest Breaks**

Neither the meal period nor rest break(s) may be used to account for an employee's late arrival or early departure or to cover time off for other purposes. For example, rest breaks may not be accumulated to extend a meal period and rest breaks may not be combined to allow a 30-minute break.

#### **H. Emergency Closings**

In cases where a Township office is ordered to be closed because of inclement weather, a state of emergency, natural disaster, or other order by the Township Manager, all regularly scheduled employees will receive their regular pay based upon hours scheduled to be worked that day. If an employee has a pre-approved scheduled day off, he or she shall not receive an additional day off or additional pay for the day of the emergency closing.

Declared closures may not apply to “essential employees” such as Police, Fire, Public Works, and others as designated by the Township Manager. Please refer to the Township’s Continuity of Operations Plan (“COOP”) for a detailed outline of procedures for emergency or other unplanned closures.

#### **I. Anniversary Date**

For all purposes regarding the Township, including but not limited to, pay and longevity benefits, an employee’s anniversary date is defined as the day (day/month/year) work began as a regular full- time or regular part-time employee for the Township.

#### **J. Performance Evaluations**

The Township uses a uniform system for evaluating the work performance of all employees. The primary purpose of the employee performance evaluation is to maintain communication between supervisor and employee and inform employees on the quality of their work and, if necessary, how they can improve their work performance. Employees will sign the evaluation form to acknowledge their review and receipt of the document, but not necessarily to indicate agreement with the rating(s).

Employee performance will typically be formally evaluated in writing annually by their immediate supervisor. The Human Resources Director and management may participate in employee evaluations. The Township endeavors to provide all employees with an evaluation at least once per calendar year and the Township retains the right to evaluate employees more than once per calendar year. Copies of all performance evaluations will be given to evaluated employees, as well as the Human Resources Department to retain in employee personnel files. Employees wishing to appeal their performance evaluations must contact the Human Resources Director within five (5) days after receiving their performance evaluation. The Human Resources Director will handle appeals on a case-by-case basis and will retain any additional documentation regarding the performance evaluation appeal.

Employees and evaluators are encouraged to have regular informal conversations about performance and areas for improvement outside the formal review process. This may include, but is not limited to, ongoing efforts to coach, mentor, and otherwise provide employees with the necessary resources.

#### **K. Promotions**

A promotion is defined as a change to a position in a class having a higher salary range than the class from which the employee left. When employees are promoted to a position in a higher class, their annual salary shall be increased by an amount as determined in the salary range. The new rate of pay becomes effective upon the date of promotion; the next step increase (if applicable) will occur one year from the promotion date.

Township management may choose to promote Township employees on the basis of past performance, job skills, initiative, demonstrated desire for advancement, and attainment of the preferred and minimum qualifications for the job (such as certifications, licenses, and academic achievement).

## **L. Personnel Files**

The Township keeps personnel files on all employees. Because personnel files contain confidential information, the only people who can see them are people with a legitimate business reason. [Under the Bullard-Plawecki Employee Right to Know Act 397 of 1978](#), employees may wish to review their own file, and may do so by contacting the Human Resources Director. Employees may review their file only when a representative of the Human Resources Department is also present. Copies of the file may be requested, and the Township may charge a reasonable copying fee to the employee.

It is important for the Township to have certain personal information about employees in personnel records. Employees must notify the Township Human Resources Department as soon as there is a change to their mailing address, telephone number, marital status, dependents' information, educational accomplishments, emergency contacts, and other possibly related information. Personal data will be stored by the Human Resources Department in a confidential manner.

## **M. Social Security Number Privacy and Protection**

Meridian Township values privacy and will take all necessary steps to ensure compliance with the provisions of the [Michigan Social Security Number Privacy Act](#) 454 of 2004. To protect employee personal information, the Township will not use Social Security numbers to identify employees. However, Social Security numbers may be included in job applications and forms sent by mail.

The Township will not:

- Publicly post or publicly display employee Social Security numbers.
- Require employees to send their Social Security number over the Internet, unless the connection is secure or the Social Security number is encrypted.
- Require employees to use their Social Security number to access an Internet Website, unless a password or unique personal identification number or other authentication device is also required to access the Internet Website.
- Print employee Social Security numbers on any mailed materials, unless state or federal law requires the Social Security number to be on the document that is mailed.

The Township will continue to collect, use, or release Social Security numbers as required by state or federal law, and may use Social Security numbers for Township identification or authorization purposes. Questions about this policy may be directed to Human Resources.

## **N. Layoffs and Recalls**

This policy shall govern all layoffs and recalls of Township employees who are not covered by a layoff or recall procedure in a collective bargaining agreement. If a layoff occurs, consideration will be given to the quality of each employee's past performance, the need for the service, and the employee's seniority in that classification, in determining which employees will be retained. Employees to be laid off will be notified at the earliest date possible of that decision.

All layoffs and recalls of positions will be based upon the Township's operational needs and financial position. The Township retains sole discretion to determine which employees will be impacted in a layoff.

**O. Job Vacancies**

When there is a vacancy or position to be posted at the Township, the Human Resources Department will be notified, and the Human Resources Director will post the position both internally and externally through the "all employees" e-mail notification system and listings on the Township website. External advertisements will be posted on the online job posting system and all other job posting sources as necessary. Internal candidates will be required to submit a resume and cover letter to the Human Resources Director for consideration. Such materials must be submitted by the interview deadline or the employee will not be considered an applicant.

The interview process may include Supervisors, Managers, Directors, and Human Resources. If necessary, candidates will be called back for additional interview(s). The overall most qualified candidate, as determined by the Township, will be selected.

**P. Onboarding**

New hires must meet with Human Resources on or before their first day of employment to complete required forms and review employment documents. A more detailed, job-specific orientation will take place with the department staff where the new hire will be working.

**Q. Hiring of Family/Relatives – Fraternization**

The Township permits the employment of qualified individuals who are related to a current employee provided that a supervisory/subordinate relationship does not exist as a result of that employment.

For purposes of this policy, family/relatives includes spouse, child, parent, sibling, step-parents, step-siblings, half-siblings, parent-in-law, child-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, and siblings-in-law.

If a supervisory relationship exists for two employees who become relatives after hire, or who start a dating relationship, the employees must inform Human Resources about the relationship. The Township may seek to transfer one of the employees if a vacancy exists for which one or both employees are qualified. The Township may alternatively seek the voluntary resignation of one of the impacted employees. The Township retains the right to terminate an employee to avoid a violation of this policy.

Consensual romantic or sexual relationships between employees, while not expressly forbidden, are generally considered unwise. Employees should be aware of the risks and potential work-related difficulties of such relationships.

The Township retains the discretion to transfer, seek voluntary resignation, or terminate related employees, even if there is no direct supervisory relationship if the familial relationship causes a conflict or potential conflict in the workplace. Relatives of current Township employees shall not be given preference in any hiring decisions.

## **R. Employment Classification Categories**

Meridian Township has established the following classifications for employees:

- **Regular, full time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work a full-time schedule of 40 hours per week. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.
- **Regular, part time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time schedule. These employees are eligible for pro-rated leave time and holiday pay. Depending on the number of hours worked over the course of a year, these employees may also be eligible for health insurance coverage.
- **Temporary, full time:** Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work a schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.
- **Temporary, part time:** Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work less than a full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.
- **Seasonal Workers/Interns/Irregular:** Employees who are hired as interim workers during the summer months, or on a limited work schedule throughout the year, for a limited duration. Temporary, irregular and/or seasonal workers are not eligible for Township benefits.

All employees are also designated as either nonexempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws. The following is intended to help employees understand their employment classification.

**Nonexempt employees** are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”). They are entitled to the law’s requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime.

**Exempt employees** are generally managers or professional, administrative, or technical staff who are exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor.

## **S. Background and Reference Checks**

To ensure that individuals who join Meridian Township are qualified and to ensure that we maintain a safe and productive work environment, it is our policy to conduct pre-employment background checks on applicants who are being considered for employment to the extent such a background check is necessary based on the requirements and expectations of the position. Background checks may include verification of any information on the applicant’s resume or application form, a driving record check, a criminal background check, and in certain positions, a credit report.

All offers of employment are conditional based on a successful background check (if any). All background checks are conducted in compliance with the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and state and federal privacy and anti-discrimination laws. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by those with a legitimate business need to know the information.

This policy will be administered, and any background or reference checks will be performed, in compliance with the Township's *Non-Discrimination and Fair Employment Practices Policy* as found elsewhere in this Manual.

The Township also reserves the right to conduct a background check for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment in the same manner as described above.

#### **T. Progressive Discipline**

In order to correct or eliminate employee poor performance or misconduct, the Township may utilize the disciplinary process.

Disciplinary action may take any form the Township deems appropriate to the circumstances, including any of the following:

- 1) Verbal warning
- 2) Written warning
- 3) Suspension with or without pay
- 4) Termination of employment

The Township retains the discretion to utilize whatever level of discipline is deemed appropriate under the circumstances or to craft individualized discipline and correction on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, the Township strives for discipline to be corrective, not punitive. The Township will follow the principles of progressive discipline whenever practicable, except that the Township may skip disciplinary steps for sufficiently serious conduct as determined in the Township's sole discretion unless otherwise limited by an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

#### **U. Separation of Employment**

Separation of employment can occur for several different reasons.

- **Voluntary Resignation:** Resigning employees must provide two weeks' notice, in writing, to facilitate a smooth transition. Proper notice of resignation entitles an employee to a payout of accrued but unused vacation leave. Management reserves the right to provide an employee with two weeks' pay in lieu of notice in situations where job or business needs warrant such action. If an employee provides less than two weeks' notice, the employee is disqualified from any payout for accrued vacation and the Township may deem the individual to be ineligible for rehire depending on the circumstances regarding the notice given.
- **Retirement:** Employees who wish to retire are required to notify their Director and the Human Resources Department in writing at least one (1) month before the planned retirement date. Employees who retire under an applicable retirement plan are entitled to a

payout of accrued but unused vacation leave.

- **Job Abandonment:** Employees who fail to report to work or contact their supervisor for three (3) consecutive workdays will be considered to have abandoned their job and voluntarily quit without notice, effective at the end of their normal shift on the third day. The Supervisor will notify the Human Resources Department at the expiration of the third workday and initiate the paperwork to document the employee's voluntary resignation. Employees who are separated due to job abandonment are ineligible to receive a payout for accrued but unused vacation leave and are ineligible for rehire.
- **Termination:** Employees are employed on an at-will basis and the Township retains the right to terminate an employee at any time. Employees who are involuntarily terminated are ineligible to receive payout for accrued but unused vacation leave.

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement may be subject to different separation of employment procedures than stated in this policy and are advised to refer to individual collective bargaining agreements for separation of employment procedures.

Health insurance terminates the last day of the month of separation unless an employee requests immediate termination of benefits. Information for Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation ("COBRA") continued health coverage will be provided.

#### **V. Exit Interview**

All Township employees who separate from employment with the Township are encouraged to take part in an exit interview. Exit interviews will take place with the Human Resources Director. Upon the request of the Human Resources Director or the separating employee, additional attendees may be permitted in exit interviews. The Human Resources Director will coordinate the time and dates of all exit interviews.

The Township utilizes exit interviews to assess outgoing employee experiences while working for the Township. The Township may utilize some information discovered during exit interviews to improve employment practices at the Township.

The separating employee must return all Township property at the time of separation, including credit cards, uniforms, Township cell phones, keys, computers, identification cards, etc.

#### **W. Rehire**

Employees who leave the Township in good standing may be considered for reemployment. The applicant must meet all minimum qualifications and requirements of the position and follow the applicant process as described in the *Job Vacancies* Policy found elsewhere in this Manual.

Supervisors must obtain approval from the Human Resources Director or designee prior to rehiring a former employee. Rehired employees begin benefits just as any other new employee. Previous tenure will not be considered in calculating longevity, leave accruals, or any benefits unless approved in advance by the Township Manager or as required by law.

An applicant or employee who was terminated for violating policy or who resigned in lieu of termination from employment is not eligible for rehire.

## **IV. WORKPLACE SAFETY**

### **A. Drug-Free Workplace**

Meridian Township has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of employees and to the security of our equipment and facilities. For these reasons, Meridian Township is committed to the elimination of drug and/or alcohol use and abuse in the workplace.

Meridian Township prohibits all employees from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, using, or being under the influence of an illegal drug, alcohol, or marijuana in or on Township premises or while conducting Township business. This prohibition applies to marijuana. Employees are also prohibited from misusing legally prescribed or over-the-counter (“OTC”) drugs.

The policy outlines the practice and procedure designed to correct instances of identified alcohol and/or drug use in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees and all applicants for employment of the Township. The Human Resources Department is responsible for administration of the drug and alcohol policy.

Employees must report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications’ effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely and promptly disclose any work restriction to Human Resources. In some positions, employees will not be permitted to return to work if they have restrictions. The Human Resources Department will make the final determination regarding return to work restrictions. The following work rules apply to all employees:

- Whenever employees are working, are operating any Township vehicle, are present on Township premises, or are conducting related work off-site, they are prohibited from:
  - Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing, dispensing an illegal drug (which includes possession of drug paraphernalia).
  - Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug or abusing over-the-counter drugs.
- The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug or illegally controlled substance in an employee’s body while performing Township business or while in a Township facility or vehicle is prohibited.
- Employees must not perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting the employee’s ability to safely perform their job duties. If an employee is aware that a prescription drug they are taking may impact their ability to perform their job duties safely, they must notify the Human Resources Department of that concern.
- Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

Meridian Township reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol, or other contraband. All employees may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas, and property that might conceal drugs, alcohol, or other contraband. Employees who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspection are subject to appropriate discipline up to and including termination.

### **B. Employee Assistance and Drug-Free Awareness**

Illegal drug use, abuse of legal medications, and alcohol/drug misuse have a number of adverse health and safety consequences. Information about those consequences and sources of help for drug/alcohol problems are available from the Human Resources Department, which can make referrals and assist employees who may be struggling with their use of drugs and/or alcohol.

The Township will assist and support employees who voluntarily seek help for such problems before becoming subject to discipline and/or termination under this or other policies. Such employees may be allowed to use accrued paid time off, be placed on leaves of absence, referred to treatment providers, and otherwise be accommodated as required by law. Such employees will be required to document that they are successfully following prescribed treatment and to take and pass follow-up tests if they hold jobs that are safety sensitive or that require driving or if they have violated this policy previously.

### **C. Required Drug and Alcohol Testing**

The Township retains the right to require the following tests:

- **Pre-employment:** All applicants to positions designated by the Township as requiring a drug test must pass a drug test after receiving an offer of employment. Refusal to submit to testing will result in disqualification for further employment consideration. Pre-employment testing for marijuana will be restricted to positions specifically identified by the Township in its sole discretion.
- **Reasonable Suspicion:** Employees are subject to testing based on observation of apparent workplace use, possession, or impairment by a supervisor. The Human Resources Department must be consulted before sending an employee for reasonable suspicion testing.
- **Random Drug and Alcohol:** Employees in safety-sensitive positions requiring a CDL are subject to random testing as required by the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- **Post-accident:** Employees may be subject to testing when they cause or contribute to accidents that damage a Township vehicle, machinery or equipment, and/or result in an injury to themselves or another employee requiring off-site medical attention. In any of these instances, the investigation and subsequent testing will take place immediately or within two (2) hours at a facility equipped to do such testing.
- **Follow-up:** Depending on the circumstances and the employee's work history/record, the Township may offer an employee who violates this policy or tests positive the opportunity to return to work on terms acceptable to the Township, which could include follow-up drug testing at various times and frequencies.

#### **D. Consequences for Violation of Drug-Free Policies**

Applicants who are required to but fail to take a valid drug test or who test positive will not be hired. Employees who fail to cooperate in required tests or who use, possess, buy, sell, manufacture, dispense, or work under the influence of an illegal drug in violation of this policy are subject to termination. If an employee tests positive for alcohol or illegal drug use in violation of this policy, the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Employees will be paid for regularly scheduled work hours when they are sent for alcohol/drug testing and during any paid suspension pending the results of the drug/alcohol test. After the results of a test are received, a date/time will be scheduled to discuss the results of the test. This meeting will include a member of management, union (if applicable), and the Human Resources Department.

#### **E. Confidentiality of Drug-Test Information**

Information and records relating to test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and medical explanations provided to the Human Resources Department shall be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from regular personnel files.

#### **F. Violence in the Workplace**

Employees are expected to refrain from conduct that may be dangerous to others.

The Township encourages employees to bring their disputes to the attention of their supervisors and the Human Resources Department before a situation escalates.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, resident, or a vendor will not be tolerated. Township resources may not be used to threaten, stalk, or harass anyone at the workplace or outside the workplace. The Township handles threats as it does other forms of violence.

Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of actual violence, and suspicious activities should be reported as soon as possible to supervisory personnel, Human Resources, or the Police Department. Employees should not place themselves in danger during an incident.

Employees should promptly inform the Human Resources Department of any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area.

The Township will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of violence or incidents of actual violence, and of suspicious activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected to the extent possible under applicable law. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the Township may suspend employees suspected of workplace violence or threats of violence, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone found to be responsible for threats of or actual violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **G. Safety**

It is the responsibility of each employee to conduct all tasks in a safe and efficient manner complying with all federal, state, and local safety and health regulations and Township standards, and with any special safety concerns for use in a particular area.

Although most safety regulations are consistent throughout each department, each employee has the responsibility to identify and familiarize her/himself with the emergency plan for their working area. Each facility shall have posted an emergency plan detailing procedures in handling emergencies such as fire, weather-related events, and medical crises.

It is the responsibility of the employee to complete an Incident and Accident Report within 24 hours for each safety and health incident/accident that occurs by an employee or that the employee witnesses. Failure to report such an incident/accident may result in employee disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The Human Resources Department and Township shall have the responsibility to develop and the authority to implement the safety and health program in the interest of a safer work environment.

## **H. Right to Know**

Meridian Township adheres to all applicable Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“MIOSHA”), federal, state, and local regulations concerning workplace safety. Township employees shall be informed of what hazardous substances are in the workplace and shall also be trained how to properly work with these substances, label these substances as appropriate, and document these substances. Employees who have concerns regarding the Township’s workplace safety guidelines are encouraged to contact supervisory personnel, Managers, Directors, or the Human Resources Director.

## **I. Smoke-Free Workplace**

It is the policy of Meridian Township to prohibit smoking and use of tobacco/nicotine products on all Township premises. Smoking is defined as the “act of lighting, smoking, or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette, or pipe of any kind, including vaping e-cigarettes.” Tobacco/nicotine products include chewing tobacco, all smoked tobacco products, and all other forms of smokeless tobacco or nicotine-delivery products.

The smoke-free workplace policy applies to

- All areas of Township buildings.
- All Township-sponsored off-site conferences and meetings.
- All vehicles owned or leased by the Township.
- All visitors to the Township premises.
- All contractors and consultants and/or their employees working on Township premises.
- All employees, temporary employees, interns, seasonal workers, and visitors.

Smoking and use of tobacco products is only permitted in parking lots that are at least 50 feet from any municipal building including, but not limited to, the Township Hall, the Public Safety Building, the Service Center, and all Fire Stations. Meridian Township is not required to give employees any additional breaks for smoking other than the breaks granted to employees outlined in this Personnel Policy Manual. Littering after the use of smoking and tobacco products (including cigarette butts) will not be tolerated on any Township property and offenders may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **V. WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS**

### **A. Performance Expectations / Code of Conduct/**

The Township is a professional work environment and expects employees to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Employees are expected to:

- Be respectful of other's time.
- Be punctual when arriving to work and meetings.
- Focus on Township matters and minimize personal and social distractions during working time.
- Be attentive and respectful in interactions with colleagues, vendors, and residents.
- Communicate important matters to colleagues and supervisors in a professional and timely manner.
- Be a willing and eager learner of new skills.
- Be receptive to constructive feedback and coaching.

In addition, the Township also maintains a code of conduct to ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the Township, as well as to protect the rights of all employees and officials. Although it is impossible to create an all-encompassing list of prohibited behaviors, below is a list of examples of unacceptable workplace behaviors that may result in discipline up to and including termination. This list in no way modifies the at-will employment relationship between employees and the Township.

- Falsification of timekeeping records and any employment application statements.
- Any discourteous treatment of the public, other Township employees or officials, or residents.
- Working under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or marihuana.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs or marihuana in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment.
- Theft in any form.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment or discrimination.
- Extensive absenteeism or any absence without notice.
- Unauthorized use of employer telephones, mail system, Internet, or computer networks.
- Unauthorized use of employee personal telephones, Internet, or computers during work hours.
- Unauthorized use of Township credit cards or use of Township credit cards in violation of the Purchasing Policy.
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential Township information

- Socializing that interferes with work performance or impacts the public’s perception of Township operations.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct including insubordination.
- Abuse of Township property.
- Violation of personnel policies, Township ordinances, department rules, or federal, state, or local laws.’

In general, the Township expects that common sense, professionalism, and general decency will govern personal conduct. Please contact the Human Resources Director if you have any questions regarding the Township’s Code of Conduct.

**B. Professionalism & Civility**

The Township has a strong commitment to providing an inclusive, non-discriminatory, and professional workplace. Employees of different backgrounds and perspectives add unique insights to the workplace and help foster innovation while providing great value to the Township.

The Township serves its residents best when functioning as a strong team. As such, the Township expects that staff from all departments, at every level of the Township, treat each other as respected and valuable colleagues. To promote an inclusive and well-functioning workplace, the Township requires employees to act in a professional and courteous manner to each other and the public.

All Township employees are expected to support a professional and civil workplace by adhering to the following guidelines for conduct in their interactions with colleagues, supervisors, the public, and vendors:

- Treat others with dignity and respect.
- Ensure that critiques of others are well meaning and constructive. Focus on what can be improved.
- Foster teamwork and participation from others with differing experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.
- Seek out insights and input from others with different experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.
- Remain open-minded and listen when given constructive feedback regarding others’ perception of your conduct.

Any manager or Department Director who is aware of conduct inconsistent with this Policy should immediately engage the employee in question in a dialogue to understand their perspective. If necessary, the Human Resources Department should be engaged to ensure this Policy is adhered to and that employees, the public, and vendors are treated with dignity and respect.

Certain unprofessional and non-constructive behavior may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.

### **C. Confidentiality**

In the course of employment with the Township, employees may encounter confidential information that is not subject to disclosure under the law and should not be made known to the public. Confidential information does not include information the public would be entitled to receive under statutes such as the Freedom of Information Act and does not include information relating to the terms and conditions of employment with the Township such as wages, protected concerted union activity, and workplace complaints. Confidential information will not be disclosed to external parties or to other employees without a legitimate business reason. If a Township employee has any questions about whether information is considered confidential or whether any external party has a legitimate business reason to see confidential information, they must check with their supervisor, Department Director, or the Human Resources Director.

### **D. Media Contacts**

All media inquiries should be referred to the Township Manager, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, or the Communications Manager as applicable. Employees may not speak on behalf of the Township unless authorized to do so by the Township Manager, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, or the Communications Manager.

### **E. Conflicts of Interest**

Township employees must avoid any relationship or activity that might impair, or even appear to impair their ability to make objective and fair decisions when performing their jobs. Township property, information, or business opportunities may not be used for personal gain.

Certain conflicts of interest (or the appearance of conflicts) may include, but are not limited to:

- Obtaining or continuing outside employment that may impair an employee's Township work responsibilities.
- Hiring family members or closely related persons especially within the same supervisory chain of command, where the employee may have a personal interest.
- Serving as a board member for an outside organization, where the employee's responsibilities to the organization could conflict with the employee's responsibilities to the Township.
- Accepting gifts, discounts, favors, or services from a business or other outside entity based on one's status as a Township employee.

Township employees shall be required to submit an annual conflict of interest disclosure.

## **F. Gifts and Favors**

No employee shall solicit, directly or indirectly, or accept any gift, whether in the form of service, loan, thing, or promise, from any person, firm, corporation, or other entity having business before the Township that may influence their Township decision making or may have the appearance of influencing their Township decision making. Although it is not possible to outline all gifts that will be acceptable and all that are improper, the value of the gift, the prominence of any external party's branding, and the public visibility of the gift or favor shall all be relevant factors in determining whether a gift is improper.

If a Township employee has any questions about whether a gift or favor is improper, they must check with their supervisor, Department Director, or the Human Resources Director. When in doubt, an employee should err on the side of politely declining a gift.

## **G. Outside Employment**

Employees may engage in outside employment in accordance with the following limitations. In no case shall outside employment conflict with or impair work responsibilities to the Township. Outside employment is defined as any paid employment a Township employee participates in outside of their Township work responsibilities.

Any full-time employee desiring to participate in outside employment must obtain written permission from their Director and the Human Resources Director prior to beginning their outside employment. Unless granted expressed written permission from the Director and Human Resources Director, a Township employee shall not be allowed to engage in any outside employment while on a paid or unpaid leave of absence from the Township where benefits may be maintained.

Employees engaged in outside or supplemental employment shall:

- Not use Township facilities as a source of referral for private customers or clients.
- Not be engaged in outside employment during the employee's regularly scheduled working hours.
- Not use the name of the Township or any Township agency as a reference or credential in advertising or soliciting customers or clients.
- Not use any Township supplies, facilities, staff, or equipment, including computers or technology, with any outside employment or private practice.
- Maintain a clear separation of outside or supplemental employment from activities performed for the Township.
- Not cause any incompatibility, conflict of interest, or any possible appearance of a conflict of interest.

The Township retains the right to review and change any decisions granting a Township employee permission to obtain or participate in outside employment while employed by Township. Approval shall be reviewed at least on an annual basis.

## **H. Attendance and Punctuality**

Attendance and punctuality are critical to the service the Township provides to its residents. Therefore, employees are expected to be on time and present at work when able. Except as restricted by applicable law, patterns of absenteeism or tardiness may result in discipline even if the employee has not yet exhausted available paid time off. Absences due to illnesses or injuries that qualify under the Earned Sick Time Act (“ESTA”) and/or Family and Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) will not be counted against an employee’s attendance record. Medical documentation within the guidelines of the ESTA and FMLA may be required in these instances. Vacation and personal leave must be scheduled with one’s supervisor in advance. Sick leave may be used in the case emergency or sudden illness without prior scheduling.

Not reporting to work and not calling to report the absence is a no-call/no-show and is a serious matter. Unless an employee is incapacitated and notice to the Township is impracticable:

1. The first instance of a no-call/no-show will result in not less than a written warning.
2. The second separate offense may result in more serious discipline up to termination of employment.
3. **A no-call/no-show lasting three days will be considered job abandonment and will be deemed an employee’s voluntary resignation of employment.**

## **I. Attire and Grooming**

As public servants, it is important for all employees to project a professional image while at work by being appropriately attired. Township employees are expected to be neat, clean, and well-groomed while on the job. Clothing must be consistent with the standards for a business environment and must be appropriate to the type of work being performed. Employees in Township departments required to wear uniforms must do so and apply by all uniform policies implemented by the specific department.

The Township is confident that employees will use their best judgement regarding attire and appearance. Management reserves the right to determine appropriateness. Any employee who is improperly dressed will be counseled or, in some cases, may be sent home to change clothes.

Examples of unprofessional attire include but are not limited to:

- Sweatpants, loungewear, pajamas, exercise wear, flipflops, slippers, shorts, and any pants or jeans that are worn through or that have tears or holes.
- Beachwear, sleeveless t-shirts, and clothing that exposes the lower back or stomach.
- Any clothing with a printed message, slogan, political message/endorsement, picture, or art depicting drugs, alcohol, sex, weapons, violence, or anything that is obscene, disrespectful, or offensive.

In keeping with appropriate attire and grooming, the Township allows reasonable self-expression through personal appearance unless it conflicts with an employee’s ability to perform their position effectively or it is regarded offensive or harassing towards co-workers, residents, or others with whom the Township conducts business.

The Township permits employees to wear jewelry, piercings, or to display tattoos at the

workplace with the following guidelines. To make this determination, management will consider whether jewelry, piercings, or tattoos poses a conflict with an employee's job or work environment, considering:

- Personal safety of self or others.
- Productivity or performance expectations.
- Offensiveness to co-workers, customers, residents, vendors, or others in the workplace based on racial, sexual, religious, ethnic, or other characteristics or attributes of a sensitive or legally protected nature.

If management determines an employee's jewelry, piercings, or tattoos is not appropriate for the work environment, the employee will be encouraged to identify appropriate options, such as removal of excess or offensive jewelry, piercings, covering of tattoos, or other reasonable means to resolve the matter.

#### **J. Electronic Communication and Internet Use**

The following guidelines have been established for using the Internet, Township-provided cell phones, and e-mail in an appropriate, ethical, and professional manner:

- All technology systems used by the Township (telephones, facsimile machines, photocopiers, computers, printers, voice mail, e-mail systems, and other technology) are for Township business purposes and are provided to further our goals and service to the public. Employees must use common sense and adhere to appropriate work behavior when using the Township's technology systems.
- Any personal use of personal communication devices should be limited in duration and frequency so that it does not interfere with the employee's work responsibility or adversely affect the productivity of the employee or the employee's co-workers.
- Internet, Township-provided equipment (e.g., cell phone, laptops, computers), and services may not be used for transmitting, retrieving, or storing any communications of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, or pornographic nature.
- The following actions are forbidden: using abusive, profane, or offensive language; creating, viewing, or displaying material that might adversely or negatively reflect upon the Township or be contrary to the Township's best interests; and engaging in any illegal activities, including piracy, hacking, extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement, and unauthorized access of any computers and Township-provided equipment such as cell phones and laptops.
- Employees may not copy, retrieve, modify, or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission or as a single copy reference only.
- Employees should not open suspicious e-mails, pop-ups, or downloads. Employees may not install hardware or software, or engage in any other sort of file downloading or uploading without permission of the Township Manager, or their designee. Contact IT with any questions or concerns to reduce the release of viruses or to contain viruses immediately.

- Text messages and e-mails are public records if they relate to Township business and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation and to the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”). Be aware of this possibility when sending text messages and e-mails within and outside the Township.

Violation of these rules or other misuse of Township technology or other actions that undermine the Township’s cybersecurity may be the subject of discipline up to and including termination.

**K. Right to Monitor**

All Township-supplied technology and Township-supplied work records belong to the Township and not to the employee. The Township may routinely monitor the use of Township-supplied technology. Inappropriate or illegal use or communications may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**L. Solicitation, Distribution, and Posting of Materials**

Except with respect to protected labor relations activities, the Township prohibits the solicitation, distribution, and posting of material on or at Township property during worktime, except as may be permitted by this policy.

Except for protected labor relations activity:

- Non-employees may not solicit employees or distribute literature of any kind in the workplace during worktime.
- Employees may only admit non-employees to work areas with management approval or as part of a Township-sponsored program. These visits should not disrupt workflow. An employee must always accompany the non-employee. Former employees are not permitted in Township workspaces unless on official business or invited by management. Protected labor relations activities are not permitted during scheduled working hours in the workplace unless prior approval is received.
- Employees may not solicit other employees during work times, except in connection with a Township-approved or sponsored event for employees.
- Employees may not distribute literature of any kind during work times , except in connection with a Township-sponsored employee event.
- The posting of material on employee bulletin boards or electronic announcements are permitted so long as they are not done during working times or in work areas.

Violations of this policy should be reported to the Human Resources Department and are subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment.

**M. Employee Travel and Reimbursement**

Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses and applicable IRS mileage reimbursements incurred in connection with approved travel on behalf of the Township. Employees must complete and submit proper forms provided by the Township to be eligible for reimbursement. Employee travel beyond 50 miles within the State of Michigan requires approval by the Department Director and all travel outside the State of Michigan requires approval by the

Township Manager.

**N. Use of Township Equipment**

The use of Township equipment for other than official Township business is strictly prohibited.

**O. Township Vehicles**

Vehicles are authorized for use in conjunction with official duties or while in service only, unless otherwise specified within Department policy, subject to review and approval of the Township Manager, or by Township Board action.

All other Township vehicles, assigned or pool vehicles, will be used for official business only. Trips for personal business, other than breaks when the employee is in the field, will not be permitted. Employees shall not permit persons to drive Township vehicles who are not approved to do so.

All vehicles will be operated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local traffic laws. Operators are responsible for reasonable vehicle maintenance checks (gas, oil, fluid levels, tires, unusual operation symptoms, noises, interior and exterior cleaning, etc.) and reporting vehicle problems to the Township mechanic.

Employees who receive a moving violation(s) may have the use of Township vehicles restricted by the Township Manager and may be subject to discipline.

## **VI. TIME OFF/LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### **A. Holiday Pay**

Meridian Township recognizes paid holidays each year:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday (4 hours)
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

Should a holiday fall on a weekend, the holiday will be observed on the workday closest to the holiday.

To qualify for holiday pay, employees must report to work on their regularly scheduled work day immediately preceding and immediately after the scheduled holiday, unless the employee is on vacation or is otherwise excused by their supervisor, except that holiday pay will not be paid to an employee who is on an unpaid leave of absence of one (1) week or more during which the holiday falls.

If an employee terminates their employment, he/she will not receive pay for holidays occurring after the last day worked.

Employees who observe religious holidays not observed by the Township may request time off from the Department Director. If granted, such time off will be the employee's vacation or personal time. Holiday pay only applies to those holidays listed in this Section.

### **B. Vacation**

All permanent full-time and part-time employees are eligible for vacation leave benefits. Part-time employees working 20 to 29 hours per week will earn vacation on a pro-rated basis. For purposes of vacation leave, full-time employees are those working 30 or more hours per week.

Vacation accrual begins on the first day of the month following the hire date for full-time or permanent part-time employment. Vacation is accrued according to the schedule in this policy. Vacation leave will not be earned during an unpaid leave of absence.

To schedule vacation time, employees should submit a completed leave form to the employee's supervisor at least two weeks before the requested leave.

Employees must ensure that they have enough accrued leave available to cover the dates requested. Requests will be approved based on several factors, including department operating and staffing requirements. The supervisor should return the leave request to the employee within three business day of the date it is submitted indicating that the request has been approved or denied.

### ***Vacation Benefits Schedule***

Each full-time employee not within an organized bargaining unit shall accumulate vacation monthly up to a maximum of 25 working days (200 hours). The Township Manager may waive the maximum accumulation of vacation time upon written request of the employee. Vacation shall be earned according to the following schedule of continuous and completed years of service:

- Start through 4 years = 8 hours per full month worked
- 5 years through 9 years = 10 hours per full month worked
- 10 years and over = 14 hours per full month worked

Regular part-time employees earn vacation in a pro-rated amount.

If an employee resigns or retires after giving at least a two-week notice of their intent to resign or retire, that employee shall be paid for their accrued but unused vacation leave earned through the last day of active employment. Employees who do not give proper notice or who are involuntarily terminated for any reason shall not receive any payout for accrued but unused vacation time.

### **C. Personal Leave**

Personal leave days are made available to provide for pressing personal business which cannot be conveniently scheduled on the employee's time off. Each full-time employee shall be allowed three (3) paid personal leave days (24 hours) each calendar year with full pay and pro-rated if the employee is employed for less than one year. Regular, part-time employees receive pro-rated hours based on hours worked. Paid personal leave days must be used by the end of the calendar year. Personal leave may not be changed to sick or vacation leave, and shall not be cumulative. Personal leave also may not be used in conjunction with regularly established vacation periods and may not be scheduled consecutively at the end of the calendar year. Unused leave will be forfeited at the end of the calendar year.

#### **D. Sick Leave**

All regular full-time employees accrue sick leave at a rate of 8 hours per month beginning on the date of hire.

Regular, part-time employees accrue sick leave immediately after hire in a pro-rated amount using the full-time total of 8 hours per month and the average number of hours the part-time employee works per week. Employees may carry over no more than 880 hours of sick leave from one year to the next.

All other employees accrue 1 hour of sick leave for every 30 hours they work. Seasonal employees, interns, and irregular employees may not use accrued sick leave until they have completed 120 calendar days of employment.

Employees may use sick leave for the following purposes as outlined in the Earned Sick Time Act, as amended:

1. An employee or family member's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of the employee or mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or preventative care for the employee or their family member.
2. An employee or a family member is the victim of domestic violence or sexual assault and needs time off for medical / psychological care, to obtain services from a victim services organization, to relocate, to obtain legal services, or to participate in any civil or criminal proceedings.
3. For a meeting at the employee's child's school or place of care related to the child's health or disability or the effects of domestic violence or sexual assault on the child.
4. For the closure of the employee's workplace or the employee's child's school or place of care if such locations are closed due to a public health emergency or it is determined by a health care provider that the employee or a family member's presence in the community would jeopardize the health of others due to exposure to a communicable disease.

An employee using sick time for any reason other than listed in this Section may be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Employees must request foreseeable uses of sick leave at least 7 days in advance. For unforeseeable sick leave usage, the employee must call in before the start of their shift unless emergency circumstances make that impossible. If an employee is unable to call in prior to the start of their shift for legitimate reasons, the employee must call in as soon as possible thereafter. Directors may require substantiation of sick leave if an employee misses more than three (3) consecutive workdays. If such examination is required, the Township will pay all out-of-pocket costs that would have otherwise been incurred by the employee.

Upon separation of employment, full and regular part-time employees shall receive payment of 1/4 of their accumulated sick leave which is paid into the employee's ICMA/RHS account, provided at least two (2) weeks written notice of separation is given by the employee, and providing no abuse of sick leave takes place during the final two (2) weeks of their employment. Employees who are involuntarily terminated by the Township are not entitled to any payout for unused sick leave and all such leave is forfeited. Employees who retire shall receive payment for one-half of their accumulated sick leave, which shall be paid into the employee's ICMA/RHS

account, provided the employee has given the Township 30 days prior notice of retirement. Seasonal employees, interns, and irregular employees are not eligible for any payout of unused sick leave upon separation. If an employee is separated from employment for two or more months, their sick leave bank shall be reset to zero upon any subsequent rehire.

Employees who have accumulated 500 or more hours of unused sick leave at the beginning of any calendar year, have the option to sell back to the Township up to forty hours of sick leave at the end of the calendar year. Payment shall be based on the employee's current hourly rate of pay as of December 31 of that year.

#### **E. Bereavement Leave**

An employee who wishes to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their supervisor immediately.

Paid bereavement leave is granted according to the following schedule:

- Employees are allowed three days of paid leave in the event of the death of the employee's spouse, child, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, stepson, stepdaughter, grandparent, grandchild, or spouse's grandparent. Based on extenuating circumstances, a Director, the Human Resources Director, or the Township Manager may grant leaves in excess of three days for bereavement.
- Employees are allowed one day of paid leave in the event of death of the employee's aunt, uncle, nephew, or niece.

#### **F. Jury Duty**

Upon receipt of notification from the state or federal courts of an obligation to serve on a jury, employees must notify their supervisor and provide them with a copy of the jury summons. The Township will pay a regular full-time and regular part-time employee their regular straight time rate which he/she would have earned if working. If jury duty ends before an employee's scheduled shift ends, he/she may either return to work or take personal or vacation leave for the remainder of the day. In order to receive payment, an employee must give the Township at least two (2) days' prior notice that he/she has been summoned for jury duty, furnish satisfactory evidence that he/she reported for or performed jury duty on the day(s) for which he/she claims payment, and submit payment(s) received for jury duty, less mileage paid, to Human Resources/Payroll.

### **G. Election Leave**

Employees who are chosen to serve as an election official other than with the Township will be permitted to take required time off to serve in this capacity. It is incumbent on employees who are chosen to act as election officials to notify their supervisor or Director a minimum of seven (7) days in advance of the need for time off in order to accommodate the necessary rescheduling of work periods.

### **H. Military Leave of Absence**

Meridian Township is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal and state law, it is the Township's policy that no employee or prospective employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination on the basis of that person's membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Specifically, no person will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion, or other benefit of employment on the basis of such membership. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised their rights under applicable law or Township policy. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of Township policy, the employee should immediately contact Human Resources.

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are eligible for benefits under this policy. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the Uniformed Services, including Reservists and National Guard members, for training, periods of active military service and funeral honors duty, as well as time being spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service.

Employees requesting leave for military duty should contact the Human Resources Department to request leave as soon as they are aware of the need for leave.

### **I. Lactation/Breastfeeding**

For up to one year after a child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding their child will be provided reasonable break times as needed to express breast milk for her baby. The Township will designate a private room for this purpose. Breaks of more than 30 minutes in length will be unpaid, and the employee should indicate this break period on her time record.

### **J. Paid Parental Leave**

This policy provides eligible Township employees with the opportunity to be provided up to four (4) weeks of Paid Parental Leave Time for the birth of a child, or placement of a child with you for adoption.

1. Eligibility:
  - A. Must be a permanent full-time employee with twelve (12) months of service accrued.
  - B. Employee must be the biological parent who has given birth to a new child, the spouse of that biological parent, or committed partner of that biological parent, OR be the legally designated guardian of a minor child up to and including age 5 who is newly adopted. The adoption of a spouse's child is not eligible for this benefit.
  - C. Employee must not have taken any Paid Parental Leave Time under this policy in the 12-month period immediately preceding the date Paid Leave begins.
  - D. Paid Parental Leave is predicated on the understanding that the employee will return to work after the conclusion of the Paid Parental Leave time. If it is known that the employee will not be returning to work following the leave, this benefit may be denied or discontinued. An employee who fails to return to work on or before the conclusion of their approved Paid Parental Leave period shall be deemed to have voluntarily resigned from the Township.
2. Procedure
  - A. Employee shall provide at least 30 days' notice (unless due to the circumstances this would not be possible) to their Department Director and the Human Resource Department as to their intent to use Paid Parental Leave Time.
  - B. Employee must specify in the written notice the total amount of Paid Leave employee plans to take not to exceed four (4) calendar weeks. Paid Parental Leave Time is not subject to extension.
  - C. Paid Parental Leave Time will commence immediately upon the birth of the child OR the legal placement of the adoptive child.
  - D. Employees must provide proof of the date of the birth or adoption within 30 calendar days of the birth or placement of the child.
  - E. If an employee is a parent or adoptive parent to multiple new children at the same time, (i.e. birth of twins or adoption of two eligible children simultaneously) it shall be considered one event for the purposes of the Paid Parental Leave Time program and will not increase the length of leave for the employee.
  - F. For FMLA-eligible employees, the FMLA provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave following the birth or adoption of a minor child. Any Paid Parental Leave utilized under this policy will run simultaneously with any available FMLA leave for the same qualifying event. It is the intent of this policy that Township employees will remain in a paid status during part of the FMLA period allowed for the birth or adoption of a child.
  - G. Employees who are eligible and provide timely notice and adequate proof as required under this policy will be approved for Paid Parental Leave time not to exceed four (4) calendar weeks, beginning on the effective date of the event. The Township shall continue to pay the employee at their base rate of pay, including any increases that would normally occur under the covered period. An employee's job remains protected during the period of Paid Parental Leave. Paid Parental Leave must be used consecutively and is not permitted to be used intermittently.

- H. If an employee elects to voluntarily return to work prior to the conclusion of the Paid Parental Leave Time period, they will only be paid for the time they took, and will receive no additional Paid Parental Leave Time.
- I. The Employee shall remain eligible for all Township benefits and will continue to accrue leave time while on Paid Parental Leave Time, in accordance with their collective bargaining agreement, contract, or letter of understanding or employment.
- J. Employees who are on Paid Parental Leave are not eligible for overtime pay, as they are not actively working. An employee whose requested Paid Parental Leave Time falls on a scheduled holiday will receive Paid Parental Leave Time pay but will not receive additional holiday pay. Employees are ineligible to work alternative employment during the period of Paid Parental Leave time.
- K. It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to administer this Paid Parental Leave program. It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to notify the employee and the Department Director of the employees expected return date based on the approved Paid Parental Leave period.

## **VII. BENEFITS**

For more information regarding benefits programs, please contact the Human Resources Department or refer to the Township Summary Plan Descriptions, which were provided to employees upon hire. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of this Manual and the terms of any insurance or plan document, the insurance or plan document shall apply.

### **A. Medical and Dental Insurance**

The Township currently offers regular full-time employees regularly scheduled to work a minimum of 30 hours per week enrollment in medical and dental insurance coverage options in effect the first day of the month following their first day of work after hire.

Insurance elections are fixed for the remainder of the plan year. Changes in family status, as defined in the Plan document, allow employees to make midyear changes in coverage consistent with the family status change. Please contact the Human Resources Department to determine if a family status change qualifies under the Plan document and IRS regulations.

During open enrollment, employees may change medical, dental, and vision elections for the following year. An employee may refuse medical insurance coverage at their will. Such refusal must be documented in writing and submitted to the Human Resources Department.

The Township will pay an employee each month if medical coverage is refused, but an employee waiving coverage must acknowledge that the Township has offered him or her affordable minimum essential coverage, as defined under the ACA and that he or she understands the consequences of the waiver of coverage.

The Township reserves the right to change insurance carriers and terms and conditions of insurance coverage at any time with the goal that the fundamental provisions of the coverage will not be changed.

The Human Resources Department is available to answer benefits plan questions and assist in enrollment as needed.

### **B. Flexible Spending Account**

The Township currently offers an employee-funded flexible spending account (“FSA”) to regular full-time employees. Plan participants may elect an annual amount of flexible dollars to pay for eligible health care expenses, including medical or dental insurance deductibles, copayments, and out-of-pocket costs for vision care and other types of care.

If eligible medical or dental expenses are less than the elected annual amount of flex dollars for that calendar year, the balance may be held over to use for 2 months 15 days in the next calendar year. Claims must be submitted by March 31 for the previous calendar year to be applied to that balance.

### **C. Group Life Insurance**

The Township provides regular full-time employees an employer-paid basic group term life policy along with an accidental death and dismemberment policy. Each policy pays a death

benefit equal to the employee's salary to the next multiple of \$1,000, subject to the terms of the policy as to an age reduction in benefits and other terms.

#### **D. Long-Term Disability Benefits**

The Township offers regular full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work a minimum of 30 hours per week a non-contributory long-term disability ("LTD") base plan. This non-contributory base plan provides for monthly LTD benefits of 60% of basic monthly earnings to a pre-determined maximum benefit less any other offsets. Eligible employees are automatically enrolled as of the first day of the calendar month following their first date of work after hire. Long-term disability coverage terminates on the last day of employment.

Please direct any questions about long-term disability benefits to the Human Resources Department.

#### **E. Retirement**

- **401(a) Defined Contribution Plan:** The Township offers a contribution plan, requiring employee contributions and Township contributions, for eligible employees.
- **457 Deferred Compensation Plan:** Available to eligible employees.

The benefits are outlined in the plan documents which are available in the Human Resources Department. Please direct any questions about retirement benefits to the Human Resources Department.

#### **F. Workers' Compensation Benefits - Coordination with Township Benefits**

An employee who receives compensation under the Michigan Workers' Compensation Act may supplement workers' compensation benefits with the use of sick leave but only to the extent that the sick leave, together with workers' compensation benefits, does not result in take home pay that exceeds what the employee would have received for working their regular shift. An employee will not accrue additional vacation, sick leave, personal leave, or holiday pay while receiving workers' compensation. The Township will provide health, dental, and vision insurance benefits equivalent to those received by active employees for up to a total of six (6) months while an employee is on a leave covered by workers' compensation.

#### **G. Employee Assistance Program ("EAP")**

Through the Township's employee assistance program, the Township provides confidential access to professional counseling services. The EAP, available to all employees, offers problem assessment, short-term counseling and referral to appropriate community and private services. This service is provided on behalf of the Township by Sparrow Health System.

The EAP is confidential and is designed to safeguard an employee's privacy and rights. Contacts to, and information given to, the EAP counselor may be released to the Township only if requested by the employee in writing. There is no cost for an employee to consult with an EAP counselor. If further counseling is necessary, the EAP counselor will outline community and private services available. The counselor will also let employees know whether any costs associated with private services may be covered by their health insurance plan. Costs that are not covered are the responsibility of the employee.

## **H. COBRA**

Eligible employees shall have the right to continue group health coverage for themselves and their dependents when they terminate employment at the Township. Such coverage is subject to the provisions of the COBRA laws and will be at the employee's expense.

Employees who terminate their employment with the Township or who experience another qualifying event under the provisions of the COBRA law will be advised of their rights by the Township.

## **VIII. COMPENSATION**

### **A. Overtime Pay**

Non-exempt employees who work more than 40 hours in a workweek will be paid time and one half for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

Employees who anticipate the need for overtime to complete their work must notify their supervisor in advance and obtain approval before working hours that extend beyond their normal schedule.

If an employee is assigned to light duty or on work restrictions, they will not be assigned or permitted to work overtime hours except in emergency circumstances as designated by the Department Director. This overtime exception must be approved in advance by the Director of Human Resources and the Director to whom the employee reports.

### **B. Compensatory Time**

Non-exempt employees paid at an overtime rate for hours worked over 40 in a workweek may elect to receive compensatory time to be used for additional time off. Time worked over 40 hours in a workweek will be eligible for compensatory time if the additional time worked is approved in advance by the Director or Human Resources Director. Compensatory time is earned at the rate of one and one-half hour for each hour worked over 40 hours in a workweek. Accumulated compensatory time may be taken off only upon approval of the Director and Human Resources Director. Compensatory time may not be used before or after a scheduled vacation or a holiday.

An employee may not carry over more than forty (40) hours of compensatory time from one calendar year to the following calendar year. If it is not convenient to grant the use of compensatory time prior to the end of a calendar year, the Township Manager, in their sole discretion, may pay an employee for such compensatory time as he or she determines appropriate.

### **C. Longevity**

The Township will pay longevity pay to employees according to the following schedule of continuous and completed years of service:

- 5 through 9 years = \$320
- 10 through 13 years = \$640
- 14 through 17 years = \$960
- Over 17 years = \$1,280

Longevity payments must be earned (as of the end of five (5) years and paid in the first pay period thereafter) of any calendar year. For the purposes of computation, years of service shall be measured from the last date of continuous employment with the Township. Elected Officials are not eligible to receive longevity payments. Pro-rated longevity payments shall be made to an employee at retirement or to an employee who is currently, or has been, on an unpaid leave within the previous year who is otherwise eligible for longevity.

## **IX. UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **A. Objective**

The objective of the Township in implementing and enforcing this policy is to define unlawful workplace harassment, prohibit it in all forms, provide procedures for lodging complaints about conduct that violates this policy, investigate claims of unlawful harassment, and carry out appropriate disciplinary measures in the case of violations.

### **B. Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, Full-Time, Part-Time, Seasonal, Interns, and Volunteers of the Township, as well as for citizens, vendors, visitors, or contracted employees. All employees, including Supervisors, Managers, and Directors will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for any violation of this Policy.

### **C. Workplace Harassment**

The Township expects employees to respect the dignity and rights of others. Consistent with our policy of equal employment opportunity, harassment or discrimination in the workplace based on a race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, citizenship status, veteran status, gender identity or expression or any other characteristic protected by applicable law will not be tolerated. It is the Township's policy that all employees are responsible for assuring that the workplace is free from discrimination and unlawful harassment against any employee, including sexual harassment and harassment on the basis of their protected characteristics. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on or ridiculing an individual's protected characteristic will not be tolerated. Any employee found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **D. Prohibited Conduct – Discrimination**

It is a violation of this Policy to discriminate in the provision of employment opportunities, benefits or privileges; to create discriminatory work conditions; or to use discriminatory evaluative standards in employment if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or in part, an individual's race, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, pregnancy, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, marital status, veteran or active military status, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic. Discrimination violates this Policy regardless of whether the applicant or employee actually has the protected characteristic or is merely perceived to have it.

Discrimination in violation of this Policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

### **E. Prohibited Conduct – Harassment**

The Township prohibits unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, and will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this Policy. For purposes of this Policy, harassment is any disrespectful or unprofessional conduct that is not welcomed by the person being harassed and is designed to threaten, intimidate or coerce an employee, co-worker, or any person working for or on behalf of the Township and is based solely or in part on the individual's race, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, pregnancy, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, marital status, veteran or active military status, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic. Harassment violates this Policy regardless of whether the applicant or employee actually has the protected characteristic or is merely perceived to have it. Harassment also violates this Policy when it's based on a combination of two or more protected characteristics or the protected characteristic of someone with whom the applicant or employee is associated, such as a family member or friend.

The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this Policy:

- Verbal harassment includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's race, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, pregnancy, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, marital status, veteran or active military status, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic, including epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- Nonverbal harassment includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of race, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, pregnancy, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, marital status, veteran or active military status, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic.
- Such unlawful harassment or discrimination may include epithets, slurs and derogatory remarks, stereotypes, jokes, posters, cartoons or any form of stalking or bullying based on individual's race, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, pregnancy, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, marital status, veteran or active military status, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic.

### **F. Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently persistent or offensive to unreasonably interfere with an employee's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working

environment.

There are two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment can be physical and psychological in nature. Employees are prohibited from sexually harassing other employees whether or not the incidents of harassment occur on Township premises and whether or not the incidents occur during working hours. Meridian Township adheres to all federal, state, and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws.

Though sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct, some examples of specifically prohibited conduct include the following:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as rape, sexual battery, molestation, or attempts to commit these assaults, and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body, or poking another employee's body.
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, or other sexual comments, such as sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the Township workplace.
- Retaliation for sexual harassment complaints.

#### **G. Retaliation**

As used in this Policy, "retaliation" means any adverse employment action taken against an applicant or employee because that person participated in activity protected under this Policy or reasonably thought to be protected under this Policy. Examples of protected activities include, but are not limited to:

- Reporting or assisting someone in reporting suspected violations of this Policy.
- Cooperating in investigations or proceedings arising out of a violation of this Policy.
- Filing a complaint with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

"Adverse employment action" is conduct or an action that materially affects the terms and conditions of the applicant's or employee's employment status or is reasonably likely to discourage the person from engaging in a protected activity. Even actions that do not result in a direct loss of compensation or in termination may be regarded as an adverse employment action when considered in the totality of the circumstances.

The Township will not permit coercion, intimidation, retaliation, interference, or discrimination

for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. However, the Township may take disciplinary action if an employee:

1. *Intentionally* files a false complaint; *or*
2. *Intentionally* provides false information during an investigation or review of a complaint.

Complaints made in good faith, even if they are not substantiated by an investigation, will not subject the employee to discipline or termination. The Township will also take appropriate steps to assure that the person against whom such an allegation is made is treated fairly.

Any person who is found to have violated this aspect of the Policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

## **H. Complaint Resolution Procedures**

### **1. Employees**

If an employee believes that they have been subjected to unlawful harassment on the basis of sex or any other protected characteristic or any unwelcome attention on the basis of a protected characteristic, they must report the incident to their own supervisor and the Human Resources Director. They may address the situation directly and immediately to the harasser, if they feel comfortable doing so. If the alleged harassment complaint is directly related to an employee's Supervisor, Manager or Director, the employee may report the incident to the Human Resources Director, Township Manager, or any other Director or Supervisor. In no event is an employee required to report alleged harassment to the alleged harasser.

It is important to report any and all concerns of unlawful harassment or inappropriate conduct to the Human Resources Director or a supervisor/director as soon as possible. Management must be made aware of the situation so that it can conduct an immediate and impartial investigation and take appropriate action to remediate or prevent the prohibited conduct from continuing.

A complaint may be verbal or in writing. While there is no requirement that the incident be reported in writing, a written report that details the nature of the harassment, dates, times and other persons present when the harassment occurred will better enable the Township to take effective, timely and constructive action.

### **2. Directors, Managers, and Supervisors**

Directors, Managers, and Supervisors must deal expeditiously and fairly with allegations of unlawful harassment within their departments whether or not there has been a written or formal complaint. They must:

- Take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment or discrimination seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Ensure that harassment or inappropriate sexually oriented conduct is immediately reported to the Human Resources Director or Human Resources Department (also referred to as "Human Resources") so that a prompt investigation can occur.

- Take appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring during and after any investigations or complaints.

Directors, Managers and Supervisors who knowingly allow and tolerate unlawful harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such conduct to Human Resources, are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline up to and including termination.

### ***3. Township Response / Investigation***

Upon receipt of any complaint, the Township will conduct, or will retain an outside party to conduct, a prompt and thorough investigation. The investigation may include interviews with the parties involved and may also include interviews with individuals who may have witnessed the alleged misconduct or who may have other relevant personal knowledge. The Township will investigate all reports as confidentially as permitted under the law, and participants in the investigation may be asked to maintain confidentiality during open investigations to ensure the integrity of the investigation. Retaliation against anyone who reports a violation of this Policy or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited, regardless of the merit of the complaint. Nothing in this Policy should be interpreted to interfere with any employee rights under state or federal law, including rights under the Public Employment Relations Act.

In most cases, the Human Resources Director shall conduct investigations or shall be the primary point of contact for any outside party retained to conduct an investigation. If the complaint involves the Human Resources Director or if there is otherwise a conflict that may impact or appear to impact the Human Resources Director's impartiality, the Township Manager shall conduct investigations (if properly trained to do so) or shall be the primary point of contact for any outside party retained to conduct an investigation. If the complaint involves the Township Manager or if there is otherwise a conflict that may impact or appear to impact the Manager's impartiality, the Township Supervisor shall be the primary point of contact for any outside party retained to conduct an investigation. If the complaint involves a Township Board Member, the remaining Board Members shall select from among their members who will act as the primary point of contact for any outside party retained to conduct an investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator shall deliver a report summarizing the investigative findings and making recommendations. If the investigation is conducted by the Human Resources Director, the report shall be delivered to the Township Manager. If the investigation is conducted by the Township Manager, the report shall be delivered to the Township Supervisor. If the investigation is conducted by an outside party, the report shall be delivered to the investigator's primary point of contact within the Township.

The complainant and alleged harasser shall be notified of the outcome of the investigation and whether any corrective action will be taken.

**I. Confidentiality**

To the extent permitted by law, the Township will endeavor to keep the reporting of the applicant or employee's concerns confidential; however, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when it interferes with the Township ability to fulfill its obligations under this Policy, applicable law, and any court order. All employees are required to cooperate fully with any investigation.

**J. Discipline**

Any employee who violates this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. To the extent a customer, vendor, or other person with whom the Township does business engages in unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, the Township will take appropriate action to remedy the situation and prevent further harassment or discrimination.

The Township will resolve all complaints pursuant to applicable law. If the Township determines that the complaint is valid, the Township will take prompt action designed to stop the harassment immediately and to prevent its recurrence, which may include termination of the offending employee.

If you are unclear on any provisions of this Policy, please contact the Human Resources Director for more information.

## **X. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA) POLICY**

### **A. Purpose**

The Township will comply with the Family and Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) and will grant up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave during a 12-month period to eligible employees (or up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave).

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with a general description of their FMLA rights. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, employees will be afforded all rights required by law. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the Human Resources Director.

### **B. Reasons For Leave**

The following is a list of valid reasons for purposes of taking FMLA leave. If the reason for leave falls under one or more of the following categories and if the employee is eligible, FMLA leave is available.

1. Birth of the employee’s child and after-birth care.
2. Placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
3. To care for the employee’s spouse, son, daughter or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition.
4. For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job.

### **C. Special Military Related Leave**

The law provides for the following two (2) types of special FMLA leaves available only to eligible employees of family members serving in the Armed Forces.

1. Active Duty Injury or Illness. An eligible employee is granted up to a maximum total of 26 workweeks of unpaid, job protected leave within a single 12-month period of time in order to care for the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, next of kin or parent of the employee who has a serious injury or illness incurred as a member of the Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves while on active duty.
2. Qualifying Exigency. An eligible employee is granted up to a maximum total of 12 workweeks of unpaid, job protected leave within a 12-month period of time due to any “qualifying exigency” (emergency, crisis, circumstance, difficulty, hardship) arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter or the employee’s parent is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a “contingency operation.”

**D. Eligibility Requirements.**

Even if the reason for needing FMLA leave qualifies under one or more of the categories listed above in this Policy, an employee must also meet the eligibility requirements established by the law. FMLA leave is available only if an employee satisfies all of the following three (3) eligibility requirements:

Requirement #1. The employee requesting leave must have been employed by the Township for at least 12 months.

AND

Requirement #2. The employee requesting leave must have actually worked at least 1,250 hours with the Township during the immediately preceding 12-month period of time.

AND

Requirement #3. There are a combined total of 50 or more employees employed by the Township either at or within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

Employees on FMLA Leave will be required to use available sick time until such time is exhausted. After sick time is exhausted, employees may choose to utilize other forms of paid leave or to go unpaid during the remainder of the FMLA leave.

**E. Intermittent Leave or a Reduced Work Schedule**

Employees may take FMLA leave in one consecutive block of time or may use the leave intermittently. In all cases, the leave may not exceed a total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks to care for an injured or ill service member) in a 12-month period.

The Township may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate the intermittent or reduced schedule in instances when leave for the employee or employee's family member is foreseeable and for planned medical treatment, including recovery from a serious health condition or to care for a child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care.

For the birth, adoption or foster care of a child, the Township and the employee must mutually agree to the schedule before the employee may take the leave intermittently or work a reduced-hour schedule. Leave for birth, adoption or foster care of a child must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the child.

When leave is needed for planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the Township's operations.

**F. Employee Status and Benefits During Leave**

The Township will continue an employee's health benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee was continuously at work.

While on paid leave, the employer will continue to make payroll deductions to collect the employee's share of insurance premiums. While on unpaid leave, the employer will cover the cost of insurance premiums. When an employee returns from an unpaid leave of absence, they

will be expected to make arrangements with the Township to repay the value of those insurance premiums. If the payment is more than 30 days late, the employee's health care coverage may be dropped for the duration of the leave. The Township will provide 15 days' notification prior to the employee's loss of coverage.

If the employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member or a circumstance beyond the employee's control, the Township will require the employee to reimburse the Township the amount it paid for the employee's health insurance premium during the leave period.

If the employee contributes to a life insurance or disability plan, the Township will continue making payroll deductions while the employee is on paid leave. While the employee is on unpaid leave, the employee may request continuation of such benefits and pay their portion of the premiums, or the Township may elect to maintain such benefits during the leave and pay the employee's share of the premium payments. If the employee does not continue these payments, the Township will discontinue coverage during the leave. If the Township maintains coverage, the Township may recover the costs incurred for paying the employee's share of any premiums, whether or not the employee returns to work.

#### **G. Employee Status After Leave**

Generally, an employee who takes FMLA leave will be able to return to the same position or a position with equivalent status, pay, benefits and other employment terms. The position will be the same or one that is virtually identical in terms of pay, benefits and working conditions. The Township may choose to exempt certain key employees from this requirement and not return them to the same or similar position when doing so will cause substantial and grievous economic injury to business operations. Key employees will be given written notice at the time FMLA leave is requested of their status as a key employee.

## **XI. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION/ AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND AMENDMENTS ACT (ADAAA) POLICY**

It is the policy of the Township to provide reasonable accommodations in employment to qualified individuals with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on Township operations or would change the essential functions of the position. Retaliation against an individual with a disability for using this policy is prohibited. The Township is committed to its legal obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act including the interactive process.

In general, it is the responsibility of an applicant or employee with a disability to inform the Human Resources Director that a need for an accommodation exists or that some adjustment or change is needed to perform the essential function of a job because of limitations caused by a disability. Generally speaking, any request for an accommodation should be made in writing within 182 days or sooner after you know or reasonably should have known of the need for accommodation.

When the Human Resources Director is so notified, the Human Resources Department initiates the interactive process with the individual by requesting the employee to identify what accommodations are requested (if known) and to provide appropriate medical documentation. A form for accommodation requests (to be supported by medical documentation) is available from Human Resources. Employees can also provide requests in another format so long as the necessary information is provided. After sufficient documentation is provided, the Human Resources Director and the employee will confer as to possible reasonable accommodations (if any).

## **XII. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **A. Introduction**

In order to provide residents timely information about activities, news, and events regarding Meridian Township, the Township may administer various social media accounts. The Township also acknowledges and honors employees' rights to have their own personal social media accounts.

To promote an inclusive work environment, the Township has developed a policy for official Meridian Township social media accounts. The Township has also drafted guidelines for employees to consider while using their own personal social media accounts. If there are any questions regarding this policy, please feel free to contact the Human Resources Director.

### **B. "Official" Township Social Media Accounts**

An official Township social media account is defined as a social media account representing the Township in an official capacity (e.g. a social media account representing the Police Department). The Township retains the rights to alter any employee's access to any social media platform at the workplace and to also republish or re-use any content posted on an official Township social media account. Although not all-encompassing, the following is a list of Township regulations regarding employee use of official Township social media accounts.

- **Approval** – The creation of any official Township social media accounts must be approved by the Township Manager or by a designated appointee of the Township Manager. Only those authorized to post from official Township social media accounts are permitted to do so.
- **Adherence to Departmental Policies** – Township departmental guidelines regarding official Township social media accounts may not usurp the Township Social Media Policy. However, employees must adhere to any additional official Township social media policies set by their department. Additionally, employees operating official Township social media accounts must adhere to all Information Technology ("IT") policies.
- **Identification** – When relevant, all employees representing the Township on an official Township social media account, must identify themselves by name and role within the Township.
- **Confidential Information** – Operators of official Township social media accounts shall not share any confidential Township information including, but not limited to, pending Township litigation or personnel matters.
- **Obscene Content** – Although not an all-encompassing list, Township employees operating official Township social media accounts shall not share any content that is deemed harassing, libelous, defamatory, discriminatory, pornographic, or any material which may cause a hostile work environment.
- **Endorsements** – Employees operating official Township social media accounts shall not ,

without prior written approval from the Township Manager or by a designated appointee of the Township Manager, produce or share any content that endorses political candidates, political causes, ballot proposals, or businesses and services.

- **Intellectual Property** – Official Township social media accounts shall adhere to all federal and state laws that govern intellectual property including, but not limited to, copyright and trademark protections.
- **Document Storage** – All official Township social media content shall adhere to existing Township electronic document storage procedures and all Township Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) policies and procedures.
- **Right to Monitor** – Operators of official Township social media accounts shall have the right to monitor all content shared by these accounts as well as content contributed by the public. Additionally, operators have the right to remove content contributed by the public if the content is in violation of the External Social Media Policy. Threats or harassing material shall be reported to the proper law enforcement agency.
- **Work Responsibilities** – Operators of official Township social media accounts shall only use these accounts for work-related purposes.

### **C. Personal Social Media Use**

Meridian Township respects employees’ rights to express themselves through social media and additionally adheres to all provisions in Michigan’s Internet Privacy Protection Act.

Personal social media use is considered as employees using social media on their own personal accounts, not representing the Township in an official capacity. Although not all-encompassing, the following is a list of guidelines for an employee to consider when using personal social media.

- **Identification** – If an employee of Meridian Township identifies themselves as an employee of Meridian Township on a personal social media account, the employee should note that the account is non-official.
- **Disclaimer Recommendation** – Employees who identify themselves as Township employees on personal social media accounts may want to consider posting a disclaimer on their account stating, “The views and opinions expressed here are the views of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of Meridian Charter Township.”
- **Be Respectful** - Keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing our Open Door Policy than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage co-workers, customers, associates or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment.
- **Obscene Content** – Township employees should refrain from publicly sharing obscene content on personal social media accounts (as defined in the “Official” Township Social Media Accounts).

- **Use of Township Logos** – Township employees may not use any Township logos on their personal social media accounts without the expressed written permission by the Township Manager or by a designated appointee of the Township Manager.
- **Personal Use on Work Time** – Employees shall not use personal social media during working hours. Personal social media use may be the basis for discipline up to and including termination.

### **XIII. MILITARY LEAVE POLICY (USERRA)**

The Township values its employees who also serve in the military. It is the policy of the Township to comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act of 1994 (“USERRA”), as amended, and applicable state laws that protect job rights and benefits for veterans and members of the reserves. The laws cover all persons serving in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service commissioned corps, and the reserve components of these services, and the National Guard.

USERRA provides protection to employees who are absent from work for active duty, active duty for training, initial active duty for training, funeral honors duty, inactive duty training, full-time National Guard duty under federal direction, and a period for which a person is absent from a position of employment for the purpose of an examination to determine the fitness of the person to perform any of those duties. In addition, also protected are those in service in the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, those attending a military service academy, and those participating in a ROTC active or inactive duty training program. Covered service also includes an employee’s service as an intermittent disaster-response appointee upon activation of the National Disaster Medical System (“NDMS”) or as a participant in the authorized NDMS training program. Finally, in times of war or national emergency, the President has the authority to designate any category of persons called into the country’s service at such times as a service member covered by USERRA’s rights and protections.

#### **A. Notice Required**

An employee taking leave provided in USERRA must provide as much advance written or oral notice as possible of the need for leave, unless impossible because of military necessity or otherwise impracticable or unreasonable. Consistent with the Department of Defense recommendations, the Township requests at least thirty (30) days notice.

#### **B. Documentation**

An employee taking leave provided in USERRA is required to provide documentation confirming their military service for leave that is longer than thirty (30) days. The Township requests that employees provide documentation for all leave taken under USERRA.

#### **C. Confirmation of Service**

An employee taking leave provided in USERRA must provide the name and contact information of their commanding officer. The Township reserves the right provided in USERRA to contact the commanding officer of an employee to confirm the service related to any leave.

#### **D. Employment and Pay**

Upon presentation by a regular full-time employee of compensation records identifying the date of and payment made for the training program, the Township shall pay the difference between the compensation received for the training and the compensation that would have been received had the regular full-time employee worked as scheduled for up to ten (10) working days annually. In the event that the annual training required for an employee exceeds the ten (10) days specified above, the additional days shall be granted as a leave of absence without pay (or charged against

the employee's accumulated vacation leave, if requested by the employee).

**E. Reemployment**

Under USERRA, an employee is entitled to reemployment upon separation from military leave, if the employee:

- Was honorably discharged or terminated from service;
- Was employed in a position for which there was an expectation of continued employment;
- Has not been absent for duty in the military for longer than a cumulative period of five years, unless involuntarily retained in the military;
- Reported to work or notified their supervisor of an intention to return to work, at the proper time, as indicated within this policy.

<b>Period of Service</b>	<b>Required Employee Action</b>	<b>When Action Must Be Taken</b>
1 – 30 days	Report to work	On the next regularly scheduled work shift on the first full calendar day after service ended, plus the time for safe transportation back to their residence and eight hours of rest – OR – As soon as possible after the eight hour rest period, if, through no fault of the employee, it would be impossible or unreasonable to report within the time described in (1)
31 – 180 days	Notify their supervisor in writing of the employee's intent to return to work	Within 14 calendar days (Unless impossible or unreasonable through no fault of the employee, then the next first full calendar day that submitting the request becomes possible)
181+ days	Submit a written request for reemployment	Within 90 days after completing service

This policy may not address all issues concerning your rights during military leave. If issues arise that are not addressed in this policy, the Township will abide by USERRA and other applicable laws. Should you have any questions or require further information, please see the Human Resources Director.