



Probationary Period Policy

Policy Number: PP 4-2

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Approved By: Roger L. Stancil, Town Manager

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POLICY

The Town Ordinance provides for a probationary period as follows:

“New employees shall serve a probationary period of six (6) months, except for department heads, firefighters and law enforcement officers, who shall serve a probationary period of one (1) year.

If recommended by the department head, the probationary period may be extended up to an additional three (3) months to allow further evaluation of performance. In such cases, the employee must be notified in writing of the purpose of the extension, the conditions, and the length of time of the extension. This notice must be provided to the employee before the expiration date of the original probation period.”

PURPOSE

The purpose of a probationary employment period is to provide time for job adjustment and training to determine if the employee is qualified and capable of performing the job. It is an opportunity for both the new employee and the Town to demonstrate Professionalism and accountability. The Director of the Human Resource Development Department is authorized to issue procedures consistent with this policy.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T. VALUES



Professionalism: We are committed to the excellence and accountability of our own performance as well as the performance of the organization. We carry out our jobs efficiently and effectively, are open to feedback about our performance and show a willingness to learn.

APPROVAL

Roger L. Stancil, Town Manager



Probationary Period Procedure

Policy Number: PP 4-2

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Approved By: Cliff Turner, Human Resources Director

PROCEDURES

These procedures are issued by the Director of Human Resource Development to implement the Probationary Period Policy, PP 4-2, issued by the Chapel Hill Town Manager. These procedures may be periodically updated.

1. Probationary Period: “New employees shall serve a probationary period of six (6) months, except for department heads, firefighters and law enforcement officers, who shall serve a probationary period of one (1) year.
2. Use of Leave during Probationary Period: “During a new employee's probationary period or any extension thereof, departments may grant an employee's request to use accrued annual leave based on the operational needs of the department.”
3. Prior to the End of a Probationary Period: “Before the end of the probationary period, the supervisor shall recommend to the department head whether the employee shall be retained, have the probationary period extended, or be terminated.”
 - a) Supervisor Responsibility: The supervisor is responsible for keeping track of the employee's probationary period.
 - b) Employee Performance Management Systems: The Town provides an employee performance management system that is set up to manage communications, set expectations, and provide feedback during an employees' probationary period. Supervisors should use this system during an employee's probationary period.
 - c) Recommendation made prior to end of Probationary Period: The supervisor must make a recommendation to the Department Head before the end of the probationary period after the employee's hire date regarding whether the employee should be retained, have the probationary period extended, or be terminated.
 - d) HRD involvement: HRD must receive a copy of the written recommendation for the employee's personnel file no later than the end of the probationary period. Notes on the employee performance review can serve as the recommendation.
 - e) Employee to be notified: Employees should be notified as to their status no later than the end of their probationary period.
4. Extension for Up to Ninety (90) Days: “Upon recommendation of the Department Head, an employee's probationary period may be extended for up to ninety (90) days to allow further evaluation of the employee's performance. In such cases, the employee must be notified in writing of the purpose of the extension, the conditions, and the length of time of the extension. This notice must be provided to the employee before the expiration date of the original probation period.”

PROCEDURES
CONT.

a) Human Resource Development must be consulted before an employee's probationary period can be extended.

5. Examples of When an Extension Might Be Considered:

a. A probationary employee has been absent from work at a critical point or for a substantial period, which has delayed proper evaluation.

b. An employee has had initial performance issues which are improving but not yet resolved.

6. Unsatisfactory Work Performance during Probationary Period: "A probationary employee whose work is judged unsatisfactory should receive feedback on how to correct the unsatisfactory performance. This feedback is intended to assist the employee in understanding and fulfilling the responsibilities of the position at a satisfactory level. This feedback should include specific methods of correction and a timetable for making the corrections." A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is an acceptable method of providing feedback to the employee.

7. Termination during Probationary Period: "If the employee fails to achieve satisfactory performance during the probationary period, the employee may be terminated. A probationary employee terminated during their probationary period or extension with proper notice, will be paid for unused accrued annual leave."

8. Other Reasons for Termination: An employee may also be terminated during the probationary period for negligence in the performance of duties or for detrimental personal conduct. Employees terminated for these reasons will be paid for any unused accrued annual leave.

9. Grievance Process: Probationary employees have access to the grievance process. ([Code of Ordinances, Section 14-127](#)).

FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS

None.

PROCEDURES
APPROVED BY

Cliff Turner, Human Resources Development Director



ADDITIONAL
CONTACTS

Human Resource Development 919-968-2700 or HR@townofchapelhill.org
Ombuds office 919-265-0806 or Ombuds@townofchapelhill.org
Employee Assistance Program 1-800-326-3864

DEFINITIONS

None.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All Employees are expected to:

- a) Be aware of the Town's Probationary Period Policy and Procedure
- b) Ask questions about anything they do not understand

All Supervisors/Managers are expected to:

- a) Know when a new employee's probationary period ends and monitor accordingly
- b) Provide training and other resources to help probationary employees achieve satisfactory work performance during their probationary period, and provide ongoing feedback to probationary employees about their work performance
- c) Make recommendations about continuing a probationary employee's tenure with the Town to the Department Head before the end of the probationary period.

All Department Heads are expected to:

- a) Monitor the work performance of probationary employees and work with supervisors to assure that probationary employees have access to training and resources to help them achieve satisfactory work performance.
- b) Make determinations about converting an employee to non-probationary status
- c) Determine when an extension of probationary status is warranted and follow procedures to inform the employee prior to the end of the initial probationary period

All Human Resource Development staff members are expected to:

- a) Assist employees, supervisors, managers, and Department Heads in understanding and implementing the Probationary Period Policy and Procedures.

SCOPE

This policy covers all regular full and part time employees except the Town Manager, Deputy Town Manager, and Assistant Town Managers.

POLICY HISTORY

Adopted May 2001
Revised and Reissued July 1, 2017

This policy replaces and supersedes any previous Town policies, departmental policies, handbooks, or unwritten policies or practices covering the same subject. Departmental policies in compliance with this policy are referenced in Section XI **Related Information**. In the event of any disparity between this policy and the Town's Code of Ordinances and/or applicable local, state, or federal laws, the Town's Ordinance and/or applicable laws shall prevail.

RELATED INFORMATION

[Town of Chapel Hill Code of Ordinances 14-42](#)
[Town of Chapel Hill Code of Ordinance 14-127](#)