

CITY OF  
ESTD.  1909  
**WALKER**  
LOUISIANA  
*City Living Country Charm*

## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



*Revised December 9, 2024*



# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

## FORWARD

This employee handbook is to be utilized as a basic reference concerning policies and procedures, privileges and opportunities, and obligations and responsibilities affecting employees of the City of Walker. It is intended as a convenient guide and therefore does not contain every policy and has only excerpts from others. You may obtain complete information from the actual policy documents located in the administrative offices for the City of Walker. These include the following:

- Code of Ordinances for the City of Walker
- Job classifications
- Salary structures and pay scales
  - Handbook for Municipal Officials in Louisiana (includes Lawrason Act)

Information contained in this handbook does not create any contractual rights for City employees. Policies contained in the handbook do not increase or diminish the legally enforceable rights of the City and its employees. The misapplication or failure to follow any specific provision in this handbook should not be grounds for setting aside or modifying any employment decision when it has been determined by the appropriate administrative authority that the decision was fairly made and is in the best interest of the City. Because the City is the initiator of change and is also subject to various external legal and regulatory forces requiring change, the information in this handbook will be revised as the City of Walker determines that conditions warrant.



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# CITY OF WALKER LOUISIANA

The City of Walker is a municipality located in Livingston Parish in the State of Louisiana. The City is constantly in a state of dynamic transition with a rapidly growing population and ever increasing commercial development. The public education system that serves Livingston Parish and the City of Walker is consistently ranked in the top 2 public school systems in the state based on student scores and public support. The City of Walker prides itself on its low crime rate, cleanliness of the City, and abundant recreational activities that provide an excellent atmosphere to live and raise a family.

The City of Walker is managed by a Mayor and City Council elected by a majority of the populace of the municipality and governed by the Lawrason Act of the Louisiana Legislature. The Lawrason Act sets forth the powers and duties of all elected/appointed officials and provides the mechanism for establishing those positions. In addition, and upon recommendation of the Mayor and a majority approval of the City Council, a Municipal Clerk, and Tax Collector are also officials that aid in the management of the City. The Chief of Police is an elected position in the City of Walker and is responsible for employing and managing a full-time police force.

Walker was originally named Milton Old Field for Michael Milton who claimed land in 1853. Walker post office was established in 1856 and named for state legislator William E. Walker, MD. The City of Walker was incorporated in 1909.

Today the City owns and manages its own water and natural gas systems along with a public wastewater treatment plant and collection system. Garbage collection is privatized and contracted yearly.

Fire protection is provided by Fire Protection District #4 whose income is derived from a one cent sales tax collected in Livingston Parish.

The City also manages two public parks, which provide recreational opportunities for the area residents.

## DEPARTMENTS

Several departments are established within the infrastructure of the City of Walker to ensure efficient operation of the City. A departmental supervisor that reports directly to the Chief of Operations and Department of Public Works Director manages each department and oversees personnel necessary to maintain acceptable work performance standards (exception: Police Department answers directly to the Chief of Police). The departments are as follows:

Animal Control Department	
Clerk of Court	
Gas Department	
General Administration	
Parks and Recreation Department	
Permit Department	
Police Department	
Purchasing	
Sanitation	
Street Department	
Utilities Department	
Waste / Water Department, Operations, Maintenance	



# MUNICIPAL OFFICERS

As per the requirements of and duties outlined by the Lawrason Act, the City of Walker elects or appoints the following municipal officers:

Title	Term
Mayor	elected to four-year term
Chief of Police	elected to four-year term
City Council (5)	elected to four-year term
Municipal Clerk	Recommended by Mayor, approved by majority vote of Council; serves at pleasure of Mayor and city council.
Tax Collector	Recommended by Mayor, approved by majority vote of Council; serves at pleasure of Mayor and <b>city council</b> .

One **city council person** will serve as Mayor Pro Tempore with the responsibilities as outlined in the Lawrason Act.

## TYPES OF EMPLOYEES

In addition to the Municipal Officers required by the Lawrason Act, The City of Walker has established the following appointed positions (recommended by the Mayor and approved by the majority vote of the City Council):

1. Clerk of Court
2. DPW Director
3. Chief of Operations
4. Finance Director
5. Department Head: Gas, Water/Sewer, Streets

All full-time, permanent employees of the City of Walker are considered at will employees and are subject to the provisions of this handbook. However, the Council of Lawrason Act municipalities, pursuant to R.S. 33:362, are required, by ordinance, to provide policies and procedures regulating the employment of municipal employees, including the hiring and firing of such employees. The Mayor is empowered, subject to applicable state laws, ordinances, and civil service rules, to appoint and remove municipal employees, other than employees of a police department with an elected chief of police. Additionally, the appointment or removal of non-elected municipal clerk, tax collector, municipal attorney, any department head, or the auditor is subject to approval of the city council {R.S. 33:404(A)(3)}.

Generally, all full-time employees are hired for an indefinite period of time and unspecified term and neither this handbook nor any rule, guideline, or policy promulgated supplemental to this handbook is intended to be an employment contract. The Mayor and the board shall determine the number and kinds of positions. Job descriptions shall be developed and maintained for each job category by the appropriate department head and approved by the Mayor and the board.

For the purpose of flexible staffing and to address special work requirements, the Mayor within the limitations of the budgetary appropriations, may employ temporary employees:

Rates of pay must comply with federal minimum wage and overtime requirements.

## EXCLUDED EMPLOYEES

Elected city council, temporary or contingent (seasonal or transient) employees, contract workers and student workers are excluded from the provisions of this handbook and therefore not eligible for the included employee benefits. No temporary appointment may exceed 180 days without prior approval of the Council.

## NEW EMPLOYEES / FILLING VACANCIES

Prior to a position being filled, a determination must be made by the Mayor or Chief of Police, as applicable, that a position is open and is to be filled. Also, certification must be made that sufficient funds are available within the budget to pay the employee, including fringe benefits. A vacancy refers to a newly created position or the replacement of an employee in an existing position.

- All vacancies shall be advertised for a minimum of (3) three days to ensure equal opportunity for applicants to apply for the position.
- The City of Walker and Police Department will provide each applicant with a standardized application form.
- The City of Walker will accept applications for a period of (7) seven days after close of advertisement to allow time for all applicants to complete and submit official application forms.
- Any applicant falsifying any information on the application will be dropped from consideration of employment. Any employee who provided false information on the application form will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Each applicant who has been offered employment with the City of Walker shall be required to take a drug test, provided by the City at a medical facility or laboratory of the City's choice, as a precondition to such employment. Each applicant shall have a criminal background check done prior to employment. **Individuals convicted of a felony may not be eligible for employment with the City of Walker.**
- All information obtained by the City of Walker as a precondition of employment will remain confidential, up and until the individual accepts employment with the City, at which time the records are subject to the Louisiana Public Records law (see section 'Employees Record Confidentiality').

- Police Department employees are hired on recommendation of the Police Chief with the approval of the Mayor and city council. Pursuant to the Lawrason Act LA. R.S. 33:321 et seq.
- Police Department is to follow hiring procedures outlined in Division 6 Section 2-58 et seq. of the Code of Ordinances.

## PROMOTION

The City of Walker will promote within its workforce whenever possible. However, all promotions are to be based upon work performance, education and experience, and other appropriate factors without bias.

## EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

The City of Walker shall provide and each new employee shall take part in, an orientation period consisting of reviewing the municipality's personnel ordinances, rules and policies, safety rules and regulations, employee benefits, job duties, and other pertinent rules, regulations, ordinances, and laws.

## EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES

### EMPLOYEE STANDARD OF CONDUCT

As an employee of the City of Walker, you are expected to represent the City in a professional manner at all times. In addition, the following is required:

### ACCIDENTS

- Employees are required to report any accident or damage involving City vehicles and/or equipment, however minor, to the appropriate department supervisor *immediately* even if the accident occurs after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends or holidays. A drug/alcohol test must be performed on **ALL** accidents.
- An Accident Report or Damage Report must be completed by the involved employee and submitted to the immediate supervisor within 24 hours of occurrence of the accident. The Supervisor must then submit an Accident Report/Damage Report to Administration and/or Human Resources within 24 hours.

## FATIGUE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Employees may not work more than 16 hours of secondary employment combined with regular duty. This combination of hours shall not include regular days off.
- B. Officers may not work more than 16 hours per day of secondary or extra duty employment combined with regular duty. This combination of hours shall **not** include regular days off, court overtime or other departmental overtime unless otherwise specified by the Chief of Police.

## APPEARANCE

### APPEARANCE/DRESS CODE POLICY

Employees are to dress appropriately and be neat and well groomed at all times while working. Clothes should be clean and pressed at all times. Shoes should be clean, closed-toe, and in good condition.

Employees are expected to maintain a professional standard of cleanliness and personal hygiene.

Hair must be clean, neat and if colored, maintained in a natural tone. This means no colors such as green, purple, blue, pink, etc. Shaggy, un-kept hair is not permissible regardless of the length.

Public Works employees: Hair beyond shoulder length must be tied back and restrained by either a cap or pins so that it will not catch in equipment.

City employees may wear beards, goatees and mustaches that are neatly trimmed and no more than (1) inch in length. Facial hair must be well kept and fully-grown with no patches. Goatees and beards must be kept trimmed above the neckline (above the Adam's apple). Sideburns may not pass earlobes.

Visible tattoos of an offensive nature and body piercings (excluding ears) are not allowed.

If questionable attire is worn in the office, the respective supervisor will hold a private discussion with the employee regarding the requirements of the dress policy. If the supervisor needs assistance in communicating with an employee regarding the appropriateness of his/her attire, or personal appearance, the department supervisor may be contacted for assistance.

Violation of this policy may result in reprimand or disciplinary action.

Employees seeking an exception from any of the above standards should speak with their immediate supervisor.

## ATTENDANCE

- Punctuality and consistent attendance is expected of all employees. For required absences see Leave section of Handbook.

- Any employee absent from work for three consecutive days without prior notification of his department supervisor will be considered to having abandoned and voluntarily resigned his position.

## SMOKING / VAPING

**The Louisiana Smoke Free Workplace Act of January 1, 2007, Act No. 815., prohibits smoking** not only in many public places, but also in the workplace. Smoking of cigarettes, cigars and/or any vaping devices is strictly prohibited inside *all* City of Walker buildings and property as well as in any City owned vehicles and any type of equipment. Smoking is only allowed in the designated smoking areas outside.

## PURCHASES OF MERCHANDISE WITH CITY FUNDS

No employee may enter into an agreement to obtain services or purchase items with City funds without the expressed consent of the appropriate departmental supervisor with authorization and approval of the Mayor and within the limitations of the approved budget. All purchases must be made using approved requisition obtained from the purchasing agent for the City of Walker.

## EMPLOYEE EVALUATION

The appropriate department supervisor shall evaluate the performance of each employee for the City of Walker annually. The chief of police or his designate will evaluate police personnel and the Mayor shall evaluate department supervisors. Copies of evaluations will be placed in the employee's personnel file for a minimum of three years.

- The Mayor and Council may inspect the evaluation of an employee of the City whenever the employee is a subject of a proposed personnel action such as salary increase, promotion, transfer, reprimand, demotion, suspension, or termination.
- The evaluation shall be in writing on forms approved by the Mayor and the Council (see Human Resources).
- Each employee shall receive a copy of his evaluation.
- If an employee disagrees with the performance evaluation, he may submit a written statement of rebuttal to the Mayor and Council.

## VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Employees are the most valuable resource of the City of Walker and their safety and security are essential to carrying out their responsibilities. Each employee has a reasonable expectation to perform his/her assigned duties in an atmosphere free of threats and assaults. It is the purpose of this section of the handbook to ensure the highest standards of safety for all employees, officials and visitors of the City of Walker. The City will take all reasonably available steps to protect all such persons from violence.

Recognizing the increasing incidence of violence in the workplace, the Governor of the State of Louisiana has issued Executive Order MJF 97-15 effective March 5, 1997

committing the Governor and the State of Louisiana to work toward a violence free workplace for state employees.

The City of Walker shall assume the responsibility to comply with all federal and state statutes, rules, regulations, and/or guidelines in making reasonable efforts to:

- Hire, train, supervise, and discipline employees;
- Intervene in situations of harassment in the workplace where the employer is aware of the harassment;
- Ensure employees and/or independent contractors are fit for duty, and do not pose unnecessary risk to others;
- Provide security precautions and other measures in order to minimize the risk of foreseeable criminal intrusion based upon prior experience or location in a dangerous area;
- Maintain an adequate level of security;
- Provide employee training in the City's plan, warning signs of potential of violent behavior and precautions which may enhance the personal safety of the employee at work;
- The City will warn an employee of a credible threat made by another to do harm to that employee;
- Support the application of sanctions and/or prosecution of offenders, as appropriate;
- Accommodate, after appropriate evaluation, employees who require special assistance following incidents of workplace violence;
- Cooperate with law enforcement agencies;
- Establish a uniform violence-reporting system with regular review of submitted reports;
- Initiate procedures to protect employees, who report credible threats, from retaliation; and
- Keep up-to-date records in order to evaluate the effectiveness of changes initiated to prevent workplace violence.

The employees of the City of Walker shall have the responsibility to report to the Mayor's office or Police Department, or both where applicable, all threats or incidents of violent behavior in the workplace, which they observe or of which they were informed. Examples of inappropriate behavior that must be reported include:

- An employee or visitor who may be in possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon in the workplace as described in the section on Firearms Free Workplace;
- Intimidation through verbal threats;
- Physically touching another employee in an intimidating, malicious, or sexually harassing manner, including such acts as hitting, slapping, poking, kicking, pinching, grabbing and pushing; and
- Physically intimidating others including such acts as obscene gestures, getting in your face, fist shaking, and throwing any object.

An employee who has been threatened or assaulted by another at the workplace will immediately report the situation to his/her supervisor. The supervisor to whom the incident is reported will immediately notify the Mayor and/or the City of Walker Police Department. In an emergency situation, reporting shall be made directly to the Police Department.

Written statements shall be obtained by the Police Department from all involved, including those who witnessed the incident. The statement should answer who, what, when, where, how and why of the incident while the event is still mentally fresh. The written statements should include names of all parties of the incident, including victims, subjects and witnesses.

The following actions should be taken in accordance with the severity of the incident:

**The situation is not dangerous:**

Separate the employees and witnesses involved and isolate them until they are interviewed and their statements are taken; **Document all actions and statements;**

**The situation is dangerous:**

Contact the Police Department at 225-664-3125 or 911;

Order all those presenting the danger to leave the facility immediately (unless this action must be taken by the police); Do not attempt to physically remove an individual (leave it to the police); and **Document all actions and statements.**

All incidents of violence in the workplace will result in initiation of the City's disciplinary procedures (see following section in handbook). All parties involved will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If the incident involves a member of the Police Department, the investigation will be conducted by an independent law enforcement agency. That decision will be jointly made by the Mayor and Chief of Police.

## EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

It is the objective of the City of Walker to establish disciplinary procedures for the City employees that provides:

1. Due process for the employee and,

2. Fair and equitable treatment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or veterans status.

For all employees it is imperative to ensure that the employees know what is expected of them. The duties and responsibilities of the job, along with the associated work



rules must be communicated so that the employee will be forewarned that the failure to meet job expectations will result in some form of discipline.

The type of discipline imposed should be consistent with and reflect the seriousness of the problem. It must be recognized however that some offenses (e.g. theft, fraud, serious negligence, etc.) are so serious that suspension or dismissal is required on the first offense.

Consequently, and subject to R.S. 33:404(A)(3), the Mayor may reprimand, verbally or in writing; suspend with or without pay; demote, dismiss, or deny a salary increase to an employee (excluding police personnel) for any of the following reasons:

- Any behavior that interferes with the efficient operation of the City or performance of duties of other employees.
- Performance below the accepted standards for the City.
- Failure to follow and adhere to any of the requirements of this handbook or policy of the City.
- Any other good cause as determined by the Mayor that precludes discrimination.
- The employee may appeal the suspension to the Mayor. However, the Mayor's decision is the final decision.
- The Police Department shall follow Section 2.58 of the Code of Ordinances.

For any of the reasons listed above, an employee's department supervisor may reprimand him either verbally or in writing. In addition, the supervisor may *recommend* to the Mayor that the employee be suspended with or without pay, demoted, dismissed, or denied an increase in pay. **Other than verbal or written reprimands, only the Mayor of the City of Walker has the authority to initiate disciplinary action against any City employee** (excluding police personnel).

Prior to any disciplinary action being initiated against any employee, a written statement must accompany each reason. The Mayor or the employee's supervisor shall present a copy of the statement to the employee or mail a copy of it to the employee at his last known address. At the request of the employee, the Mayor may conduct an informal meeting concerning each reason for disciplinary action. The Mayor, department supervisor, the employee, and any other person who has direct knowledge of any reason and whom the Mayor has asked to attend may attend the informal meeting.

When disciplinary action is taken, the written statement concerning each reason for the action, any written statement the employee submits in connection with any reason for the action and a notation describing the action taken shall be made a part of the employee's personnel file.

During the course of the investigation, hearing or trial of an employee on any criminal charge, or during the course of any civil action involving the employee, the Mayor may suspend the employee without pay for the duration of the proceedings as a non-disciplinary measure, when considered in the best interests of the City of Walker. Back pay shall not be ordinarily recoverable; but where the suspension is terminated by full reinstatement of the employee, the Mayor may authorize full recovery of pay and benefits for the entire period or for any lesser period of the suspension.

An employee whose performance is unsatisfactory shall be notified how his work is deficient and what he/she must do if his work is to be satisfactory. If the employee's



work continues to be below standard, the Mayor may demote or dismiss the employee subject to R.S. 33:404(A)(3).

## TERMINATION FROM SERVICE

All City of Walker employees (with the exception of police personnel) hold their positions at the pleasure of the Mayor, unless otherwise stated in the City ordinances or Lawrason Act. Services of the employees may be terminated at any time with reasonable cause by giving such employees reasonable notice. The types of termination of service are:

1. Termination with cause:
  - a. An employee, other than a department head, Municipal Clerk, or employee of the police department can be dismissed only after approval of the Mayor.
  - b. A department head or Municipal Clerk can be dismissed only upon recommendation of the Mayor and approval by the Council.
  - c. An employee of the police department can be dismissed only upon the recommendation of the chief of police and approval of the Mayor and Council, pursuant to Section 2.58 of the Code of Ordinances.
  - d. Employees terminated with cause will be dismissed immediately.
2. The City must terminate employees through no fault of the employees:
  - a. The employee with the least seniority in the department shall be laid off first provided, in the opinion of the department supervisor that all employees not laid off due to higher seniority are qualified to perform any job that is asked of them. If such employee cannot perform such job then he will be laid off in lieu of a lower ranking seniority employee who can perform the job duties that are asked of him.
  - b. A two-week severance notice shall be sent to all prospective laid off-employees.
  - c. Each laid-off employee shall, upon reapplying to the City, be considered for re-employment.

**Employees that resign voluntarily shall submit a letter of resignation to his/her department supervisor two weeks prior to the date of resignation. The City of Walker, as a recognized public municipality in the State of Louisiana, does not offer severance pay to any employee who resigns or is dismissed from their job, regardless of the circumstances of their dismissal.**

# GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Any employee may file a grievance relating to the circumstances of his employment with the following exceptions:

1. Salary recommendations can be contested only if it can be shown that there exists a significant departure from established office procedures and such departure significantly affected the decision.
2. Promotional decisions can be contested only if an employee can demonstrate that established promotional policies or procedures were not followed or were unfairly applied.
3. Work activity that reasonably may be expected to be part of the employee's regular job position.
4. Work activity accepted by the employee as a condition of employment.
5. The specific contents (rather than an interpretation of the contents) of any municipal employee personnel ordinance, policy, guideline, or regulation.
6. Methods, means, and personnel by which the Mayor and department supervisors choose to carry out the responsibilities properly assigned.
7. Elimination of a position or layoff of an employee.

Any question concerning whether a specific grievance may be made is solely at the discretion of the Mayor and/or the Chief of Operations.

**The employee must first discuss the grievance with their immediate supervisor within five (5) business days of the date of occurrence.**

If the grievance is not resolved, the following procedure must be followed.

1. The employee shall file a written grievance (contact Human Resources for forms and instructions) and submit it to their department head within five (5) business days of meeting with their immediate supervisor.
2. The department head will meet with and prepare a written response to the employee's written grievance within five (5) business days.
3. Copies of the grievance and response are to be provided to Human Resources and the Mayor's office by the department head within three (3) business days of the grievance being filed.

If the employee is not satisfied with the department head's response:

1. The employee must appeal the decision in writing to the Mayor within five (5) business days after receipt of the department head's response. (Contact Human Resources for forms and instructions.)
2. After receipt of the appeal the Mayor, at his discretion, may meet with the employee, the employee's supervisor, and/or the department head.

3. The employee, employee's supervisor, and/or the department head may be asked to present written documentation and testimony.
  4. The Mayor will provide the employee with his written decision concerning the appeal within five (5) business days.
  5. The decision of the Mayor is final.
- If the department supervisor and/or department head fails to fulfill their obligations in the appeals process in the mandated time frame, the employee may appeal directly to the Mayor.
  - If, after the appeals procedure has begun, the employee fails to fulfill his obligations in the appeals process in the mandated time frame, the appeal shall be dropped.
  - At any stage of the appeals process, the most recent decision that has been rendered on the complaint or appeal shall remain in force until such time as that decision has been upheld, reversed, or modified.
  - Back pay shall not ordinarily be recoverable; but where the disciplinary action is reversed or modified, the Mayor may authorize full recovery of pay and benefits for the entire period or for any lesser period.
  - Retaliation for filing a grievance is strictly prohibited. No employee shall take reprisal action against an employee who uses the grievance procedure, serves as an advisor, or participates in any way (i.e. witness) in the grievance process. Any employee violating this provision against retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
  - No employee shall use an official position in an attempt to improperly influence the grievance procedure.
  - The decision to utilize the grievance procedure shall not deny any employee the right to file a charge of unlawful discrimination with the appropriate state and/or federal agencies.
  - Copies of the official grievance and appeals forms are available from Human Resources. These forms are to be used by all employees seeking resolution of a grievance under the grievance procedure. No formal grievance may be considered unless it is properly made on the official forms as supplied by Human Resources.

## EMPLOYEE RECORDS CONFIDENTIALITY

It is the intent of the City of Walker to establish reasonable balance among (1) Requirements of the Louisiana Public Records law, (2) Privacy rights of individual employees of the City, and (3) Availability of information necessary to accomplish the purposes of the City.

The courts have ruled that certain records may be exempt from the Public Records Law because the nature of the information is so personal that the disclosure of the records would constitute an invasion of privacy, according to Article 1, Section 5 of the Louisiana Constitution.

Exemptions include but may not be limited to:

1. Police records pertaining to pending or reasonably anticipated criminal litigation.
2. Home address and telephone numbers of public employees when the employees request that they be kept confidential, and any medical and insurance records of the employee.
3. Any personal tax return or the information contained in any tax return. However, the name and address of any person who obtains an occupational license, the information on the license and information as to whether an occupational license has been issued to a particular person shall be public records.

The City of Walker may maintain the following types of records in personnel files:

1. Personnel Records – any record maintained in any administrative office of the City in connection with the recruitment and employment of any person whether the record is stored in printed or written form, micro graphically, electronically or otherwise. Such records include but are not necessarily limited to letters of application, personal resumes, letters of recommendation, academic records, materials furnished by a placement service, appointment forms, records of promotion or other changes in status subsequent to appointment, salary raises, leave accrual, personnel action, performance evaluations, and correspondence in the employee’s personnel folder between the individual employee and any administrative officer of the City.
2. Employee Medical Records – medical records of an employee relating to the employment relationship between the employee and the City or, if related to worker’s compensation, may only be maintained in a secure file separate from the employee’s personnel file. Because medical records of an individual employee may involve worker’s compensation matters, only the Mayor and board may have access to the information
3. Law Enforcement Records – records held by a law enforcement agency, including the City of Walker Police Department, except for the initial arrest record, do not become public records until such time as any criminal charges have been finally adjudicated or otherwise settled. Such records may only be made a part of an employee’s personnel record if directly bearing on the employment relationship and, in any case, only in the personnel records of the City.
4. Office of Internal Auditing – working papers and other materials gathered by City auditors become available as public records only in the form of a completed audit report upon its issuance. Audit reports may only be made a part of the employee’s personnel records if applicable to employee discipline.
5. Grievance and Disciplinary Hearings – Papers, notes, tapes, and minutes of grievance or disciplinary proceedings are not personnel records until such time as those proceedings are completed.

Conditions for access of records:

1. All City employees may review their own official personnel records. The personnel record of any individual will be made available to him or her upon written request.
2. The City does not provide information about applicants for employment until such time as they become employees. The resumes of applicants for employment, therefore, will be considered confidential unless the applicant agrees to the release of the information or until the applicant becomes an employee of the City.
3. The Mayor and Council will have access to the personnel files of all employees. The Custodian of Records may give access to the files to any administrative officer or other employee of the City who, in the judgment of the custodian of the personnel record, must have access in order to carry out his/her duties. Custodians will also provide access to files in response to court orders and subpoenas but should consult with the City's legal counsel before doing so.
4. All persons having access to personnel files will regard the contents (other than directory information) as confidential and will not divulge such contents to prospective employers, credit agencies, governmental agencies or to other persons except as specified above or with the expressed written consent of the employee.
5. Access to medical records is available only to the Mayor and Council. Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding necessary restrictions in the work or duties of the employee and necessary accommodations resulting from medical information contained in such information.
6. Breach of personnel records confidentiality by any employee of the City will be considered cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

### PAYROLL

All City employees (including police officers) are paid bi-weekly. Supervisors are responsible for maintaining an accounting of the time worked by each employee in their department and accurately report this time to the payroll clerk by 1:00 p.m. Monday.

- Payroll Deductions. There are two types of deductions, those required by law and those authorized by you.

The law requires that regular amounts be deducted from your pay and applied toward payment of your federal and state income taxes, if applicable, and contribution to Social Security. You are responsible to notify payroll of tax deduction changes in writing.

- Full-time employees shall be compensated according to the City of Walker's pay plan.

- Each employee must personally account for his own time.
- Any employee who falsifies a time card or sheet will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

All employees are required to participate in direct deposit; therefore, your earnings will be deposited by the City directly into the bank account that you designate. Forms to sign up for the direct deposit requirement are part of the new employee orientation package or may be obtained from Human Resources, Payroll or administrative offices. In addition, the City's accounting/payroll department will deduct insurance and applicable medical benefits from your check prior to taxes being withheld if you are part of the offered cafeteria savings plan. However, participation in the cafeteria plan is optional and changes may be made to the plan only on the open enrollment period.

To ensure proper withholding of taxable deductions, you must immediately report any change in the number of dependents claimed on your withholding forms to the accounting/payroll department. In addition, as a new employee, all appointment and necessary forms must be completed and returned to the accountant/payroll office promptly to ensure payment in a timely fashion.

**Payday:** Employees of the City of Walker are to be paid bi-weekly, receiving their paychecks on Friday. If for reasons beyond the control of the City of Walker the checks cannot be distributed by this time, they are to be distributed as soon as possible thereafter. All payroll checks will be direct deposited no later than Friday of the week of payroll.

**Pay Plan and Practices:** The City of Walker maintains a classification and pay plan for all jobs in the government. Job classifications are determined based on actual job duties. Similar duties and responsibilities are grouped together but this does not mean that every job in a classification will be identical.

Job classifications are assigned to pay grades and each employee within a classification will be paid at a designated step within that pay grade. Pay, as much as possible, will be based on what is currently being paid for similar jobs in the area. Increases to pay are not automatic but will be determined each year based upon the budgetary and financial constraints of the City of Walker. It is the responsibility of the Mayor to assess the financial condition of the City and make appropriate pay recommendations in the annual budget submitted to the Council for approval.

## EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

To encourage and cultivate job satisfaction and improve job performance, all employees are encouraged to attend job related seminars and other educational meetings that are job related. Prior approval of your department supervisor and approval by Mayor or Chief of Police, as appropriate, must be attained prior to registration or attendance.

## TRAVEL

### TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

As an employee of the City of Walker it may be necessary at times to travel on official City business. Employees are eligible to receive reimbursement for travel when on official City business subject to restrictions outlined below.

1. No claim shall be made for any lodging and/or meals furnished at no cost to the employee.
2. No mileage or transportation expense will be allowed when an employee is gratuitously transported by another person.
3. The Mayor, Chief of Operations, or Chief of Police, upon recommendation of the appropriate department supervisor must approve all travel in advance.

#### Requesting Travel

Request to travel must be submitted on appropriate City forms. The requesting employee must complete and sign the forms and forward them to their supervisor. Supporting documentation must be attached to the request forms such as agendas, itineraries, registration fees, etc.

The supervisor must submit completed and signed forms to the Mayor, Chief of Operations, or Chief of Police at least five days prior to the date of travel.

#### Authorization

Approval of travel will be the final decision of the Mayor, Chief of Operations, or Chief of Police based on needs of the City, funds available for travel, and usefulness of travel for development or training.

#### Advances

Travel advances are prohibited except for overnight travel. The employee authorizes the City to deduct the amount advanced from their paycheck if travel is canceled or not completed.

#### Transportation, Lodging & Meals Guidelines

All lodging and commercial travel must be arranged through City Administration.

- Commercial travel must be arranged through City Administration unless prior approval is granted in writing by the Mayor, Chief of Operations, or Chief of Police. Common carrier must be used for out-of-state travel unless utilization of another means of travel is more cost-efficient or practical. Commercial air travel will only be arranged for coach or economy class.
- Generally, City-owned vehicles should be used for in-state travel. To drive City-owned vehicles, the employee must be at least 21 years of age. With prior approval a mileage allowance will be granted for employees using their personal vehicles for business travel in accordance with the published GSA rate for mileage. The current GSA mileage rate can be found at: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates>. To be eligible for reimbursement of personal vehicle use,



employees are required to have general liability insurance of at least \$25,000 per individual and \$50,000 per accident. Rental vehicles must be arranged through City Administration.

- Meals will be reimbursed according to rates established by The Louisiana Travel Policy section 1506(a) as amended. Receipts are not required for routine meals within these allowances. If meals exceed these allowances, receipts are required. Meal reimbursements will only be made for day travel 50 miles or more from the City of Walker according to the following qualifications:
  1. Breakfast will be reimbursed each day when travel begins at/or before 6:00 a.m. on the first day of travel or extends beyond 9:00 a.m. on the last day of travel and for all intervening days.
  2. Lunch will be reimbursed each day when travel begins at/or before 10:00 a.m. on the first day of travel or extends beyond 2:00 p.m. on the last day of travel and for any intervening days.
  3. Dinner will be reimbursed each day when travel begins at/or before 4:00 p.m. on the first day of travel or extends beyond 8:00 p.m. on the last day of travel, and for any intervening days.
- Expenses incidental to travel shall be reimbursed with receipts for the following:
  1. Communication expenses relative to City business
  2. Charges for storage and handling of equipment
  3. Public transportation such as buses or taxis when incurred as part of approved travel
  4. Tips for baggage (not to exceed \$1.00 per bag)
  5. Parking fees, ferries, and tolls
  6. Additional expenses with prior approval of the Mayor, Chief of Operations, or Chief of Police

When traveling on official business, expenses may be reimbursed by submitting receipts along with a Check Request Form to the Accounting Department. The form must be signed by the Chief of Operations, or Chief of Police prior to submission. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted no later than ten days from the end of travel.

## IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Employees may be issued official identification cards by the City of Walker for the purpose of identification as an employee of the City and allow access to City activities, facilities, and services. Each card includes a unique photograph, text, and encoded information for the individual to whom it is issued.

ID cards are the property of the City, may not be used to obtain City services after employment with the City has ended, and must be surrendered upon request by an authorized authority of the City.



## HOURS

Regular office hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Field hours are from 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

- For all full-time permanent employees, the regular work week shall be 40 hours from Monday through Thursday, except as otherwise determined and approved by the Mayor and the board.
- The workweek shall be designated as Monday through Sunday for the purpose of payroll, accounting, leave, and overtime purposes with the exception of on-call employees.
- Except as specifically required by the Mayor or the appropriate department supervisor, no employee shall begin work prior to 7:00 a.m., work during the designated lunch period, or work after 5:30 p.m.
- If it is necessary for employees, other than police personnel, to work beyond the regular workday, the Mayor or authorized departmental supervisor may authorize or require overtime work.
- If it is necessary for police personnel to work beyond the regular workday, the chief of police or his designee may authorize the overtime work.
- On Call Employees:

Walker Police Department hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Police officers for the City of Walker work consecutive 12-hour shifts consisting of 4 days and 3 days in a standard 2 week pay period. This effectively provides 84 hours per bi-weekly pay period with 80 hours at basic rate of pay and 4 hours at time and one half (see police manual for additional information). Police personnel shall perform their work during hours established by the chief of police.

## FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS AND STAFFING

The City of Walker's regular business hours shall be from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. However, individual departments may have official hours that differ in order to provide necessary services, including multiple shifts.

Departments are encouraged to consider flexible schedules when in the best interest of the employees and the City. The City of Walker recognizes that flexible schedules can improve morale, productivity and recognize the contributions made before and after normal work hours.

Flexitime is a work schedule equal to 40 hours per week but differing from the regular business hours. A flexitime schedule is appropriate only when the work schedule is beneficial to the City. Working a flexitime schedule is a privilege, not an employee right and flexible schedules are not appropriate for all job situations. Flexitime schedules may be considered using the following guidelines:

- **Service** – The level of service provided the department shall not decrease. Normally, flextime provides a wider span of service and provides staff with an opportunity to modify their work schedule to fit individual needs. Department supervisors must also consider the workload, flow of work, impact on quality and schedules as they relate to the mission and objectives of the City.
- **Coverage** – Implementation is dependent on ensuring at least minimal coverage during standard business hours, including the lunch period as appropriate. Departments should design alternate work schedules so that adequate supervision is provided. Non-supervisory employees should not be without supervision for long periods of time on a regular basis. Supervisors should be present for each alternate work schedule option.
- **Cross Training** – The department must take whatever actions are necessary to provide cross training/backup assignments in order to ensure at least minimal service for the duration of the normal work hours.
- **Policy Compliance** – Flextime should not be intended to alter the basic understanding that each employee is expected to work 40 hours in a week. Flextime does not change normal attendance requirements. It is important to remember that failure to charge an employee leave for time not worked during the normal work schedule is considered payroll fraud. Non-compliance will result in disciplinary action.
- **Approval** – The department supervisor may approve flextime schedules provided that each workday is 10 hours and a lunch period of 30 minutes to one hour is included. Supervisors shall document each employee’s flextime schedule in writing, signed by the employee and submitted to the Mayor. The Mayor has the final decision on approval/disapproval of flextime. It is the responsibility of the department supervisor to ensure that a flexible work hour’s policy is administered in an equitable and consistent manner. Failure to do so will result in the termination of the flextime schedule(s) within that department.

## OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME

The City of Walker has an overtime policy for its employees established within the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FSLA), state rules, and other pertinent laws and regulations. An ‘overtime hour’ is an hour worked by an employee, other than police personnel, at the direction of the Mayor or the authorized department supervisor and is an hour worked by a police department employee at the direction of the chief of police as per the following:

- All non-exempt City employees (other than police department employees) shall earn overtime in the amount of one and one-half (1½) times their standard rate of pay for each hour physically worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a standard 40 hour pay period as an employee of the City of Walker.

All non-exempt police department personnel shall earn overtime in the amount of one and one-half (1 ½) times their standard rate of pay for each hour physically worked in excess of eighty (80) hours in a standard two week pay period as an employee of the City of Walker.

- Consistent with the needs of the City of Walker, the appropriate departmental supervisor shall assure that each employee is allowed compensatory leave or overtime pay for all overtime worked.
- The City limits each employee's total compensatory time to 240 hours accrued. The City must pay employees for any time over 240 hours once the employee's compensatory accrual limit is exceeded.
- Compensatory leave may be taken only with the advance approval of the departmental supervisor. To the extent practicable, it should be taken within the pay period in which it was earned.
- Upon separation from the City, each employee shall be paid the value of his accrued compensatory leave in a lump sum.

All executive, administrative, and professional employees who are "exempt employees" are excluded from the Minimum Wage and Overtime Provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. All non-exempt employees will be paid at the rate of time and one-half according to the FLSA.

All employees of the City of Walker are expected to work overtime when necessary. Depending upon whether your job is exempt or nonexempt, you may be paid overtime. Any overtime scheduled must have prior supervisory approval.

All departments are required to limit the amount of paid overtime earned by an employee to the least extent possible. Typically, if an employee earns an amount of overtime more than \$5000.00 or 30% of his base salary, then alternatives to overtime should be sought. All department supervisors will be required to justify to the Mayor and Council any excessive overtime earned in their department.

The City of Walker shall designate an employee to be responsible for maintaining and processing accurate overtime records. The total number of hours worked must be accurately recorded on the employee's payroll record for that day (hours cannot be shifted to another day). Overtime submitted to payroll must be paid unless recorded as compensatory time earned.

Employees should submit written requests to take compensatory time off following the same City guidelines for requesting annual leave. Compensatory time off will also be recorded on the payroll system for the week in which it was earned. Adjustments to correct compensatory time balances (earned versus taken) must be made using the normal leave tracking system.

**On call employees** (employees who are subject to working after normal hours of business) shall be paid for one (1) hour each day they are on call at 1 ½ times their hourly wage. In addition to the one (1) hour per day "On Call" guarantee, the on call employee shall be paid for all work performed under "On Call" employment on a quarter hour basis. "On Call" hours worked shall be at 1 ½ times their hourly wage.

## LUNCH AND BREAKS

Prior to accepting employment with the City, you will be notified of the time period assigned for lunch. Standard lunch breaks shall be 1/2 hour in duration unless previously approved by the appropriate supervisor and confirmation copied to the Mayor. Lunch breaks must not exceed the allotted time. No travel time can be included in your lunch break.

## TARDINESS

If for some reason you are not able to report to work at your appointed time, you should call your supervisor and report the time that you expect to arrive for work and the reason for being late. This call should be made no later than 1/2 hour prior to your report time. You will be expected to take appropriate leave time for any time that you do not work. Excessive absences or tardiness to work may also result in disciplinary action, as your supervisor deems appropriate. Tardiness will be documented in 15 minute increments on payroll.

# INSURANCE BENEFITS

## INSURANCE PLANS

The City of Walker offers many insurance benefits including but not limited to group hospitalization, accident, major medical, dental, vision, and life insurance for full-time employees and eligible dependents. As part of a continuing effort to provide benefits to meet the varying needs of its employees and to control spiraling insurance costs, the City yearly evaluates all options for health insurance plans.

*More detailed information on the benefits of each of the plans offered as well as premium amounts and enrollment forms are available in Human Resources.*

The City of Walker may make the following deductions from the employee's paycheck when specifically authorized in writing by the employee: insurance premiums, hospital medical plan premiums, and charitable contributions.

- Enrollment in an insurance program shall be optional for each full-time employee.
- The City of Walker pays a set portion of the premium for the healthcare coverage plan. Once an employee has signed up for coverage in a health insurance plan, changes to coverage may only be made during open enrollment and due to a qualifying event.
- A Basic Term Life/AD&D insurance policy is provided for all full time employees at the expense of the City.

Supplemental insurance coverage is also offered to full time employees. The full cost of premiums for any supplemental coverage chosen is paid by the employee.

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF COVERAGE

If you enroll within your first thirty (30) days of full-time employment, your health or supplemental insurance coverage will be effective the first of the month following your first day of employment. For example, if your date of hire is July 15<sup>th</sup>, your effective date of coverage will be August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Additions or changes to the plan must adhere to the conditions set forth by the insurance policy in place at the time of employment.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

It is the policy of the City of Walker to provide social security to eligible officers and employees of the City according to the provisions of Section 1 of Act 204, Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature of 1952, as amended.

- In pursuance of this policy, and for such purpose, the officers of the City of Walker shall take such action as required by applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- The Mayor may execute any necessary agreement to secure coverage of eligible officers and employees.
- Withholdings from salaries or wages of officers and employees for the purposes provided may be made in the amounts and at the times as may be required by applicable state and federal laws and regulations and shall be paid in the amounts and at the times as are designated by law and regulation.
- Employer contributions and assessments for administrative expenses shall be paid from amounts appropriated for such purposes to the state agency in accordance with applicable state law and regulation.
- The municipal clerk shall maintain records and submit reports as may be required by applicable state and federal law or regulation.

## RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The City of Walker will provide a Retirement program for all full-time employees.

- The minimum enrollment age will be 18 years of age for both the 401(a) and 457(b) retirement plans.
- Withholding from salaries or wages of eligible employees will be made in the appropriate amount and shall be paid bi-weekly to the retirement fund.
- Full time city employees hired prior to January 1, 2014 shall receive a 9% salary contribution to the city's 401(a) defined contribution retirement program.
- Full time city employees hired after December 31, 2013: the City will provide matching funds of 50% on the first six percent of employee contribution on the first

of the month following the employee's first day of employment.

- The City's match will be applied to the first 6 percent of employee contribution to the City's 401(a) defined contribution retirement plan.

Full-time police officers and other full-time employees of the City of Walker's Police Department {as defined by R.S. 112213 (11)} can participate in retirement benefits prescribed by the Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana (R.S. 11:221 et. seq). If participation in MPERS is declined, the employee shall be eligible to participate in the City's 401(a) defined contribution retirement plan effective January 1, 2014.

New employees should consult the retirement plan handbook available from the Director of Human Resources for specifics of your retirement program. As per R.S. 11:164, no retirement benefits are provided for Council or other part-time employees, however, the Mayor remains eligible for participation

## TERMINATION OF LEAVE PAYMENTS

### TERMINATION OF SERVICE

The value of your accrued annual leave will be paid in a lump sum. All compensatory time accrued will be paid for according to value at time earned (see Overtime and Compensatory Time). No sick leave will be paid at termination of service.

## WORKER'S COMPENSATION

The City of Walker provides workers' compensation benefits to its employees (including part-time employees) in accordance with the Louisiana Workers' Compensation Law. This law is designed to protect you from loss of income due to injuries occurring on the job. This program covers every person performing services arising from and incidental to his or her employment.

If you are injured on the job, you are required to notify your supervisor immediately (if medically prudent). As part of standard City policy, all employees injured on the job will be required to submit to a drug test as soon as medically possible.

To return an employee to the workplace as soon as possible, the City will make reasonable efforts to place returning employees into a meaningful assignment, which he/she can perform while on modified duty on a temporary basis. For work to be considered suitable for modified employment, the following conditions must be met:

1. The employee must meet the required qualifications for the modified job assignment which the employee will be required to perform,
2. The work must be a meaningful and productive part of the City's operation,
3. The work must conform to the medical restrictions set by the medical care provider, and
4. The modified job assignment and/or modified work schedule cannot exceed six (6) months.

The City cannot guarantee placement and is under no obligation to offer, create, or encumber any specific position for purposes of offering placement on modified duty to an employee on workman's compensation.

For more details concerning the City of Walker's workman's compensation program, contact the Municipal Clerk's Office.



# HOLIDAYS

The City of Walker observes the following holidays:

## YEARLY HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

8 hour	10 hour	12 hour
New Year's Day	New Year's Day	New Year's Day
Martin Luther King	Martin Luther King	Martin Luther King
Presidents' Day	Presidents' Day	
Good Friday		
Memorial Day	Memorial Day	Memorial Day
4 <sup>th</sup> of July	4 <sup>th</sup> of July	4 <sup>th</sup> of July
Labor Day	Labor Day	
Veterans Day	Veterans Day	Veterans Day
Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving
Acadiana Day		
Christmas Eve	Christmas Eve	Christmas Eve
Christmas Day	Christmas Day	Christmas Day
	Employee birthday	
<b>96 hours</b>	<b>110 hours</b>	<b>96 hours</b>

- A. If holiday falls on day employee is not scheduled to work, it will be observed on regularly scheduled workday preceding or following holiday.
- B. *Excluding birthday holiday*, employee will be paid full hourly wage for holiday plus additional full hourly wage for each hour worked during holiday period (essentially 2x pay).
- C. Holiday pay must be provided to the employee in addition to any hours worked during this period. All overtime rules will apply for calculation of wages. Employees are eligible for holidays beginning the date of hire.
- D. Only full-time employees shall be eligible for holiday pay. Employees in non-paid status the day before or the day after the holiday shall not be eligible for holiday pay.
- E. The Mayor, with the approval of the Council, may increase/decrease the number of holidays for a particular year with justification.

*All 10 hour full time employees are eligible for a day off with pay for their birthday. In the event that the birthday falls on a weekend, other paid holiday, or on a day in which the City is closed, the birthday holiday may be taken on any other day during the week following the actual birthday (the specific date must be approved by the employee's department head). In the event that two employees have the same birthday, and having two employees at the same time absent would impact operations, the department head may choose an alternative date for one of the two employees.*



# LEAVE

## ANNUAL LEAVE

Employees will be allowed to accrue vacation leave each pay period at an accrual rate based on years of service and the number of hours actually worked, not including overtime, pursuant to Chart One below. Hours may be carried over annually until the employees next anniversary date pursuant to Chart Two below. The Mayor may approve additional carryover of leave upon his discretion. Any leave approved by the Mayor to be carried over in excess of the maximum allowable, **must be used within the first six (6) months after employee's anniversary date.** Unused vacation leave will be paid out upon termination up to the maximum allowable carryover based on years of service.

Annual leave shall begin accrual on the first day of employment. Any annual leave requested during the first six (6) months of employment must be approved by the employee's supervisor and the Chief of Operations.

### CHART ONE: ANNUAL LEAVE PER YEAR OF SERVICE

0 - 2 years	80 hours per year
3 - 4 years	120 hours per year
5 - 9 years	140 hours per year
10 - 19 years	160 hours per year
20 - 29 years	200 hours per year
30+ years	240 hours per year

### CHART TWO: MAXIMUM PAYOUT UPON TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

**There will be no maximum rollover of leave time for employees. Earned leave time will accrue and be available as needed for employees, however, upon termination, there will be a maximum payout as outlined in the chart below.**

YEARS	EARNED LEAVE	MAXIMUM PAYOUT AT TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT
0-2	80	120
3-4	120	180
5-9	140	220
10-19	160	260
20-29	200	320
30+	240	380

## SICK LEAVE

Employees will be allowed to accrue sick leave each pay period at an accrual rate based on years of service and on the number of hours actually worked, not including overtime, pursuant to Chart One below. Sick leave may be used at the discretion of the employee upon approval of his/her department head. Sick leave may be accumulated and carried forward to the next fiscal year with an unlimited amount of hours. Unused sick leave will NOT be paid out upon termination of employment.

A Doctor's excuse may be required by their supervisor for any sick leave taken depending on the employee's documented past use of sick leave. A Doctor's excuse **shall** be required for three or more consecutive days of sick leave.

Sick leave shall begin accrual on the first day of employment. Any sick leave requested during the first six (6) months of employment must be approved by the employee's supervisor and the Chief of Operations.

### CHART ONE: SICK LEAVE PER YEAR OF SERVICE

0 - 2 years	80 hours per year
3 - 4 years	120 hours per year
5 – 9 years	140 hours per year
10 – 19 years	160 hours per year
20 – 29 years	200 hours per year
30+ years	240 hours per year

## FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

It is the policy of the City of Walker to comply with all provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended.

### What is FMLA leave?

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that provides eligible employees with job-protected leave for qualifying family and medical reasons. The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) enforces the FMLA for most employees.

Eligible employees can take up to 12 workweeks (480 hours) of FMLA leave in a 12-month period\* for:

- The birth, adoption or foster placement of a child with you,
- Your serious mental or physical health condition that makes you unable to work,
- To care for your spouse, child, or parent with a serious mental or physical health condition, and

- Certain qualifying reasons related to the foreign deployment of your spouse, child, or parent who is a military service member.

\*The “12-month period” is the 12 month period measured forward from the beginning date of the actual leave.

An eligible employee who is the spouse, child, parent, or next of kin of a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness **may** take up to 26 workweeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember.

You have the right to use FMLA leave in one block of time. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, you may take FMLA leave intermittently in separate blocks of time, or on a reduced schedule by working less hours each day or week. Read FMLA Fact Sheet #28M(c) for more information.

FMLA leave is **not paid leave**, but you will be required by the City of Walker to exhaust all annual leave, sick leave, or compensatory leave depending on the nature of the absence before being placed on authorized leave without pay.

#### **Are you eligible to take FMLA leave?**

The City of Walker is considered a covered employer under the FMLA.

You are an **eligible employee** if **all** of the following apply:

- You have worked for the City for at least 12 months,
- You have at least 1,250 hours of service for the City during the 12 months before your leave

#### **How do you request FMLA leave?**

Generally, to request FMLA leave you must:

- Follow the City of Walker’s normal policies for requesting leave
- Give notice at least 30 days before your need for FMLA leave, or
- If advance notice is not possible, give notice as soon as possible.

You **do not** have to share a medical diagnosis but must provide enough information so the City can determine whether the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. You **must also inform the City if FMLA leave was previously taken** or approved for the same reason when requesting additional leave.

The City does **require** certification from a registered health care provider to verify medical leave and **will** request certification of a qualifying exigency (when spouse, child, or parent is on covered active duty or under an impending call to covered active duty).

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

State employees may be subject to certain limitations in pursuit of direct lawsuits regarding leave for their own serious health conditions. Most federal and certain congressional employees are also covered by the law but are subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or Congress.

### **What does the City of Walker need to do?**

If you are eligible for FMLA leave, the City **must**:

- Allow you to take job-protected time off work for a qualifying reason,
- Continue your group health plan coverage while you are on leave on the same basis as if you had not taken leave, and
- Allow you to return to the same job, or a virtually identical job with the same pay, benefits and other working conditions, including shift and location, at the end of your leave

The City of Walker **cannot interfere with your FMLA rights** or threaten or punish you for exercising your rights under the law. For example, the City cannot retaliate against you for requesting FMLA leave or cooperating with a WHD investigation.

After becoming aware that your need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the City must confirm whether you are eligible or not eligible for FMLA leave.

If the City determines you are eligible, you must be notified in writing:

- About your FMLA rights and responsibilities, and
- How much of your requested leave, if any, will be FMLA-protected

### **Where can you find more information?**

Contact the **Human Resources Department** at 225-665-4356 with any questions and to request forms.

Call the U.S. Department of Labor at 1-866-487-9243 or visit [dol.gov/fmla](http://dol.gov/fmla) to learn more.

*If you believe your rights under the FMLA have been violated, you may file a complaint with WHD or file a private lawsuit against your employer in court.*

## CIVIL, EMERGENCY, AND SPECIAL LEAVE

An employee shall be given time off without loss of pay, vacation leave, or leave when:

- Performing jury duty
- Summoned to appear as a witness before a court, grand jury, or other public body or commission. However, special leave cannot be granted if the employee is the plaintiff or defendant or the employee has been summoned as a witness as a result of employment other than his/her regular job.

- The Mayor’s approval determines that he is prevented by an act of God from performing duty (i.e. disaster pay)
- The employee is a member of the National Guard and is ordered to active duty incident to a local emergency.

NOTE: Paid leave is a benefit available to full-time employees. Any employee hired at less than full-time status is not eligible for paid leave.

## BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Employees may be granted two (2) days of bereavement leave with pay in the event of the death of an immediate family member or their spouse’s immediate family member. Immediate family member is defined as: parent, step-parent, child, step-child, brother, step-brother, sister, step-sister, spouse, grand-parent or grand-child; or an adult who stood in loco parentis\* to the employee during childhood.

Three (3) days may be allowed if distance to travel is over one hundred-fifty (150) miles.

Employees may be allowed up to four hours of bereavement leave with pay to attend the funeral of a fellow regular employee or retiree of the company, provided such absence from duty will not interfere with normal operations of the company.

Employees may be required to provide documentation to Human Resources verifying need for bereavement leave.

**\*in loco parentis = in the place of a parent**

## MILITARY LEAVE

Employees who are members of any branch of the United States Armed Forces shall receive up to fifteen (15) working days of paid military leave each calendar year. Upon request, employees shall be approved to use earned vacation and/or sick leave for additional periods of military service beyond the fifteen (15) days of paid leave per year. Employees who have exhausted all military, vacation, and personal leave shall be granted leave without pay while serving for a period not to exceed six (6) years. No leave is earned while on leave without pay; however, all other benefits provided by the City remain in effect with the employee being responsible for remitting payment to cover the employee portion of any premiums.

Military FMLA shall be provided as required under federal guidelines.

## LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

- Authorized leave without pay must be requested in writing in advance and may be granted to you by the Mayor or Chief of Police with Mayor’s approval, or imposed by the Mayor for an approved absence. Leave without pay will only be considered when all applicable leave pertaining to the requests for leave without pay is exhausted. Factors considered will be business necessity and impairment to public service. Reasons for granting authorized leave without pay may include but not be limited to:

- Extended illness.
  - The need to provide care for a family member.
  - Education that will directly increase job effectiveness; and/or
  - Adoption of a child.
- The Mayor may extend **authorized** leave of absence without pay to any employee for a period not to exceed six months, provided such leave shall not prolong the period of his appointment.
  - **Unauthorized** leave without pay will be assigned when you do not follow the proper guidelines for requesting leave as outlined in this handbook. Unauthorized leave without pay will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

As a City of Walker employee, the *Louisiana Employment Security Law* covers you in the event you become unemployed. If you should lose your job, this entitles you to receive unemployment compensation benefits, provided the monetary requirements established by the Employment Security Law are satisfied. Details are available from the office of the Municipal Clerk.

## EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

The City of Walker firmly supports the national plan of Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity. The City's policy of equal opportunity is administered without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, marital status, or veteran's status.

This policy also prohibits sexual or other forms of harassment, in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

The City fully embraces equality of opportunity by affirming that it will take affirmative action to ensure that all applicants receive fair consideration for employment and that employees are treated fairly in all employment practices, including recruitment, promotion, selection for training, upgrading, transfer, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, tenure, demotion, layoff, and termination.

If you have questions regarding the City's Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, you should contact the Municipal Clerk's office for more information. If you believe you have been discriminated against contrary to federal laws, you are entitled to make an inquiry or file a complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 701 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana 70113; or the U.S. Department of Education, 1200 Main Tower Building, Dallas, Texas 75202.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

The City of Walker's policy is to provide equal opportunity employment for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, participation in, treatment in, or employment pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other related federal and state law. The City prohibits discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in employment and other programs, public services, transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications. Additionally, the City is committed to promoting an atmosphere to end discrimination against individuals with disabilities, to bring persons with disabilities into the social and economic work stream and to provide enforceable standards to address discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

The City of Walker is obligated to provide 'reasonable accommodations' upon request to disabled employee applicants or employees, unless the accommodation would present an 'undue hardship'. The determination of 'undue hardship' is a decision that grows out of ADA Accommodation Assessment process and will be made jointly by the Mayor or Chief of Police, the affected department, the affected employee or applicant, and the City attorney.

If the person requesting an accommodation is not satisfied with the proposed accommodation, the person may file a formal or informal grievance according to established City policy (see employee grievance procedures).

All information obtained by the City necessary to make an accommodation decision may be disclosed only with the express written consent of the person requesting an accommodation on the basis of disability.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This represents the organizational policy of the City of Walker concerning sexual harassment. Any questions concerning the context or content of this policy should be discussed with your department head, Human Resources, Chief of Operations, or the Mayor.

It is the belief of the City of Walker that its employees are the primary means by which the goals and objectives of the municipality will be met. All employees of the City of Walker must understand its position on sexual harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when the conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment or the holding of office, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment and shall not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace are prohibited by federal law through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and by state law through La. R.S. 23:301 *et seq.* These laws prohibit both *quid pro quo* harassment, which arises when consent to sexual demands is made an express or implied condition of employment, and hostile work environment harassment, which arises when the workplace is permeated with discriminatory intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim's employment and create an abusive working environment. ***As required in R.S. 42:342-344, the City provides annual employee training and annual reporting.***



Sexual harassment may be defined as unsolicited, offensive behavior that inappropriately asserts sexuality over employees including but not limited to the following:

- a) *Verbal*: Sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, threats, sexual humor;
- b) *Non-Verbal*: Leering, whistling, obscene, gestures, showing inappropriate images; and
- c) *Physical*: Touching, brushing the body, coerced sexual activity, assault, impeding egress or passage.

Sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace shall not be tolerated and the City of Walker will take appropriate action to end any such harassment and/or prevent the recurrence of any such misconduct.

If a person's behavior makes an employee uncomfortable, the employee should feel free to immediately advise the person that, in the employee's opinion, the behavior is inappropriate, and that the employee would like it stopped.

Any employee of the City of Walker may file a complaint of sexual harassment. Any employee who believes he or she has been subjected to unlawful sexual harassment or has been retaliated against for reporting such activities or assisting in a related investigation of such activities, must report the alleged act immediately or as soon as possible to their immediate supervisor or department manager. It is not necessary for an employee to complain to an offending supervisor in order to report sexual harassment. If, for whatever reason, the employee does not feel that the persons named in this paragraph are suitable persons to whom to report the incident, the employee should contact Human Resources.

Whether or not a particular incident is sexual harassment requires a complete factual investigation, and the City of Walker will conduct such investigations on all complaints in a manner so as not to cause any serious effect on innocent employees who either file a complaint and/or may be the subject of a filed complaint. In all instances, a prompt and thorough investigation will take place, giving careful consideration to protect the rights and dignity of all persons involved.

It is mandatory that *all parties* to an allegation of sexual harassment participate in the investigation of the incident, and cooperation in the investigation of claims of harassment is an express element of each employee's employment. The City of Walker will take those steps it feels necessary to resolve the problem, which may include verbal or written reprimand, suspension, or termination. Actions taken on the complaint shall be documented.

The City of Walker will investigate by gathering information, in as confidential a manner as possible, given the need to investigate the complaint, from all concerned parties, and it will not retaliate against any employee as a result of reports of alleged harassment or cooperation with any investigation. The City of Walker may consult its legal representative for assistance in determining whether conduct that has occurred does in fact constitute sexual harassment. The City of Walker may also make subsequent inquiries from time to time to ensure offensive conduct does not resume and/or that the subject of such harassment has not suffered any retaliation.

No retaliation of any kind will be tolerated because an employee in good faith reports an incident of suspected harassment. The supervisor, or other person to whom the complaint



was made, will work to establish mutually agreed upon safeguards against retaliation while attempting to mediate any sexual harassment complaint.

Any employee, manager, or supervisor found by the City of Walker to have unlawfully sexually harassed, or unlawfully retaliated against, another employee will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination. If any employee, manager, or supervisor is found by the City of Walker to have intentionally made a false allegation of sexual harassment, that individual will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

Regardless of the outcome of the investigation by the City of Walker, a complainant may pursue a claim under state and/or federal law.

The provisions of this section effectively replace any and all previous policies for reporting sexual harassment in the workplace, including Ordinance #09-1998-01 and Ordinance 05-2011.

#### FIREARMS FREE WORKPLACE

The policy of the City of Walker is to establish a firearms free zone as provided for in Louisiana Revised Statute 14:95.6 regarding the possession of firearms and dangerous weapons within its facilities and premises (defined as real property and immovable property under the authority and control of the City of Walker). Firearms and dangerous weapons to be defined as a rifle, shotgun, pistol or revolver or any other firearm from which shot or shots are discharged by an explosive and any gas, liquid, or other substance or instrument which, in the manner used, is calculated or likely to produce death or great bodily harm.

The City will enforce all provisions of the state Criminal Code including those prohibiting possession of firearms within a firearms free zone as provided at R.S. 14:95.2. The statute does not apply to:

- Federal, state, or local law enforcement officers in performance of official duties.
- If on private property or within a private residence, within 1000 feet of City property.
- If in accordance with a concealed handgun permit issued pursuant to R.S. 40:1379.1 or if approved by the Mayor or Chief of Police.
- The Mayor may approve the carrying of a Firearm in the City vehicle's during travel.
- Constitutionally protected activities that cannot be regulated by the state such as a firearm contained entirely within a motor vehicle.

## EMPLOYEE SUBSTANCE ABUSE/DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

The City of Walker is fully committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace and a workforce free of substance abuse. Employees are prohibited from reporting for work or performing work for the City of Walker with the presence in their bodies of illegal or unauthorized drugs, controlled substances, designer (synthetic) drugs, or look alike drugs at or above the initial testing levels and confirmatory testing levels as established by the medical facilities and/or laboratories selected by the City. Controlled substances or controlled dangerous substances are described in Schedules I, II, III, IV, and V of LA R.S. 40:964 and Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. 812). Illegal or unauthorized drugs include any drug which is not legally obtainable; any drug which is legally obtainable but has been illegally obtained; prescription drugs not being used in accordance with the prescription; or any substance which affects the employee's ability to perform assigned duties safely and competently. Employees are further prohibited from the illegal use, possession, dispensation, distribution, manufacture, or sale of controlled substances, unauthorized drugs, designer (synthetic) drugs, look alike drugs, and illegal drugs at the work site and while on official business, on duty or on call for duty. The presence of illegal or unauthorized drugs, and other prohibited substances in a City vehicle while on or off duty is also prohibited. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment. Depending on the circumstances, other action, including notification of appropriate law enforcement agencies, may be taken against any violator of this policy. An employee shall notify their department supervisor and/or the Mayor on the first scheduled workday of any arrest or conviction for a criminal or drug-related offense which occurs on or off duty. Any employee arrested in connection with a criminal drug violation in the workplace will be placed on personal leave of absence without pay and could face termination of employment pending the outcome of any legal investigation and conviction.

The City of Walker desires to maintain a safe, healthful, productive, and efficient environment and workplace for its employees and volunteers and the public they serve. Employees who use illegal drugs or abuse alcohol or other controlled substances on or off duty, tend to be less productive, less reliable, and prone to greater absenteeism, substandard performance, and poor morale. This results in the potential for increased cost, delay and risk in providing services. Ultimately, they threaten the City's ability to serve the public.

### ALCOHOL

- No employee shall possess, distribute, dispense, sell, use or ingest any alcoholic beverage during work hours or on municipal premises or in the immediate premises wherever municipal work is being conducted.
- No employee shall report to work under the influence of alcohol.
- No employee may be called out to work if they have consumed alcoholic beverages within the previous twelve (12) hours. **It is the employee's responsibility to inform the department supervisor of his condition.**
- Violators of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## DRUG TESTING

All employees may be required to submit to drug testing as a condition of employment or as a condition of continued employment. Whether announced or unannounced, tests will be administered under the following circumstances:

- Each applicant for employment with the City of Walker shall submit to drug-screening as part of the pre-employment or pre-qualification medical exam. Any applicant found to test positive for a prohibited substance shall be rejected and may not re-apply for employment for a period of one year from the date of notification of the results. Any applicant refusing to submit to drug testing during pre-employment or pre-qualification shall be rejected.
- Investigation of possible individual impairment at any time there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence of a drug during work or service hours.
- Investigation of accidents or incidents involving an employee or the general public.
- Maintenance of safety for employees or the general public.
- Maintenance of productivity, quality of products or services, or security of property or information.
- Monitoring to assure compliance with the terms of a rehabilitation program or self-reporting of drug and alcoholism, at the employee's expense.

### RANDOM DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

#### Urine Drug Testing

Pursuant to U.S. DOT 49 CFR PART 199 and 49 CFR PART 40, the City of Walker requires all Gas Department employees to participate in random drug testing. Random testing is unannounced.

Any employee who refuses to submit to a drug test shall be relieved from duty or service and shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

- If an employee is randomly selected for drug testing and is not at work on the day selected, then the employee will be tested on the day they return to work or an employee will be chosen from a list of alternates.
- Urine specimens will be screened and confirmed at an HHS certified laboratory chosen by the City.

#### Alcohol Testing

- If the City has reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee is under the influence of alcohol during work hours or service hours, the employee shall submit to a breath alcohol test. Each employee found to be alcohol free shall be notified in writing and may, if they so choose, have a copy of the notification placed in their personnel file.

Test results shall be made known to Human Resources and/or the Mayor and COO upon completion of the test. If the test results are positive, the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All information obtained as a result of the drug and alcohol testing program will be kept confidential by the City unless court ordered.

### **Prescription Medicine**

- Except for law enforcement investigation purposes, no prescription medicine shall be brought upon City of Walker premises by any person other than the person for whom the medicine is prescribed by a physician, and such medicine shall be used only in the manner, combination, and quantity prescribed.
- Employees must notify a supervisor, prior to or immediately upon reporting for duty, when they believe, or have been advised or presented information by a physician or pharmacist, that prescribed or over-the-counter medication may impair the ability to perform usual job duties or otherwise create a safety and/or security hazard. The City reserves the right to have a licensed physician determine if use of a prescribed drug or over-the-counter medication by an employee produces effects which may increase the risk of injury to the employee or others while working. If such a finding is made, the City reserves the right to limit or suspend the work activity of the employee during the period that the physician advised that the employee's ability to perform the job safely may be adversely affected by the consumption of such medication.

Employees who know they have a drug or substance abuse problem should contact Human Resources for information about where to seek assistance. All inquiries will be maintained in the strictest confidence. Certain forms of treatment may be covered by the employee health insurance plan. Please check the health insurance manual for more information.

This policy as outlined will replace all previous employee substance abuse and drug-free workplace policies of the City of Walker.

### **CODE OF ETHICS**

The City of Walker acknowledges the mandate in Article X, Section 21 of the Louisiana constitution, and subsequent R.S. 42:1101 et seq. in which the Legislature enacted the Code of Governmental Ethics for officials and employees of the State of Louisiana and all political subdivisions thereof. Specifically, the Ethics Code prohibits:

- A public servant (public employee or elected official) from participating in a transaction involving the governmental entity in which he has a personal substantial economic interest, subject to recusal from voting (R.S. 42:1112);
- A public servant, or member of his immediate family (his children, spouses of his children, brothers, sisters, parents, spouse, and parents of his spouse), or legal entity in which he has a controlling interest from bidding on or entering into any contract, subcontract, or other transaction that is under the supervision or jurisdiction of the agency of such public servant (R.S. 42:1113); and
- A member of the immediate family of an agency head or a member of a governing authority from being employed in the agency or by the governmental entity (R.S. 42:119).

The State Board of Ethics administers the Code of Ethics. In addition, the City of Walker requires that all employees, including elected officials, annually attest through signature verification that they have read the ethics policy. Employees found in violation of the policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## GIFTS AND FAVORS

No public servant of the City of Walker (a public employee or elected/appointed official) shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any person who has or is seeking a contractual, business, or financial relationship with the City of Walker. The provisions restricting the receipt of gifts by public servants are found in 1115 of Louisiana's Code of Governmental Ethics (LSA-R.S. 42:1115). In addition to these restrictions, 1111A of the Code also applies to the receipt of gifts in certain situations (LSA-R.S. 42:1111A).

A 'thing of economic value' is defined as money or any other thing having economic value. The exceptions to the definition include:

- Promotional items having no substantial resale value such as calendars, pens, hats, and t-shirts which bear a company's name or logo, and
- Food and drink consumed while in the presence of the giver. The giver or a representative of the giver must be present when the food and drink are consumed. Reasonable transportation and entertainment that are incidental to the food and drink are also allowed.
- Flowers or a donation, if the value does not exceed \$50.00, in connection with the death of an immediate family member.

No City public servant shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any person who is seeking, for compensation, to influence the passage or defeat of resolutions or ordinances enacted by the City of Walker.

No City employee shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any person who conducts operations or activities which are regulated by the City of Walker.

No City employee shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any person who has substantial economic interests which may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's official job duties).

No City public servant shall receive anything of economic value, other than the compensation and benefits to which he is entitled from his governmental employer, for the performance of the duties and responsibilities of his office or position.

No City public servant or other person shall give, pay, loan, transfer, or deliver, directly or indirectly, to any public servant or other person anything of economic value which such public servant or person would be prohibited from receiving by any provision of the Ethics Code.

**See Chapter 8 of the Louisiana Municipal Employee Handbook (Lagniappe: Public Utilities, Personnel Matters, Ethics, and Retirement) for more detailed information**

including: prohibited sources of income, restricted participation in transactions, post employment restrictions, and exceptions.

## ABUSE OF OFFICE

A City of Walker public servant:

- May not use the authority of his office to compel or coerce a person to provide himself or someone else with a thing of economic value that they are not entitled to by law.
- May not use the authority of his office to compel or coerce a person to engage in a political activity.
- May not participate in any way in the sale of goods or services to a person regulated by his agency if an immediate family member of the regulatory employee or any business enterprise in which the employee or his family owns at least 25% receives or will receive a thing of economic value by virtue of the sale.

## WHISTLE BLOWER PROVISION

- Any employee who reports to his departmental head, Mayor, Chief of Operations, Chief of Police, or to the Ethics Board any information he reasonably believes to be a violation of a provision of one of the laws administered by the Ethics Board or any alleged act of impropriety within the City of Walker shall be free from discipline or reprisal for reporting said acts of alleged impropriety.
- Any employee who reports to a person or entity of competent authority or jurisdiction information which he reasonably believes to be a violation of any law or of any order, rule, or regulation issued in accordance with law or any other alleged acts of impropriety related to the scope and/or duties of public employee or public office within the City of Walker shall be free from discipline or reprisal for reporting said acts of alleged impropriety. No employee with the authority to hire and fire, supervisor, Mayor, or other elected official shall subject any employee to acts of reprisal because of said employee's effort to disclose such acts of impropriety.

## NEPOTISM

The City of Walker prohibits immediate family members to be placed in a supervisory-employee relationship as per the provisions of the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics (LSA-R.S. 42:1119), which prohibits nepotism (preference of any sort given to relatives).

In addition:

- The City may employ no member of the immediate family of the Mayor.
- No member of the immediate family of the Chief of Police may be employed by the Walker Police Department.



- The City or police department may employ no member of the immediate family of a councilman.
- No member of the immediate family of a departmental supervisor may be employed within that individual's department, whether or not intervening levels of supervision are present between the departmental supervisor and the immediate family member.

Violations of this policy may subject the employee, his or her immediate supervisor, and the agency head to both disciplinary action and fines under state law.

**See Chapter 8 of the Louisiana Municipal Employee Handbook (Lagniappe: Public Utilities, Personnel Matters, Ethics, and Retirement)** for more detailed information on exceptions to the nepotism restrictions.

## POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Partisan political activity by an employee, while at work, including publicly or privately advocating or lobbying passage or defeat of any matter before the City of Walker, is prohibited.

If you do engage in political activities, you may not utilize City of Walker resources to do this, and you must make it clear that you are speaking as a private individual and not as a City of Walker representative.

No employee of the City shall participate in any activity that would substantially compromise the ability of the employee to discharge with neutrality, efficiency, and integrity his duties and obligation to the City of Walker.

As a full-time employee, you may exercise your rights as an individual citizen to attempt to influence legislation or public policy. However, you cannot be coerced or compelled to engage in a political activity by departmental supervisors, elected or appointed officers of the City. If this occurs, you are encouraged to report the incident immediately to the Council as an "abuse of office".

## USE OF CITY EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, SERVICES, AND OTHER PROPERTY

All City of Walker equipment, materials, services, and other property are provided to employees for the accomplishment of their work as City employees and not for personal use. *Employees must be 21 years old or older to operate any City owned vehicles and equipment.*

**City policy shall be the following:**

No one shall use for his or her own benefit or for any other personal purposes any City property of whatever description; and no one shall be permitted to remove from buildings or grounds any property belonging to the City, unless approved by the Mayor with notification of the board.

All vehicles and transportation equipment of the City shall be used only on official business and shall be operated only by employees of the City and others authorized by the Mayor with notification of the board.

Employees driving while in the course of their employment are required to observe all vehicle and traffic regulations at all times, and operate the vehicle in a safe, courteous and responsible manner, including but not limited to, wearing seatbelts at all times, and ensuring passengers do as well, as well as adhering to all local requirements regarding the use of cellular devices. Any tickets or parking tickets received while driving in the course of employment are solely the employee's responsibility but must be reported to the employee's supervisor by the next business day immediately following the receipt of such a citation. The City of Walker reserves the right to review the motor vehicle records of any employee driving a vehicle in the course and scope of their employment at any time. Employees are responsible for *maintaining a valid driver's license at all times* and are required to notify their supervisor of any accident, any moving violation, or any other violation of law that results in their license being suspended or revoked by the end of the following business day. No employee may operate a City of Walker vehicle while on City business with a suspended or revoked license, while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs that may adversely affect the employee's driving ability.

**Violation of this policy** constitutes misuse of City equipment, materials, services, and other property and may result in City disciplinary action and/or criminal charges.

#### MISUSE OF CITY MATERIALS, SERVICES, AND OTHER PROPERTY

Misuse of City materials, services, and other property may represent a minor or major violation of this policy depending upon the circumstances of a particular occurrence. For example, misuse may be only a single, isolated occurrence or it may represent a pattern of such activity. Misuse may also constitute a violation of one or more provisions of the criminal law.

- Consistent with its commitment to provide for fair and consistent treatment in all matters involving employee discipline, the City reserves the right to investigate misuse of City equipment, materials, services, and other property through its Auditor, the Police Department, both of these agencies, or by other administrative processes.
- Employees engaged with misuse of City equipment, materials, services, and other property are subject to City disciplinary processes shall be afforded such rights and protections as provided by law and City policy.
- Employees criminally charged in connection with the misuse of City equipment, materials, services, and other property shall be subject to such disposition of the matter as is made by the Office of the District Attorney and/or the judicial system.
- The City reserves the right to both take disciplinary action against an employee and to refer the employee for prosecution under the criminal law.

Examples that are deemed to constitute misuse of City of Walker equipment, materials, services, and other property include but are not limited to the following:



1. Personal use or possession of tools, equipment, supplies.
2. Use of City vehicles for a personal use.
3. Falsification or other misuse of City documents such as time sheets, payroll vouchers, annual and sick leave reporting and other official City document.
4. Personal use of telephone and telefax services resulting in toll charges to the City. Telephone calls or telefaxes of a personal nature may not be charged to the City other than in emergencies. Should such a personal call be made, prompt reimbursement to the City must be made.
5. Use of postal and shipping services for personal use.
6. Personal use of duplication and related services and supplies.

## **USE OF PERSONAL-PRIVATELY OWNED EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, SERVICES AND OTHER PROPERTY**

No employee is expected or allowed to use 'Personal Equipment, Materials, Services and Other Property' in the course of their employment with the City. The City of Walker will supply all equipment, materials, services and other property to each employee needed for the performance of work necessary for the normal operation of the City.

The City of Walker will not be held liable for repairs or replacement for any Personal-Privately Owned Equipment, Materials, Services and Other Property used for City purposes in violation of this policy.

## **LOSS OF PERSONAL EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, SERVICES AND OTHER PROPERTY**

**The City of Walker's insurance does not and will not cover privately owned property, even if it is in City owned buildings or housing.**

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS HANDBOOK MAY BE REVISED AT ANY TIME THROUGH RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL.**