



MEMORANDUM

To: Alderman Frost, Finance and Personnel Committee Chairman

From: Shurice Hunter, Human Resources Director

Re.: Revisions to the City of Rockford Rules and Regulations

Date: May 26, 2026

Please refer to the updated City of Rockford Personnel Rules and Regulations to the Finance and Personnel Committee. The Human Resources Department recommends approval of the revised document which includes the following changes:

1. Addition of definition of Illness
2. Revised Residency section
3. Addition to Cellular Phone Usage (VESSA-related)
4. Addition to Police for Usage of Computers, the Internet and E-Mail (VESSA-related)
5. Additions to Victims' Economic Safety and Security Act (VESSA) Leave as follows:
 - a. Policy Procedures
 - b. Disclosures
 - c. Employees Concerned about Domestic Violence
 - d. Resources
6. Addition of Item V. to General Employment Policies

The City of Rockford is committed to maintaining up-to-date policies and procedures, which adhere to State and Federal laws and reflect the most up to date policies.

Staff seeks the approval of the revised City of Rockford Rules and Regulations to be effective June 1, 2026.

Thank you for your consideration

COMMITTEE REPORT

TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKFORD:

Council Members:

The Committee on Finance and Personnel having received a request hereby begs leave to report recommending **approval** of the Revisions to the City of Rockford Rules and Regulations. The Legal Director shall prepare the appropriate ordinance.

Kevin Frost (Chair)

Chad Tuneberg (Vice chair)

Frank Beach

Dawn Granath

Jaime Salgado

Committee Action Taken:

Frost:	Ayes:___	Nays:___	Absent:___
Tuneberg:	Ayes:___	Nays:___	Absent:___
Beach:	Ayes:___	Nays:___	Absent:___
Granath:	Ayes:___	Nays:___	Absent:___
Salgado:	Ayes:___	Nays:___	Absent:___

I. SECTION 1: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Appeal: An employee's request for a hearing.

Applicant: An individual who has completed and submitted an application for employment or promotion.

Appointed Service: A position specifically excluded from classified service by ordinance. Appointed service does not include elected officials.

Appointment: The offer and acceptance of a person to a position either on a regular or temporary basis.

At-Will Employment: Unless there is a collective bargaining agreement or other contract, statute or ordinance to the contrary, the right of either an employee or the City to terminate employment without cause at any time for any reason, with or without notice.

City of Rockford: The City of Rockford, Illinois (referred to in these Rules and Regulations as "City of Rockford" or "City")

Classification: A group of positions which are sufficiently alike in general duties and responsibilities, education, knowledge, experience, skills and abilities to warrant the use of the same title, class specification and pay range.

Class Specification: A written description of a classification consisting of a classification title, a general statement of the level of work and of the distinguishing features of work, and examples of the duties and desirable qualifications for the classification.

Classification Code: The identifying number for each job title, which may be present in one or more City departments.

Classification Plan: The system grouping positions into classes consisting of: 1) an index of the class specifications; 2) the class specifications; and 3) rules for administering the classification plan.

Classified Service: Except for appointed service, all offices and positions in the service of the City of Rockford.

Compensatory Time: Paid time off provided to the employee by the City in lieu of monetary payment for overtime worked by the employee. Compensatory Time is earned at the rate of 1.5 compensatory hours for each hour of overtime worked.

Day(s): Calendar day(s), unless otherwise specified. Calendar days shall mean consecutive days.

Demotion: A change in employment status from a higher paid employment classification to another employment classification having a lower maximum rate of pay.

Department: The primary organizational unit under the immediate supervision of a Department Head.

Division: An organizational sub-unit within a department.

Dismissal: Termination from City employment.

Employee: An individual who is employed or appointed to City employment, and is compensated by the City for services rendered to the City of Rockford. Individuals or groups compensated on a fee basis are not included.

Exempt: Employees whose primary duties consist of administrative, executive or professional work as defined by the Illinois Minimum Wage Law and/or Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and who do not qualify for overtime payment or compensatory time.

Full-time Employee: An employee who works more than thirty (30) hours per week.

Illness: A physical or mental health condition that substantially interferes with an employee's regular daily activities or prevents the employee from safely and effectively performing the essential functions of their position.

Immediate Family: An employee's spouse or civil union partner and dependent children.

Introductory Period: All City employees service an Introductory Period. The length of the Introductory Period may vary by job classification. Neither the introductory period nor the completion of the introductory period changes an employee's at-will employment status.

Length of Service: Days of continuous employment with the City from the most recent date of hire.

Mayoral Appointment: The Mayor shall appoint Department Heads on an annual basis as provided in the Code of Ordinances, Section 2.9. The Mayor may elect to utilize the regular hiring process or appoint individuals directly with City Council approval. Appointees shall accrue benefits, including insurance, vacation, holiday and sick leave according to the provisions set forth in these Rules and Regulations.

Merit Increases: An increase in compensation established in the compensation plan that may be awarded to an employee for exemplary service and completion of the minimum prescribed period of employment in the employee's classification.

Non-Exempt: An employee whose primary duties under the definitions of the Illinois Minimum Wage Law and/or Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) render the employee eligible for overtime payment.

Outside Employment: Any other employment relationship maintained by a City employee, including but not limited to, self-employment.

Overtime: Supervisor-Authorized time worked by non-exempt employees in excess of forty (40) hours per workweek pursuant to the City's Hours of Work/Overtime Policy. Non-exempt 911 Telecommunicators must work in excess of forty-two (42) hours pursuant to the City's Hours of Work/Overtime Policy.

Part-Time Employee: An employee who works less than thirty (30) hours per week. Except as specified in these Rules and Regulations, all part-time employee benefits are pro-rated.

Performance Appraisal/Performance Evaluation: A yearly review of an employee's work quantity and quality by the employee's supervisor and/or Department Head.

Personnel Appeals Board: An independent body of three (3) persons, as provided for by ordinance, which act in an advisory capacity to the Mayor.

Personnel File: The official record of original employment-related documents for each City employee (except sworn personnel) maintained in the Human Resources Department. Documents contained within the personnel file may include employment application, resume, performance evaluations, disciplinary records, references, recommendations, electronic document management records and background checks.

Place of Employment: Constitutes all areas within any building under the control of a business, nonprofit entity or governmental body that City employees normally frequent in the scope of employment related activities, including, but not limited to, work areas, conference rooms, classrooms, hallways, lounges, restrooms and cafeterias.

Promotion: A change in employment status from a lower paid employment classification to another employment classification having a higher maximum rate of pay.

Rate of Pay: A specific dollar amount, expressed as either an annual or hourly rate, as set forth in the compensation plan of the City.

Regular Appointment: Selection for a position, without time limitations or special restrictions as to continued employment, authorized to be filled and made as a result of the selection process specified by these Rules and Regulations.

Regular Employee: An individual hired without time limitations in either classified or appointed service for a position.

Resignation: The voluntary separation by an employee from City service.

Retirement: The voluntary separation from City service by an employee who qualifies for pension benefits.

Screening: The process of evaluating, testing, and investigating the fitness and qualifications of an applicant for City employment.

Seasonal / Internship Employee: Employee hired into a position for which the customary annual employment is six months or less and for which the period of employment begins each calendar year in approximately the same part of the year, such as summer, and may not exceed 600 hours worked within a 12-month period.

Sick Leave: Leave granted due to illness or other reason as authorized by law or these Rules and Regulations.

Supervisor: The person who manages an employee.

Sworn Personnel: Employees in the Police and Fire Departments who are under oath to provide City service.

Temporary Employee: Employee whose work is limited to a particular project or designated period of time.

Transfer: Assignment of an employee from one position to another position. Transfers can take place within a Department, between Departments, between positions of the same classification having the same pay range.

Work Day: Scheduled number of hours of employment an employee is required to perform per day.

V. SECTION 5: GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Applies to all employees with the exception of Sworn Personnel

B. Residency.

All employees (except Police, ~~and~~ Fire, and employees in the Head Start Program) shall reside anywhere in Winnebago County or anywhere within fifteen (15) miles of the Rockford City Hall within six (6) months of completion of their introductory period, department heads and City Administrator shall live within the municipal boundaries of the City of Rockford within six (6) months of their completion of their introductory period.

V. SECTION 5: GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES
Applies to all employees with the exception of Sworn Personnel

R. Cellular Phone Usage.

This section outlines the rules relating to the use of cell phones at work, including special issues relating to camera phones, the personal use of business cell phones and the safe use of cell phones by employees while operating a vehicle or machinery. Employees who violate this policy, except when exercising their rights under the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), will be subject to discipline up to, and including dismissal.

1. Personal Cellular Phones.

Employees are expected to exercise their discretion when making personal phone calls during work hours on personal cellular phones, City of Rockford landline phones and City of Rockford cellular phones. Excessive personal calls during the workday interfere with employee productivity and distract others from their work, and are prohibited. Whenever possible, employees should make personal phone calls during work breaks. Any call on work time should be kept as brief as possible. The use of social media, accessing and responding to personal emails and text messages, downloading or viewing materials to your cell phone are restricted from use during work hours. Employees must also ensure that friends and family members are aware of the City of Rockford's policy.

The City of Rockford will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones.

2. Camera Phones.

Unless use of a camera is part of an employee's duties, the City of Rockford prohibits employees from using cameras, including cameras contained in cellular phones and other handheld devices, in the place of employment.

3. City of Rockford Provided Cellular Phones

When authorized by the Central Services Division and an employee's Department Head, designated employees, positions, and/or work groups may be provided cellular phones by the City. In these instances, the City will acquire and maintain the service plan and equipment. Such phones are to be used for City business only.

4. Reimbursement

For some designated employees authorized in paragraph 3 above, the employee will be required or may elect to purchase and maintain both the cellular equipment and plan. The City will provide a taxable monthly stipend to cover the costs of maintaining such a plan. These employees may use their phone for personal use and acquire additional plan coverage to accommodate personal calls, texts, etc. above and beyond that already required for City business.

Requests for employee reimbursement for cellular equipment or a service plan must be made in writing by a Department Head or Division manager. Requests are subject

to review by Central Services Division for appropriateness and approval. Only Central Services Division is authorized to purchase new lines of service or order replacement phones.

5. Safety Issues for Cellular Phone Use.

City of Rockford employees are prohibited by law from using a cellular phone while driving and performing work in furtherance of the interest of the City. In such cases, employees shall move their vehicle to a safe location, such as the side of the road, and stop the vehicle before placing or answering a call. If pulling to the side of the roadway is impossible, and the call **must** be answered, and when not prohibited by law, employees shall: keep the conversation as brief as possible, use hands-free options, if available, refrain from the discussion of complicated or emotional matters, and keep their eyes and attention on the road. Special care should be taken in situations where there is heavy traffic, road construction, inclement weather or unfamiliar driving conditions. Under no circumstances should employees place themselves or the public at risk to conduct City business.

Employees who are charged with traffic or other violations resulting from cell phone use while driving shall be solely responsible for all criminal liability which results from such use

VIII. SECTION 8: POLICY FOR USAGE OF COMPUTERS, THE INTERNET AND E-MAIL

1. General.

The City of Rockford e-mail, computer network, voice mail and/or related equipment (including, but not limited to, computer hard drives, software, telephone or other transmission lines, etc.) are to be used solely for City-related business. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Rules and Regulations restricting the use of electronic devices during working hours, an employee shall be permitted to use a personal or employer-issued cell phone or other electronic device to document incidents, evidence, or circumstances related to domestic violence, sexual violence, gender-based violence, stalking, or any other crime of violence, when such documentation is reasonably related to exercising rights under VESSA. **Without the prior approval of a supervisor, non-work related use of such equipment is strictly prohibited except as otherwise provided herein.** Employees are prohibited from:

1. Using passwords, accessing files or retrieving stored information without proper authorization.
2. Displaying or transmitting any communication which may be construed as harassment on the basis of race, sex, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy, religion, ancestry, genetic information, citizenship or other groups protected by law. Such prohibited communications include, but are not limited to, explicit images, messages, cartoons, ethnic slurs, racial epithets and similar communications.
3. Deleting, examining, copying or modifying or altering data, files, e-mail and/or voice mail belonging to the City or its employees, without prior consent.

4. Introducing computer viruses or other disruptive or destructive programs into the City's network, equipment or programs.
5. Accessing any inappropriate web site, including but not limited to all sex-related, dating, hate crime or other web sites inappropriate to the employment environment.
6. Using another employee's password or code without authorization.
7. Disclosing the employee's own password or code or the password or code of another employee without proper authorization.
8. Using the Internet or e-mail system for gambling.
9. Sending messages anonymously or with fictitious names.
10. Using e-mail, computer network, voicemail or related equipment in other non-business or a non-work related manner that the City, in its sole discretion, determines is inappropriate.

2. Computer Usage.

The Information Technology Department (IT) is responsible for ordering and installing all computer and computer related equipment and software. Regarding employee computer workstations:

1. The installation of non-standard hardware or other equipment on workstations or the network by employees is strictly prohibited without the approval of or installation by the IT department.
2. The installation of software by employees is prohibited. All software must be installed by IT.
3. Employees shall neither share any password for any City computer with any unauthorized person, nor obtain any other user's password by any unauthorized means.
4. Employees shall not connect their own personal computer or laptop computer to the City's network or phone lines without permission of the Department Head and IT.
5. Employees are prohibited from inserting any thumb drive/flash drive into City of Rockford computers or devices without prior authorization from the IT Department. This prohibition extends to personal devices used for work-related activities, including laptops and mobile devices connected to the organization's network.

If an employee discovers a thumb drive/flash drive, whether found within the premises or externally, they must refrain from inserting it into any computer or device. Instead, the employee should immediately report the presence of the thumb drive/flash drive to the IT department or designated IT personnel for further investigation.

3. Internet Access.

The Internet is a useful research and communication tool provided to City employees for performing work in furtherance of the interest of the City. The following guidelines pertain to accessing information from or on the Internet:

1. Employees may not represent the employee's individual opinion as City policy.
2. Employees shall report all suspected computer viruses, adware and malware to IT. IT will isolate the invading software, eradicate it, and notify other departments of the outbreak.
3. Any resource, website or information of any kind for which a fee is required **must not** be accessed or downloaded without prior approval of a Department Head or designee.

4. E-mail.

The following e-mail guidelines apply to users of both the City's internal e-mail system and non-City e-mail providers, who create, send or receive e-mails via a City computer or through the City's network or email system.

1. The City's e-mail system shall be used solely for performing work in furtherance of the interest of the City.
2. Individual users must be aware of and at all times attempt to prevent potential City liability in their use of e-mail. For that reason, all outgoing messages which do not reflect the official position of the City must include the following disclaimer:

"The opinions expressed in this e-mail are my own and not those of the City of Rockford, IL."
3. The following activities constitute abuse of the City's e-mail system and are strictly prohibited:
 - a. Sending messages, which disrupt or threaten to disrupt the efficient operation of City business or administration.
 - b. Sending messages, which violate existing law, public policy, or individual rights, and create potential liability for the City.
 - c. Sending messages, which contain confidential, privileged or private information except when such messages are transmitted for an authorized purpose and in an appropriately secure manner.
 - d. Sending personal messages, which include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Messages for personal gain or for private commercial activity including personal research or surveys.
 - ii. Messages to promote, distribute materials, or solicit individuals for commercial ventures, political (unless specifically authorized), or religious causes, and/or

charitable or other social organizations in which the user is involved.

- iii. "Chain" or "junk" e-mail.
 - iv. E-mail sent via distribution lists that concern non-City business related topics.
 - v. Participation in non-City related "blogs" or "chat-room" discussions during work hours.
4. Employee e-mail messages may be subpoenaed as part of an investigation or requested pursuant to the State of Illinois Freedom of Information Act and/or may be used as evidence in court or other legal proceedings. The content of e-mail messages is subject to complete disclosure and may be publicly released without an employee's permission or knowledge.
 5. E-mail messages and the transfer of information by other means via the Internet are not secure. Any employee transmitting confidential information must use the United States Mail or other traditional couriers, i.e. FedEx or UPS.
 6. All emails must be maintained for a period of one (1) year. Emails cannot be deleted until the appropriate request for the destruction of records has been submitted and approved.

5. Penalties for Violation of Policy.

Failure by any employee to comply with the provisions of this policy may result in suspension or revocation of the privilege of accessing e-mail or the Internet, in addition to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6. Notice.

All computer systems, hardware, software and related equipment are the property of the City. All electronically generated information and files, including e-mail, produced on City equipment are the property of the City.

Employees shall have no expectation of privacy in their use of any City computer equipment. To ensure the proper use of City computers, e-mail, computer network, and/or related equipment, the **CITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MONITOR AND ACCESS ANY OF THOSE SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT AT ANY TIME, WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE TO THE INVOLVED EMPLOYEE.**

XXXV. SECTION 25: VICTIMS' ECONOMIC SAFETY AND SECURITY ACT (VESSA) LEAVE

A. City of Rockford Domestic Violence Policy

1. Statement of Policy

The City of Rockford (“the City”) is committed to promoting the health and safety of its employees. The City does not tolerate domestic violence and offers support and referrals to assist employees who disclose concerns or request ~~for~~ help. City employees are highly encouraged to report threats or acts of domestic violence to local law enforcement authorities. Employees found to have committed an act of domestic violence will be subject to discipline as set forth in this policy.

Nothing in this policy is intended to reduce or modify existing directives and policies regarding the prevention of violence in the workplace.

2. Definition

Domestic violence can be physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. Domestic violence includes, but is not limited to, actual or potential physical injury or harm, intimidation, stalking, sexual abuse or threats of physical injury or harm, or sexual abuse against a person with a past or present intimate relationship such as marriage, Civil Union, dating, family, friends or cohabitation.

3. Persons Covered by this Policy

Persons covered by this policy include City employees, seasonal hires, interns, contractors, volunteers, elected officials and temporary employees in any workplace locations

4. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

Promote the health and safety of City employees;- Create a supportive workplace for employees who are survivors of domestic violence, in which employees feel comfortable discussing and seeking assistance regarding domestic violence; Provide responsive guidelines and procedures to assist employees who are affected by domestic violence; and Provide support and assistance to employees who are survivors of domestic violence.

5. Policy Procedures

The ~~Manager~~Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office of Domestic and Community Violence Prevention or designee shall serve as the City Domestic Violence Liaison who may assist with domestic violence issues within the City. Additionally, each department shall designate an individual who may assist with domestic violence issues within that Department. Employees who are survivors may choose to notify the City Domestic Violence Liaison, designated department individual or a supervisor, who shall then consult with Human Resources staff. Employees may also seek assistance directly from Human Resources. When appropriate, an employee who is a survivor of domestic violence may be referred to the City’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP); and be provided with information on domestic violence resources, which may also be found at <http://www.remediesrenewinglives.org/>—<https://rockfordfamilypeacecenter.org/> and in the Resources section of this Policy. Other assistance will be provided based on individual needs and availability consistent with existing regulations. Assistance may also be provided with work-related needs such as requests for work schedule adjustments or leave, as needed, to obtain assistance. (Please refer to the leave section of this policy for types of leave when this option is being considered).

In addition, the designated individual will disseminate information and then refer the employee to the ~~Manager~~Executive Director of the Office of Domestic and Community Violence Prevention

and/or Human Resources staff. The ~~Manager~~ Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Domestic and Community Violence Prevention or Department Head and/or Human Resources staff will work with employees and coordinate with law enforcement and domestic violence service agencies, when appropriate, to develop and implement individualized safety plans at the direction of law enforcement and/or domestic violence service agencies. These plans may include, but are not limited to:

- Advising co-workers of the situation (subject to the Confidentiality Policy);
- Setting up procedures for alerting security and/or the police;
- Temporary relocation to a new work site;
- Assignment of parking space;
- Escort for entry to and exit from the building;
- Screening of telephone calls; and
- Providing a photograph of the perpetrator and/or a copy of any existing court orders to security, the City designee, and/or Human Resources personnel.

The posting of information about domestic violence in work areas is encouraged. Also, information may be made available where employees can obtain it without having to request it or be seen removing it. Some suggestions are: restrooms, lunchrooms, or where other employee resource information is located.

An employee using City-issued technology such as phones, laptops, or tablets to record evidence of domestic, sexual, or gender-based violence, committed against an employee or their family or household members shall not be subject to discipline.

The City shall grant employees access to any photographs, voice or video recordings, or other digital communications stored on City devices that document incidents covered by VESSA.

In cases where the alleged perpetrator and the employee are employed at the same work site, the City should give due consideration to an employee's request for a modification of duties, reassignment to another position or work shift, or relocation to separate work sites

6. Confidentiality

The City recognizes and respects an employee's right to privacy. Unless the substance of the employee's disclosure demands otherwise, strict confidentiality will be maintained by informing others only to the extent necessary to protect the safety of the individual or other individuals in the workplace. Except in times of extreme emergency where the timeframe does not permit disclosure, the employee will be given notice of necessary disclosures.

The limitations of confidentiality will be discussed with the employee who is a survivor of domestic violence. Those situations that are deemed to potentially put the employee and other employees at risk may require disclosure on a limited basis for those employees deemed to be at risk. Disclosure may be required in instances in which domestic violence has occurred at an employee's worksite.

7. Non-discrimination

The City is committed to working with employees to prevent abuse, harassment, and discrimination that may result from domestic violence. City agencies are prohibited from

discriminating against victims of domestic violence based on knowledge of the employee's current or past domestic violence incidents.

8. Leave

Every reasonable effort will be made to assist employees who are survivors of domestic violence with usage of available categories of leave where appropriate. Appropriate instances may include, but are not limited to, seeking medical attention or legal assistance, and court appearances including appearances for filings and appointments with domestic violence advocates/social workers. If time off from work is necessary, leave shall be taken in compliance with the Victims' Economic Safety and Security Act Leave as outlined in Section 25 of the City of Rockford Rules and Regulations.

Leave may include, as applicable, any available accrued leave time compensatory time (vacation, sick, or personal leave), unpaid leave if accrued time is not available (unless otherwise provided by the relevant collective bargaining agreement). This section is not intended to create compensatory or unpaid time that exceeds such compensatory or unpaid time as provided in the Rules and Regulations and/or the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

When on an approved absence/leave, the employee shall attempt to maintain contact about return to work plans. While absent, the employee must maintain contact with the appropriate supervisor and/or Human Resources staff (in accordance with the employee's respective department protocol). The employee will be asked to identify an emergency contact person in the event the employer is unable to contact the employee, and the contact person will be documented in the Human Resources Department, remain confidential, and be held separate from any personnel files.

9. Disclosures

Employees seeking to utilize the protections and benefits offered by the City of Rockford Domestic Violence Policy may make disclosures to supervisors, the designated domestic violence contact, management, and/or Human Resources staff.

Any individual who applies for and obtains a protective or restraining order is encouraged to provide a copy of the order to the City's staff listed above.

When a disclosure is made, the Manager-Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Domestic and Community Violence Prevention and/or the Human Resources staff will meet with the employee to determine the appropriate action that should be taken to assist and support the employee. When appropriate, the City's EAP and domestic violence service agencies may be consulted for assistance with this process.

When an incident involves employees from more than one City department, Human Resources staff will ensure that appropriate responses to the situation are coordinated

10. Discipline

An employee who is convicted, found guilty or pleads guilty to or of domestic violence or domestic violence related offenses, or found using any City resources, including work time and/or equipment, to commit an act of domestic violence may be referred to counseling and/or subject

to discipline, up to and including dismissal, based on the standards set forth in the City of Rockford Rules and Regulations, collective bargaining agreements, or other applicable laws or policies.

11. Employees Concerned about Domestic Violence

If an employee becomes aware that a co-worker is a victim of domestic violence, the employee is encouraged to communicate that information to the City's Domestic Violence Liaison, designee, management, and/or Human Resources office.

In addition, the Human Resources staff, City's designee or management shall discuss the matter with other appropriate authorities if there is an immediate safety risk to anyone in the workplace, or if the perceived problem has an effect on the workplace, including but not limited to safety, job performance, and morale. The Human Resources staff, City designee or management will maintain the confidentiality of the disclosing employee to the extent permitted by law and this policy.

If an employee experiences or witnesses domestic violence or threats of violence in the workplace, the employee must report the incident to a supervisor, management, and/or Human Resources staff immediately.

12. Resources

When an individual becomes separated from work due to circumstances related to domestic violence, the individual will be informed that unemployment benefits may be available pursuant to Illinois law found at www.ides.il.gov.

The City will maintain current referral resources on domestic violence, ~~supplied by the 17th Judicial Family Violence Coordinating Council.~~ This information shall be accessible on the City website.
Resources:

Family Peace Center

The Family Peace Center is a Rockford non-profit organization that offers many supportive services to survivors, including safety planning, case management, orders of protection assistance, children's services, access to civil legal services, mental health counseling, and medical services.
779-348-7600

Rockford Sexual Assault

Provides counseling services, crisis services, medical and legal advocacy, prevention education and professional education.
24-hour Crisis Hotline 815-636-9811

Rockford Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation

Provides resources and referrals to those seeking safety from sexual exploitation at their low-demand Drop-In Center.
888-823-2364

The Domestic Violence Assistance Center is located at 400 West State Street, Rockford, IL, and may provide assistance and guidance in obtaining an Order of Protection.
815-516-2440

Remedies Renewing Lives offers case management, emergency safety planning, counseling and shelter and is open 24 hours a day.
24 hour line 815-962-6102

If you feel that you are in danger, call 9-1-1.

13. Policy Dissemination

This policy will be distributed to employees covered by this policy, will be posted on the City of Rockford website and will be provided to all newly hired or promoted managers and supervisors. Employees will receive training on domestic violence as developed through this policy.

B. Victim's Economic Safety and Security Leave

1. Statement of Policy

Pursuant to the Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act ("VESSA"), the city will not discriminate against victims/ survivors of domestic, sexual violence or gender-based violence. The City grants job protection leave and other reasonable accommodation to its employees who are victims of domestic or sexual violence, gender-based violence or to those who have family members who are victims of domestic or sexual violence or gender-based violence. and whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic or sexual violence or gender based violence based upon the following requirements, terms and conditions.

2. Eligibility

All employees are eligible for leave under this policy. Employees are entitled to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks of domestic or sexual or gender-based violence leave during a twelve (12) month period. VESSA does not create a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under, or in addition to, the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. When applicable, time off for a leave under Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) will be counted against the 12 weeks allowed under the FMLA policy.

3. Reasons for Leave

An employee who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence or gender-based violence or who has a family or household member who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence and whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic or sexual violence may be entitled to leave for the following reasons. ("Family or household member" means a spouse, parent, son, daughter, and persons residing in the same household.)

1. Seeking medical attention for or recovering from physical or psychological injuries caused by domestic or sexual violence to the employee or the employee's family or household member.
2. Obtaining services from a victim services organization for the employee or the employee's family or household member.

3. Obtaining psychological or other counseling for the employee or the employee's family or household member.
4. Participating in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocating, or taking other actions to increase the safety of the employee or the employee's family or household member from future domestic or sexual violence or to ensure economic security.
5. Seeking legal assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the employee or the employee's family or household member, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or derived from domestic or sexual violence.

4. Notice

Employees must give at least forty-eight (48) hours' notice prior to the commencement of their leave, unless such notice is not practicable. If an employee cannot give forty-eight (48) hours' notice, the employee must provide certification of their need for leave as described below.

5. Certification

The City will require employees to provide certification that the employee or their family or household member is a victim of domestic or sexual violence or gender-based violence, and the leave is for one of the purposes outlined above.

Employees must provide certification to the Human Resources Department within a reasonable period after the certification is requested. The certification may take the form of a sworn statement by the employee, and upon obtaining such documents, the employee shall provide:

1. Documentation from an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim services organization, an attorney, a member of the clergy, or a medical or other professional from whom the employee or the employee's family or household member has sought assistance in addressing domestic or sexual violence and the effects of the violence; or
2. A police or court record; or
3. Other corroborating evidence.

6. Confidentiality

All information pertaining to the use, notice and certification of domestic or sexual violence or gender-based violence leave provided to the City shall be retained in the strictest confidence, except to the extent that disclosure is requested or consented to in writing by the employee or otherwise required by applicable law.

7. Intermittent Leave

Intermittent leave or reduced work schedule leave (i.e., taking leave in separate blocks of time, rather than leave for a continuous period of time) may be available.

8. Twelve Months

The City will use the “12-month calendar” method in determining the number of weeks of leave to which an employee is entitled. Under this method, when you make a request for leave, the City examines your leave record for the past twelve (12) months. In that twelve (12) month time period, an employee will be entitled to take a maximum of twelve (12) weeks of domestic or sexual violence leave.

9. Paid or Unpaid Leave

When taking leave for VESSA, eligible employees may elect to use (1) unpaid leave, or (2) accrued or provided paid vacation, personal or sick time. On the notice required, employees should indicate whether the leave is elected to be unpaid or paid. Both unpaid and paid leave will be counted toward the twelve (12) week length of leave required to be provided under VESSA.

10. Health Insurance Benefits

During VESSA leave, health benefits will be continued under the same conditions as if the employee had remained actively employed.

When a paid leave is in effect, the employee’s share of the health insurance premium(s) will be paid through the payroll deduction method. Prior to the leave, arrangements must be clearly specified and made with the Human Resources Department if all or part of the leave will be unpaid. Health insurance premiums made by the employee must be submitted in a timely manner to the Human Resources Department. The City has the right to cancel health insurance coverage if an employee’s premium payment is more than thirty (30) days late. Nevertheless, health insurance benefits will be resumed upon the employee’s return to work.

11. Other Benefits

During an unpaid VESSA leave, other benefits do not continue to accrue.

12. Reporting

The City may require the employee to report periodically, in writing, of their status and intention of returning to work upon completion of leave.

13. Return to Work

Upon completion of leave, the City will restore the employee to the position held prior to the leave, or to a substantially equivalent position, subject to exceptions as provided by law.

VSECTION 5: GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Applies to all employees with the exception of Sworn Personnel

V. Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)-eligible employees may purchase military service time for the period of all such service time prior to their participation in IMRF.