

INTRODUCTION

The City of Taft shall consider all employee terminations in a manner consistent with its policy of treating all employees equally, considerately and in good faith.

In all instances, however, employee terminations may be classified as either involuntary or voluntary terminations.

Involuntary terminations are those initiated by the City and may include layoff, release of probationary employee and discharge.

In most instances, those employees terminating under involuntary circumstances are not eligible for reemployment by the City of Taft. Employees separated due to layoff, however, shall be eligible for rehire in accordance with provisions of the Taft Municipal Code.

Voluntary terminations are those initiated by the employee and include resignation, retirement and death.

Employees resigning their position with the City of Taft may be eligible for rehire, contingent upon satisfactory performance during their employment with the City.

All employee terminations from the City of Taft shall be submitted to the Personnel Officer and shall be governed by provisions of this policy.

RELEASE OF PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES

1. Employees may be terminated without right of appeal for unsatisfactory performance at any time during a six-month (1400 regularly scheduled working hours) probationary period immediately following the individual's date of employment or during an approved extension of an employee's probationary period, the exception being Police Dispatchers and sworn officers of the Taft Police Department.
2. Police Dispatchers may be terminated without right of appeal for unsatisfactory performance at any time during a twelve-month (2080 regularly scheduled working hours) probationary period immediately following the individual's date of employment or during an approved extension of an employee's probationary period.
3. Sworn officers of the Taft Police Department may be terminated without right of appeal for unsatisfactory performance at any time during a twelve-month (2080 regularly scheduled working hours) probationary period immediately following successful completion of a basic police academy approved by the California

Commission on Peace Officer's Standards and Training or during an extension of the probationary period.

4. Officers of the Taft Community Correctional Facility (CCF) may be terminated without right of appeal for unsatisfactory performance at any time during a twelve-month (2080 regularly scheduled working hours) probationary period immediately following their appointment or during an extension of the probationary period.
5. Sworn officers of the Taft Fire Department may be terminated without right of appeal for unsatisfactory performance at any time during a twelve-month (2080 regularly scheduled working hours) probationary period immediately following their appointment or during an extension of the probationary period.
6. Termination occurring during the probationary period shall be initiated by the appropriate Department Head and shall be approved by the appropriate Department Head and by the City Manager prior to notifying the employee of termination action.
7. Terminated probationary employees shall forfeit all employee benefits except benefits accrued under the Public Employees' Retirement System.
8. Terminated probationary employees shall not be eligible for prior notice of termination.
9. Terminated probationary employees shall receive payments due on the final day of employment.

DISCHARGE

1. The City of Taft may discharge employees for just cause as well as for inadequate job performance. Reasons for such discharge shall include, but shall not be limited to, those CAUSES FOR ADMINISTERING DISCIPLINE specified in the Personnel Policies and Procedures of the City of Taft (Section 404-8 of this manual).
2. Employees discharged in accordance with provisions of the City's Employee Discipline policy shall forfeit all employee benefits except benefits accrued under the Public Employees' Retirement System and benefits to which the employee is statutorily entitled.
3. Discharged employees shall receive pay for vacation accrued on the date of termination in accordance with provisions of the City's Vacation policy (Section 318 of this manual).

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4. Discharged employees shall receive payments due within 24 hours following the final day of employment.

RESIGNATION

1. Resignation shall be defined as a voluntary termination of employment for personal reasons such as acceptance of other employment, dissatisfaction with current job or job abandonment.
2. The City of Taft requests a minimum of two weeks written notice of intended resignation from all employees. Failure to provide requested notice of intended resignation may render an individual ineligible for future employment by the City of Taft.
3. If an employee's continued presence after notice of resignation is considered detrimental to the City because of attitude or work performance, the resignation may become effective immediately. In the instance, however, the employee shall be entitled to payment of those working days between the last day worked and the effective date of resignation. Termination date for such employee shall be the last date for which salary is received.
4. Resigning employees shall forfeit all employee benefits except benefits accrue under the Public Employees' Retirement System, except that resigning employees shall receive pay for vacation accrued at date of termination in accordance with Section 318 of this manual.
5. Resigning employees shall not be entitled to severance pay except as noted in this policy.
6. Resigning employees shall receive payments due on the next regularly scheduled pay day.

RETIREMENT

Those employees retiring from the City of Taft shall receive retirement benefits in accordance with the Public Employees' Retirement System and shall be eligible for those benefits accruing to retired municipal employees.

COBRA BENEFITS

Under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) of 1986, agencies with 20 or more employees are required to continue health care coverage for

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terminated employees and for the widows, ex-spouses, and dependents of employees for 18 or 36 months for certain qualifying events.

1. City must provide for the continuation of identical coverage to employees or beneficiaries in the event of:
 - a. The employee's death;
 - b. Voluntary or involuntary termination of employment (other than for gross misconduct) or reduction in hours;
 - c. Divorce or legal separation;
 - d. The employee's eligibility for Medicare benefits; or
 - e. A dependent child ceasing to be a dependent under the applicable plan provisions.
2. Coverage may continue for at least 18 months when an employee is terminated or has hours reduced. For all other events, coverage may continue for at least 36 months.
3. If one of the following events occur before the expiration of the 18 or 36 month period, coverage will cease at that time:
 - a. Termination of all employer-provided group health plans;
 - b. Failure to pay required contributions;
 - c. Coverage as an employee under any other group health plan;
 - d. Entitled to Medicare benefits; or
 - e. Remarriage and coverage under another group health plan (applies to former spouses of covered employees).
4. Monthly premium for the group continuation plan will be 102% of the current plan rate.
5. City is not required to make a contribution towards the cost of the group continuation.
6. City must provide written notice of rights to group continuation coverage to each employee or qualified beneficiary who qualifies for group continuation.
7. It is the responsibility of the employee or qualified beneficiary to notify the employing office with respect to a divorce or legal separation, or when a dependent child ceases to be a dependent. The City then has 14 days to notify the employee or qualified beneficiary of their right to elect the group continuation plan.

DEATH

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1. Should an individual die while actively employed by the City of Taft, in the absence of a written designation of beneficiary, payment for salary due at the time of the employee's death and for vacation and sick leave accrued, if any, at the time of the employee's death shall be made to the deceased employee's surviving spouse. In the absence of a surviving spouse, such payment shall be made to the employee's children. In the absence of children, such payment shall be made to the estate of the deceased employee.
2. Payment of all money due shall be in accordance with the laws of the State of which the deceased employee was a legal resident at the time of death.

EXIT INTERVIEW

The Personnel Officer shall conduct exit interviews for all terminated employees unless unusual circumstances preclude doing so. Interviews will be conducted as soon as possible after the termination date has been established and will allow sufficient time for the employee to express himself fully.

In the case of a voluntary termination, the exit interview may expose problem areas which, if corrected, may save a valuable employee for the City. It may also assist in revealing and employee's specific reason for resignation.

In the event of involuntary termination, the exit interview serves to assure the employee that he has been treated fairly and may also indicate potential problem areas which may be eliminated through development or revision of municipal policy and procedures.

TERMINATION CHECKLIST

To assure recovery of municipal property assigned to individual employees and to collect outstanding charges owed by terminating employees, those employees terminating employment with the City of Taft shall secure from applicable departments before receiving terminal checks.

COMPLETING THE TERMINATION CHECKLIST

1. Each terminating employee shall secure a termination checklist from the Personnel Officer.
2. The terminating employee shall secure a required approval signature for each item on the termination checklist.

3. The terminating employee shall return the complete termination checklist to the Personnel Officer for approval.
4. Each terminating employee shall reimburse the City for accounts owed and for lost items assigned to the employee prior to the release of a final check.
5. The amount of all funds due to the City shall be deducted from a terminating employee's final check unless otherwise paid.