



# Cambridge Public Schools

## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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## **Mission Statement**

The Cambridge Public Schools will be the first diverse urban school system to work with families and the community to successfully educate all of its students at high levels. The school system will provide all students with a safe and nurturing environment, and with a core curriculum that is rich and rigorous and which respects diversity in students' learning styles. We have one guiding principle: Excellent Instruction in Every Classroom. We strive for our students to be proficient in all curricular areas.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

We are pleased to have you as a member of the staff of the Cambridge Public Schools. Whether an employee works full or part-time, in an administrative, teaching, professional or support category, the skills and commitment he/she brings to his/her job make an important contribution to our goal of providing excellence in education to the children and families of Cambridge.

The Cambridge Public Schools is comprised of 12 elementary schools—eleven K-5 and one K-8—four upper schools—grades 6-8— and one comprehensive high school containing small learning communities offering a wide range of progressive curricular and programmatic offerings to our vibrant, diverse educational community. The school system is governed by a seven member School Committee, chaired by the Mayor. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for overall administration of the schools and implementation of School Committee policies. An employee of the Cambridge Public Schools can expect a fair and equitable salary, competitive benefits and the opportunity to be a part of the best that public education has to offer. We are pleased to have you as a member of our team and hope that you find that the satisfaction gained from doing your job matches the effort you put into your work.

We recognize that new employees, in particular, are bound to have many questions relating to their specific position or responsibilities. You are encouraged to direct any specific inquiries you may have to your immediate supervisor or to contact the Office of Human Resources, 159 Thorndike Street, at 617-349-6435 for additional information or assistance.

This Employee Handbook has been written to provide information and guidance to Cambridge Public Schools employees. The School Department's policies, benefits, and rules, as explained in this manual, may be changed from time to time as circumstances, employment legislation, and economic conditions dictate. If and when provisions are changed, you will be notified. The policies in this manual are to be considered as guidelines and not all-inclusive. The School Department, at its option, may change, delete, suspend or discontinue any part or parts of the policies in this manual at any time without prior notice. Any such action will apply to existing as well as future employees with continued employment being the consideration between the employer and employee. No one other than the Superintendent of Schools may alter or modify any of the policies in this manual. No statement or promise by a supervisor, manager, or department head may be interpreted as a change in policy nor will it constitute an agreement with an employee. The Employee Handbook is not a contract. Additionally, the handbook makes no guarantees of employment, compensation or benefits. Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements should consult those collective bargaining agreements for detailed information, including information regarding certain working conditions and benefits. Copies of the contracts are available from union representatives.





## **I. GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

### **Basic Employment Expectations**

All employees are expected to demonstrate a professional, cooperative, knowledgeable and courteous demeanor in all interactions with students, parents/guardians, colleagues and members of the community. Work attire should reflect the professional responsibilities of an employee's position, exhibiting concern for safety, hygiene, neatness, cleanliness and projecting positive role models for students enrolled within the Cambridge Public Schools. The use of profane language is prohibited and may be cause for disciplinary action.

At a minimum, it is expected that all employees will follow general and specific work and employment guidelines, carry out instructions and directions appropriately issued by supervisors or administrators and perform job responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. Employees are expected to be regular in attendance, arriving on time and adhering to designated starting and ending times for work, breaks, lunch, prep periods, etc. Employees are advised that School Department telephones, supplies, equipment and services (including Internet access and fax machines) are for professional use. Excessive personal calls, or use of supplies, services or equipment for personal reasons are not allowed. Inappropriate use of equipment, supplies or services including electronic access may result in termination.

All employees are expected to be familiar with school district policies and procedures. A Guide to Policies- Staff Edition is posted on the school district website and copies of the school district policies and administrative procedures also are posted on the school district website ([www.cpsd.us](http://www.cpsd.us)).

### **Standards of Conduct**

Some rules of conduct are needed in any workplace in order to help everyone work together efficiently, effectively, and harmoniously. Because our mission is to serve the public and because we are empowered with substantial governmental authority to achieve that mission, we must hold ourselves to high standards of quality service and ethical conduct.

By accepting employment with us, you have a responsibility to the public, to the Cambridge Public Schools and to your fellow employees to adhere to certain rules of behavior and conduct. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected and necessary to fulfill our mission, responsibilities, and duty to the public. When each person is aware that he or she can fully depend upon fellow workers to follow the rules of conduct, then our organization will be a better place to work and a more effective servant of the people.

## **Meeting Job Expectations**

In addition to maintaining appropriate standards of conduct, it is the responsibility of employees to fulfill the essential functions of their positions in an acceptable manner. Depending on the position, these measures may be both qualitative and quantitative. Job requirements and qualifications are listed on job postings/descriptions. Your supervisor will discuss and clarify the expectations and standards of your position. Employees who are having difficulty meeting job standards should discuss the issue with their supervisor. In turn, it is the supervisor's responsibility to monitor employee performance and provide counseling, support, and assistance to employees in helping them meet job expectations.

Ultimately, if employees are unable to meet job requirements, corrective action may include reassignment, transfer, demotion or other disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Disciplinary Actions for Unacceptable Activities**

Generally speaking, we expect each person to act in a mature and responsible way at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, some of the more obvious unacceptable activities are noted below. Your avoidance of these activities will be to your benefit as well as the benefit of the School Department. If you have any questions concerning any work or safety rule, or any of the unacceptable activities listed, please see your supervisor for an explanation.

We list these standards for the guidance of all employees and supervisors. We do not expect anyone to engage in these activities, but we believe everyone is served by our being clear as to what is not acceptable.

## **Violations Which May Result in Dismissal**

Occurrences of any of the following violations, because of their seriousness, may result in dismissal without prior disciplinary action:

1. Willful violation of any Cambridge Public Schools rule; any deliberate action that is extreme in nature and is obviously detrimental to the School Department's efforts to provide services effectively and efficiently.
2. Negligence or any careless action which endangers the life or safety of another person or student.
3. Willful violation of security or safety rules or failure to observe safety rules or School Department safety practices; failure to wear required safety equipment; tampering with School Department equipment or safety equipment.

4. Being intoxicated or under the influence of controlled substance drugs while at work; use, possession or sale of any controlled substance, in any quantity while on School Department property except for medications prescribed by a physician which do not impair work performance.
5. Unauthorized possession of dangerous weapons, firearms, or explosives on School Department property or while on duty.
6. Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence; making threats of violence toward anyone on School Department premises or when representing the School Department; fighting, horseplay, provoking a fight on School Department property; or negligent damage of property. The School Department regards fighting as a very serious offense. If confronted by another employee or member of the public, we expect you to retreat, and not escalate the situation or retaliate. You should only take defensive action.
7. Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by your supervisor pertaining to your work; refusal to help out on a special assignment.
8. Engaging in an act of sabotage; willfully or with gross negligence causing the destruction or damage of School Department property, or the property of fellow employees, members of the public, vendors, or visitors in any manner.
9. Theft of School Department property or the property of fellow employees; unauthorized possession or removal of any School Department property, (including documents), from the premises without prior permission from management; unauthorized use of School Department equipment or property for personal reasons; using School Department equipment for profit.
10. Dishonesty; willful falsification or misrepresentation on your application for employment or other work records; lying about sick or personal leave; falsifying the reason for a leave of absence or other data requested by the School Department; failing to tell the truth at any time during the course of your employment with the School Department; intentionally and willfully misrepresenting information about the School Department or its employees to members of the media; failing to tell the truth during the course of a School Department investigation; alteration of School Department records or other School Department documents.
11. Violating the privacy of others by releasing confidential or protected information to outside individuals, organizations, or to unauthorized School Department employees; breach of confidentiality of personnel or personal information.
12. Malicious comments about others and/or spreading rumors harmful to individuals or the School Department's interests; engaging in behavior designed to create discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another employee on the job; willfully restricting work output or encouraging others to do the same.

13. Immoral conduct or indecency while on duty or while on School Department property.

14. Actions in violation of your public trust, including abuse of the authority vested in you as a public official, to seek unwarranted gain or exemptions for yourself or others.

15. Threatening, intimidating, harassing or coercing fellow employees, customers, or members of the public; interfering with another employee on the job; using obscene or abusive language towards another employee, customer, or member of the public; threatening or employing physical violence towards another employee, customer, or member of the public. Such conduct is prohibited at all times, whether the employee or employees concerned are off-duty or on-duty, and whether the conduct occurs on or off the School Department premises.

16. Off duty conduct so egregious or otherwise as to undermine the confidence of the public in the School Department's capacity to fulfill its functions to the public in a fair, safe, and effective manner.

## **Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity**

The Cambridge Public Schools is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer. The Cambridge Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or marital status.

Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation, benefits and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. The School Department's Program Manager for Diversity Development, (617-349-6456) or Executive Director of Human Resources (617-349-6438) are available to answer any questions or concerns an employee may have regarding Affirmative Action or related matters.

## **Non-Discrimination and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment**

The Cambridge Public Schools seeks to promote a workplace and educational environment that is free from discrimination and harassment, whether based on race, color, sex, gender identity, age, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, gender identity or disability. The Cambridge Public Schools will not tolerate harassing or discriminatory conduct that affects employment or educational conditions, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about harassment, discrimination or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of such a complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Harassment and discrimination consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on a characteristic protected by law. Harassment and discrimination includes, but is not limited to, display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above; or verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of an individual or group described above. Sexual harassment means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct are made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment, academic standing, school-related opportunities or as a basis for employment decisions or such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

An individual who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination, sexual or otherwise, has a right to file a complaint with the Cambridge Public Schools. The complaint may be filed with the individual's immediate supervisor or the Cambridge Public Schools Program Manager for Diversity Development, who is located at 159 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141 (617-349-6456). Additionally employees who observe incidents of harassment or discrimination should immediately report such incidents to their immediate supervisor, the Cambridge Public Schools Program Manager for Diversity Development or the Executive Director of Human Resources.

All reports of harassment or discrimination, sexual or otherwise, will be investigated promptly in a confidential manner and disciplinary action taken as appropriate, which may include up to termination from employment or school-related discipline. In addition to filing a complaint with the Cambridge Public Schools, employees who believe that they have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, sexual or otherwise, may file a formal complaint with either the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, which is located at One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, Massachusetts (617-994-6000), or the United States

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center Boston, Massachusetts 02203 (1-800-669-7000). For a complete copy of the Cambridge Public Schools Non-Discrimination and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment Policy, contact the Program Manager for Diversity Development or the Office of Human Resources. A copy also can be found on the school district's website ([www.cpsd.us](http://www.cpsd.us)).

## **Non-Discrimination Against and Non-Bullying of Students**

Additionally, state law also prohibits students from being bullied by students or school district employees. Pursuant to Massachusetts General Law chapter 76, section 5 "[no]

person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.” Cambridge Public Schools are committed to providing an atmosphere in which all students can learn and participate in all activities pertaining to their education. Corporal punishment in any form is expressly forbidden.

## **Complaint and Grievance Procedures**

The Cambridge Public Schools investigates all complaints received regarding its policies and practices and seeks to resolve differences that may arise among employees in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. If it is determined inappropriate conduct has been committed, appropriate action will be taken under the circumstances. Employees and students are encouraged to attempt resolution within their school and administrative office and may seek advice from appropriate individuals or the Office of Human Resources without being required to file a formal complaint.

Unionized employees also have grievance processes set forth in applicable collective bargaining agreements which may be followed with respect to grievances covered under those agreements. Additionally, if an employee is aggrieved by a ruling of a principal or supervisor, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent and may appeal the ruling of the Superintendent to the School Committee, except in those instances where law has assigned a specific authority to review and such action would be in conflict with the law. For more information on procedures, contact the Office of Human Resources.

## **Confidentiality**

As an employee of the Cambridge Public Schools, you may have access to confidential, protected or privileged information. It is expected that employees will protect others' rights to privacy by not releasing such information to unauthorized individuals. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Employees should consult their supervisors with any questions regarding confidentiality.

This provision is not intended, and should not be construed, to limit or prevent an employee from exercising rights under the National Labor Relations Act or M.G.L.c. 150E.

## **Drugs, Alcohol and Weapons**

The use or possession of any controlled substance (except for medications prescribed by a physician) in any quantity, the sale of any controlled substance in any quantity or the unauthorized possession of dangerous weapons, firearms or explosives while at work or on School Department property, or being intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty is strictly prohibited and is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any employee convicted or found guilty of a criminal offense involving a controlled substance is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, regardless of whether the offense was on school property or during working hours.

Additionally as the Cambridge Public Schools is a drug free workplace the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and educational environment and is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **Drug & Alcohol Testing**

Management and non-union employees as well as members of some collective bargaining units may be subject to administration of drug and/or alcohol screening processes to test for unauthorized use of a controlled substance and/or alcohol. Union contracts should be consulted for specific details where applicable.

## **Smoking**

Smoking or the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds, on school buses or within twenty (20) feet of any School Department building by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited by law (M.G.L., Chapter 71, Section 37H) and by City ordinance and is strictly enforced. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in disciplinary actions up through and including termination of employment.

## **Anti-Violence Policy**

All employees of the Cambridge Public Schools are expected to treat each other with respect and conduct themselves in a manner that promotes a safe, healthy workplace and educational environment. The Cambridge Public Schools is committed to working with its employees to maintain a work and educational environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment or intimidation. All reports of incidents are taken seriously and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Further-more, the Cambridge Public Schools expects its employees to report any instances of violent, intimidating, threatening or other disruptive behavior to either their supervisor, building administrator and/or the Chief Operating Officer of the Cambridge Public Schools as soon as possible. If an employee's safety is threatened, the employee should contact the police immediately.

## **Restrictions on Political Activities**

While public employees have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens, including campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive public office, Cambridge Public School employees are prohibited in connection with campaigning from using school district facilities, equipment or supplies and shall not discuss any such campaign with school personnel or students during the working day nor shall an employee use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes and students may not be pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

## **Reasonable Accommodations**

The Cambridge Public Schools does not discriminate in admission, treatment or access to its programs or activities or in employment in its programs or activities. The Cambridge Public Schools also does not discriminate against an individual with a disability with regard to job application procedures, hiring, advancement or discharge, compensation, job training or other conditions of employment. If an individual with a disability wishes to request reasonable accommodations pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act, the Program Manager for Diversity Development or Office of Human Resources should be contacted.

## **Reporting of Activities, Policies or Practices that Violate Law or Pose a Risk to Public Health or Safety**

Pursuant to the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws chapter 149, section 185, the Cambridge Public Schools does not retaliate against any employee who (i) discloses, or threatens to disclose to a supervisor or to a public body an activity, policy or practice of the employer, or of another employer with whom the employee's employer has a business relationship, that the employee reasonably believes to be in violation of a law, or a rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to law, or which the employee reasonably believes poses a risk to public health, safety or the environment; (ii) provides information to, or testifies before, any public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into any violation of law, or a rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to law, or activity, policy or practice which the employee reasonably believes poses a risk to public health, safety or the environment by the employer, or by another employer with whom the employee's employer has a business relationship; or (iii) objects to, or refuses to participate in any activity, policy or practice which the employee reasonably believes is in violation of a law, or a rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to law, or which the employee reasonably believes poses a risk to public health safety or the environment. Employees who have such concerns may file a written disclosure with either the Superintendent of Schools or the Chief Operating Officer whose offices are located at 159 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, MA 02141.



## **Conflict of Interest/State Ethics**

It is essential that public employees avoid taking official actions which are influenced by potential gain or benefit, or may be perceived as such. Accepting gifts or gratuities from individuals or organizations who do business with the Cambridge Public Schools or the City of Cambridge is strictly prohibited by School Department policy. Further, it is illegal under state law for a public employee to accept work-related gifts in excess of \$50.00 in value. All employees receive on an annual basis a summary of the state ethics law that has been prepared by the State Ethics Commission and are required by law to send an acknowledgement of receipt to the Clerk of the City of Cambridge, whose office is located at Cambridge City Hall. Additionally, all employees are required to complete an online ethics training program found on the State Ethics Commission website within 30 days of hire and every two years thereafter and to provide a certification of completion to the Office of Human Resources and Clerk of the City of Cambridge, whose office is located at Cambridge City Hall. Questions concerning conflict of interest should be directed to the City of Cambridge Office of the City Solicitor at 617-349-4121.

## **Employment of Relatives or Partners**

If you and members of your immediate family are employed by the Cambridge Public Schools, one may not supervise the other. If the employees and the department head are unable to develop a workable solution, the Superintendent of Schools will decide which employee may be transferred in such situations. For purposes of this section, your immediate family includes your spouse or domestic partner, your children, your siblings, your parents, your grandparents, and your spouse's or domestic partner's children, siblings, parents and grandparents. Should two current employees, one of whom supervises the other, enter into a personal, non-work related relationship, one or both employees may have to be transferred.

Members of the immediate family of the Superintendent, Central Office Administrators, School Committee members or Principals may not be employed by the School Department unless written notice is given to the School Committee of the proposal to employ such person at least two weeks in advance of the person's employment or assignment. Administrators are responsible for informing the Office of Human Resources of any such potential situations.

The definition of employment includes permanent, temporary and intermittent employment of any kind, service agreements and consultant agreements, or any other financial arrangement compensating an individual for services, including compensation from external organizations providing services supervised by an employee.

## **Email and Internet Use**

The Cambridge Public Schools computer networks are connected to the Internet and other on-line services in order to allow the School Department to serve the public more efficiently and effectively. Accordingly, various on-line capabilities are made available to designated School Department employees for legitimate, work-related purposes.

Use of these capabilities is subject to the same management oversight and supervision as any other employee activity. Failure to comply with defined policies on internet and on-line computer services use may result in termination, suspension, or other limitation of an employee's privileges for access to Internet-related capabilities, and may be the cause for further discipline up to and including discharge. For more specific information about what is permitted and what is prohibited, see your supervisor and read the Acceptable Use Policy.

## **Email and Web Etiquette**

All users are expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in the content and tone of their email messages and in the accessing of Internet sites.

Email messages sent through the Cambridge Public Schools are public documents and should not be used to convey confidential information.

The following are guidelines for effective "Email etiquette":

- Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Try to be concise and to the point
- Avoid using all capital letters (it gives the impression you are shouting)
- Do not forward chain letters or unsolicited information
- Only send email to those individuals directly concerned with the subject
- Avoid using email to communicate regarding private or confidential matters.  
If used, take precautionary steps to assure appropriate dissemination.

Additionally, the Cambridge Public Schools has a policy governing how school and district web pages are created and the purposes for which such pages made be created. For more information, consult a copy of the policy which is posted on the school district's website ([www.cpsd.us](http://www.cpsd.us)).

The Cambridge Public Schools also have a policy governing how its's social media is created and used. For more information, consult a copy of the policy which is posted on the school district's website ([www.cpsd.us](http://www.cpsd.us)).

## **II. BEGINNING EMPLOYMENT**

### **Employment Documentation**

Upon acceptance of a job offer and prior to beginning work, all newly hired employees must arrange to visit the Office of Human Resources to ensure that documentation necessary for employment has been submitted and to review eligibility for benefits.

Federal regulations require that all new hires complete and sign Federal Form I-9, Employment Eligibility and Verification Form and present documents of identity and eligibility to work in the U.S. As noted on the I-9 Form, this information must be supplied within three (3) days of hire.

Pre-employment documentation may include individual, family and beneficiary birth certificates, Social Security cards, U.S. passports and educator licensure/certification. Official education transcripts may also be required, depending upon the nature of your position. To gain salary credit as appropriate to union positions, documentation of experience and education must be submitted to the Office of Human Resources within one month of beginning employment.

### **Teacher and Administrator Licensure/Certification**

Teachers and educational administrators are required to possess Massachusetts licensure from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) appropriate to their position and to provide a copy of licensure to the Office of Human Resources at the time of employment, updating throughout employment as necessary. Lack of appropriate licensure may be grounds for termination. Applications for licensure must be made directly to the Massachusetts DESE, as the granting authority.

### **Reference and Background (CORI) Checks and National Criminal Background Check (Fingerprinting)**

The Cambridge Public Schools' employment verification process includes criminal record (CORI) checks and National Criminal Background Fingerprint check in addition to personal and professional references, educational and employment background checks. All offers of employment are contingent upon satisfactory results of these employment screening processes as well as any others that may be required. The Cambridge Public Schools reserves the right to periodically update CORI records for individual employees, employees in specific job categories or the school department staff as a whole. An unsatisfactory CORI or finger-print report may result in termination of employment. Employees who are involved in criminal proceedings that may affect employment should assure notification to the Executive Director of Human Resources and take prompt action to allow update of employment records.

### **Employee Id Badges**

In the interest of school and staff safety, please be advised that all permanent CPS employees are required to obtain a photographic employee ID badge within ten (10) days of starting employment.

Staff members may obtain an ID Badge at either of the following locations:

Safety Office at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (CRLS).

Office of Human Resources at 159 Thorndike Street.

Both facilities accept walk-ins during normal business hours (8am-4pm). A valid government issued photo ID (e.g., Driver's license or other state ID), and Employee ID number are required for each staff member to obtain a CPS ID badge. Your Employee ID number can be found on your paystub or by contacting your building clerk.

We encourage all staff members to wear their CPS ID badge while in CPS buildings so that staff and students can distinguish between staff and visitors. Questions regarding employee ID Badge requirements should be referred to the HR office at extension 6443.

The Office of Human Resources can only issue new ID Badges if you need a replacement badge you will need to go to the Office of Safety and Security.

## **Health Plan Enrollment**

New employees who are eligible for health insurance, the health insurance waiver payment option, and/or life insurance benefits and wish to enroll in one or more of these benefit options must do so within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of appointment. Those who do not enroll within this specified time frame will not be eligible to enroll for health insurance coverage or health insurance waiver option until the next annual open enrollment period. Life insurance is typically only available for enrollment at the time of initial employment. Additional information about available health care plan options and other benefits is provided in the "Benefits" section of this Handbook. For full details, contact the Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440.

## **Orientation**

School/department administrators and supervisors want employees to be successful in their new jobs and are prepared to answer questions new employees may have about specific responsibilities, work hours and general policies and procedures relating to employment in the Cambridge Public Schools. You may also contact the Office of Human Resources (617-349-6435) with general questions.

## **New Teacher Orientation**

As a new teacher, the Principal of a school or the department administrator will orient employees to their teaching responsibilities and assist them in ordering books, supplies and other materials.

Cambridge sponsors a system-wide orientation meeting for new teachers prior to the beginning of each school year. Also, new teacher sessions are sponsored regularly throughout each school year and are valuable sources of information about curricular and educational resources in addition to providing opportunities for sharing and networking with teachers and administrators throughout the district.

Information on these programs is available from the School Department's Electronic Registrar.

### **NOTE: BENEFITS ENROLLMENT**

**New employees who are eligible for health insurance, health insurance waiver payment, life insurance, and certain other benefits and wish to enroll must do so within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of appointment.**

### **III. EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES**

#### **Work Schedules**

Employees in the Cambridge Public Schools work a wide variety of schedules and hours. The work year may be based on a 10-month, 11-month, 12-month or other schedule, and regular work hours may range from less than 10 to 40 hours or more per week depending upon the nature of the position, school and district needs and collective bargaining agreements. One's supervisor or building/department administrator will explain the work hours associated with a position in accordance with School Department policies and answer any pertinent questions.

#### **Attendance and Absences**

All employees are expected to be regular in attendance. If illness, injury or other situation prevents an employee from coming to work, he/she must notify his/her supervisor of the absence as far in advance as possible so that appropriate coverage may be arranged. If an employee is absent for 10 or more days, he/she is required to provide written medical documentation to the Office of Human Resources to justify the absence. (Note that certain union contracts require medical documentation for absences of less than 10 days.) An employee may also be required to provide medical documentation to support absence at any time.

Additionally, in the event of a teacher's absence, it is expected that lesson plans and other pertinent materials relating to curriculum and schedules can be easily accessed by the building administrator and the substitute teacher and that notice of absence will be made via the Substitute Online system.

Failure to notify a supervisor of an absence in a timely manner or to provide requested medical documentation can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

#### **Substitute Teacher Assignments**

Cambridge maintains an online substitute teacher assignment system—Substitute Online. All assignments for substitute teachers must be coordinated by teachers or the School Principal through this centralized system or through the School Principal. In the event a teacher will be absent, the absence should be reported in the system and to the School Principal or designated administrator.

## **School Cancellations**

Periodically, weather or other emergency conditions may necessitate that schools be closed. Such closings due to inclement weather or other emergencies are announced on radio, local television stations and the School Department website ([www.cpsd.us](http://www.cpsd.us)). A computerized telephone calling chain is also maintained for communicating school closings due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Certain employees may be required to report to work under severe weather or other emergency conditions. Your supervisor will advise you if your position falls within this category.

## **Parking**

Limited parking is available at most schools. Parking permits, issued under the regulations of the City of Cambridge Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department, may be available to CTA Unit A members who teach or provide services at two or more schools during the school day. Such permits are limited, however, and are not guaranteed. Issuance of parking permits is coordinated by the Office of Human Resources. The School Department does not reimburse individuals or pay for parking violation tickets. Parking-related questions should be directed to a supervisor.

Additionally, pursuant to state law, operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, are prohibited from idling such vehicles on school grounds or within 100 feet of school grounds.

## **Performance Evaluation**

Periodically, a supervisor will formally evaluate an employee's job performance and assess how satisfactorily he/she is performing the responsibilities of his/her position.

Performance evaluation is an important factor in continued employment. If an employee does not agree with a performance evaluation, he/she may submit a written response addressing any relevant issues to the supervisor and to the Executive Director for Human Resources. The performance evaluation and any written response an employee may submit will be included in the employee's permanent personnel record.

Collective bargaining agreements may have specific requirements regarding evaluation.

## **Professional Development**

All employees are encouraged to engage in continued professional development. Continued education at institutes of higher education or in certain approved organizations can contribute to an employee achieving a higher rate of pay and his/her eligibility for promotion. Workshops and seminars are periodically offered by the Cambridge Public Schools at no or low cost during designated professional development days or after normal school hours.

Additional information regarding professional development opportunities may be obtained from an employee's supervisor.

## **Transfer**

Employees may apply for or be considered for transfer to different positions or between schools and departments. Certain contractual provisions apply. In most instances, once approved, a transfer should become effective within 2-4 weeks time unless unusual circumstances exist.

## **Resignation or Retirement**

In the event that an employee resigns employment, he/she is expected to provide a minimum of two weeks written notice to his/her supervisor and to the Executive Director for Human Resources. Certain administrative employees have a greater notice requirement under individual contracts. Employees are encouraged to arrange an exit interview with an administrator in Human Resources.

If an employee plans to retire, he/she should send written advance notification to his/her supervisor and the Executive Director for Human Resources, and also directly contact the Board of the Retirement Plan in which he or she is enrolled well in advance of the anticipated date of retirement to assure that any pension payments and insurance benefits due will be coordinated to avoid gaps in income or insurance coverage.

The Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS) administers the retirement system for teachers and educational administrators. The City of Cambridge Retirement Board administers the retirement system for other City staff. (Please refer to later sections of the Handbook for additional information about Retirement Plans and procedures.)

## **IV. COMPENSATION**

### **Starting Salary & Salary Increases**

Salary is based on the salary range established for each position. Previous experience and level of education may also be factors in determining salary. Salary schedules for positions covered under collective bargaining agreements are provided within such agreements. Salary schedules for non-union positions are available in the Office of Human Resources and are provided on notices of vacancies.

Salary increases, including both annual step increases and across-the-board increases, are governed by collective bargaining agreements for unionized employees. Where applicable, verification of education, experience and licensure must be submitted within one month of the start date of employment or within the timelines established within the collective bargaining agreement, if any, for salary credit. Non-union employees are granted increases at the discretion of the School Committee and may be granted an annual step increase based on satisfactory performance, subject to salary range maximum.

### **Pay Schedule**

Regular employees of the School Department are paid either weekly (on Mondays) or semi-monthly on the fifteenth (15th) and last day of each month. The department administrator will inform employees of their pay schedule.

### **Time Sheets/Attendance Records**

All employees are required to accurately account for their attendance. For most school-assigned staff on the semi-monthly payroll (including teachers, instructional aides, substitute teachers, hourly aides and others) time sheets will be submitted to the Payroll Department after certification by the Principal.

Other staff (including administrators, clerical and custodial staff, security staff, professional staff not assigned to a specific school and other full-time and part-time staff) submit individual timesheets certified by their supervisor. If timesheets are not submitted on schedule, an employee may experience delays in receiving pay. The timesheet must provide an accurate accounting of hours worked and absences. Falsification of timesheet information is a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.



## **Direct Deposit Option**

An employee may elect to have his/her salary directly deposited to his/her bank account by obtaining a Direct Deposit authorization form from the Office of Human Resources for submission to the Payroll Department.

## **Payroll Deductions**

All payroll deductions are itemized on paycheck stubs or Advice of Deposit forms. To ensure that an employee is paid accurately, he/she should promptly report any change in name, address, marital status or number of exemptions to the Office of Human Resources. Questions concerning pay may be referred to the Payroll Department at 617-349-6460.

### **Voluntary Deductions**

Employees may authorize payroll deductions for health and life insurance and other voluntary elected deductions.

### **Pension Contributions**

Employees who qualify for membership in either the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System or the Cambridge Retirement System are required to contribute a percentage of salary to the Plan. The required amount will be deducted each pay period. (Refer to other sections of this Handbook for additional information on Retirement Plans and procedures.)

### **Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP)**

Employees who do not qualify for membership in either the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System or the Cambridge Retirement System are required under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations to make a 7.5% contribution to a Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP) as an alternative to Social Security (FICA) contributions. Upon leaving the School Department, individuals have the option to withdraw DCP contributions. (Refer to other sections of this Handbook for additional information on DCP.)

### **Union Dues/Agency Fee**

If an employee is hired into a union position, union dues (or an agency fee) will be deducted from his/her pay. Failure to agree to pay these fees can lead to loss of employment. Union dues authorization cards are obtained from union representatives. For further information, contact the appropriate union president.

## V. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The following Section addresses employee benefits,  
such as health, retirement and other benefits.

Please read this section carefully,  
noting stated deadlines.

Failure to enroll in health insurance and other benefits plans  
or to apply for the health insurance waiver option payment  
within the **30 day time period required** will delay your eligibility  
for such benefits for as much as a year or until the next  
open enrollment period, which may be several months away.  
Life insurance enrollment is typically only available at the time of hire.  
If you are interested in health insurance coverage and other benefits,  
you must be sure to contact HR and complete and submit completed  
forms no later than 30 days after your employment start date.

Questions regarding employee benefits  
should be referred to the  
Cambridge Public Schools  
Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440  
or 617-349-6435.

All plans and rates are subject to change.

## **Eligibility for Benefits**

Certain regularly appointed full-time and part-time employees who work a regular schedule of 20 hours or more per week are eligible to participate in medical, life and dental insurance plans offered through the City of Cambridge.

Temporary employees and those employed under service agreements are not eligible for benefits.

Substitute teachers are eligible for medical insurance after completing proscribed periods of employment as described in the union contract for those positions. (See applicable union contract.)

## **New Employee Enrollment into Health Plans**

A new employee eligible for health insurance and wishing to have coverage, must complete the appropriate enrollment forms and submit them to the Office of Human Resources within 30 days of his/her effective date of regular employment.

If an employee does not enroll within this 30 day time period, he/she will not be eligible to enroll in a health insurance plan until the next annual open enrollment period. Therefore, if an employee is interested in health insurance and other coverage, he/she should take time to carefully review and promptly submit all employee benefits forms.

For additional information on health insurance enrollment, contact the Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440.

## **Health Care Plan Options & Costs**

The City of Cambridge offers several health plans, and a major medical and surgical coverage plan.

Plans include Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Tufts Health Plan, and Blue Cross and Blue Shield Blue Choice and Network Blue. The City periodically reviews health care plan offerings and these may change from time to time. To obtain detailed information about available health insurance options, contact the Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440. Eligible employees who have coverage elsewhere and do not elect health insurance coverage through the City of Cambridge may be eligible for monthly payments under the health insurance waiver option. This option must be elected within 30 days of employment, through the HR Office, if interested.

Depending upon collective bargaining agreement and employment category, the City currently pays between 75% and 88% of the cost of medical insurance premiums for eligible employees enrolled in City health care plans, Employees contribute

Between 12% and 25% - depending upon employee status and/or collective bargaining agreement—of the cost of the premium through a payroll deduction. Employee contributions towards health insurance premiums are made on a pre-tax basis in accordance with IRS regulations and therefore are not considered in calculating taxable income. Future contribution rates are subject to collective bargaining agreements.

## **Health Care Coverage for Individuals and Families**

Eligible employees may elect either individual or family coverage. Family coverage provides for spouses and/or dependents who are under age 26 or dependents of any age who fit the insurance plan's definition of disabled.

An employee may change from individual to family coverage, or add additional members to the plan within thirty days of a birth or adoption of a child or marriage. The School Department's Office of Human Resources must be notified within 30 days of such an event to effect a change in coverage outside of the open enrollment period. Changes must be accompanied by the appropriate documentation—e.g., marriage license, birth certificate.

## **Changing Your Health Insurance Plan**

Once an employee has elected a health insurance option, he/she cannot elect to change plans until the next annual City open enrollment period which typically occurs in February or in the event of a major defined change in personal circumstance, e.g., marriage, divorce, birth of a child. During the open enrollment period he/she may decide to change plans, change coverage or enroll in a plan if he/she is eligible.

## **Health Insurance Waiver Option (Payment in Lieu of Coverage)**

If an employee is eligible for health insurance coverage through the City of Cambridge, but has alternative medical coverage (through a spouse's coverage or other plan) which is not paid or sponsored by the City, he/she may be eligible to sign a waiver of participation in a City plan and be eligible to receive a defined stipend, paid in monthly installments, in lieu of health insurance coverage. For information on Health Insurance Waiver stipend amounts, and to obtain an enrollment form, contact the Employee Benefits Section of the Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440. If alternative coverage is subsequently lost through no fault of the employee's, he/she may elect to join one of the City's plans without waiting for the open enrollment period. He/she must do this within thirty (30) days of the loss of coverage. In this case, the employee would cease to be eligible for the waiver stipend.

## **Continuation of Health Insurance (COBRA)**

If employment should terminate or an employee or his/her dependent otherwise becomes ineligible to participate in group health insurance plan, he/she and/or his/her dependents have the right to continued participation in the City's group health insurance plan for up to thirty-six months under certain circumstances under federal COBRA legislation. The employee will be required to pay the full cost of the premium plus an administrative fee. Under COBRA continuation, the City will no longer contribute to the cost of health insurance premiums. For additional information on this option, contact the Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440.

## **Dental and Vision Coverage**

Certain employees may be eligible for participation in one of the following Dental Benefit Plans:

- Delta Dental Plan (certain non-union administrators on individual contracts)
- Cambridge Public Employees Dental & Vision Fund (regular employees working 20 or more hours per week)

Vision coverage is also available to most employees. In addition, health plans provide vision benefits to their members. For more information, contact the Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440.

## **Life Insurance**

Certain regular full-time employees and employees who work a regular schedule of 20 hours or more per week are eligible to be covered by the City of Cambridge Group Life Insurance plan. Plan benefits are payable in the event of death. New employees must enroll within 30 days of their appointment date to be eligible for this benefit.

Basic Life and AD & D: provides eligible employees \$5,000 of group term life insurance. The City pays 75% of the premium cost and the employee pays 25% of the cost.

Voluntary Term Life Plan: is available in increments of \$10,000.00 up to a maximum of \$100,000.00 with no medical questions asked, depending upon age. The monthly rates are also based upon age. Voluntary insurance terminates upon retirement.

For additional information on life insurance plans, contact the Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6440.

## **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)**

Members of some collective bargaining units and non-union employees may be eligible to participate in a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program that allows

an employee to voluntarily set aside up to \$2,600 pre-tax dollars to pay for unreimbursed out-of-pocket medical expenses (including co-payments, vision care and dental care, such as orthodontia) and up to \$5,000 for dependent care expenses (expenses incurred in providing day care for children or elderly parents) and/or adoption fees.

## **Retirement Plans**

### *Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Plan*

Eligible teachers and administrators (employees appointed to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education certified/licensed positions) participate in the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System (MTRS) pension plan, a State-administered plan. If an employee is eligible for this plan, after completing and submitting the application, he/she will be enrolled at the time he/she completes his or her new hire starting paperwork. Information on the provisions of this Plan may be obtained from the MTRS. Employees may contact the MTRS at 617-679-6877.

### *Cambridge Contributory Retirement System*

Other regular full-time and part-time employees who work a minimum of 20 hours per week (1000 hours per year) may participate in the Cambridge Contributory Retirement System. Participation in this Plan begins on the first day of qualified employment. New employees will be enrolled in the Plan through the School Department's Office of Human Resources. The City's Plan provides a monthly pension benefit to eligible employees who have completed sufficient service upon retirement. This Plan provides provisions for vested minimum retirement as early as age 55 with ten (10) years of creditable service. The amount of pension benefit increases as age and amount of creditable service increases. Disability Retirement benefits are also available for permanently disabled employees who meet certain other qualifications. Detailed information regarding employee contributions, vesting, plan administration, etc., is available through the Cambridge Retirement Board. Employees may contact the Board at 617-868-3401.

## **Mandatory Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP)**

Federal law requires that School Department employees who are not eligible for benefits under the Cambridge Retirement System or the MTRS (e.g., substitute teachers, temporary employees, etc.) must participate in a mandatory deferred compensation plan in lieu of Social Security. Under this requirement, 7.5% of wages are invested on a tax-deferred basis in one of two investment options provided by investment firms selected by the City of Cambridge. These mandatory contributions continue as long as the employee is employed by the School Department and is not a member of the retirement system. If employment by the School Department terminates, the participant may elect to leave the funds in the plan and earn tax-deferred interest or withdraw the funds and pay taxes on the income.

## **Social Security & Medicare**

The City of Cambridge does not participate in the federal Social Security system for any Social Security benefits except for Medicare. Medicare deductions are made for employees hired on or after April 1, 1986.

## **Voluntary Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA)**

The City's Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan (TSA) allows certain employees to invest a portion of their wages on a tax-deferred basis to a supplemental retirement savings account through payroll deduction. Contributions to the TSA are invested in a variety of investment vehicles such as stock and bond funds, guaranteed accumulation accounts and money market funds. Employees may generally enroll or change their level of contribution at any time, on line via the district's Third Party Administrator, PenServ ([www.penserv.com](http://www.penserv.com)).

## **Workers' Compensation**

Workers' Compensation is designed to provide benefits in the event that an individual is injured in connection with his or her employment. In Cambridge, Workers' Compensation costs for City employees are paid entirely by the City. If an employee is injured, he/she should immediately notify his/her supervisor and report the accident, no matter how minor it may seem. An Accident Report form, available from the school's main office or the School Safety Office, should be completed by the employee's supervisor. The Personnel Department of the City of Cambridge administers the Workers' Compensation program for all City departments. Questions concerning Workers' Compensation may be referred to Office of Human Resources at 617-349-6438.

## **Unemployment Compensation**

Unemployment Compensation provides temporary income for those who have lost their jobs under certain conditions. For more information about Unemployment Compensation, or to apply for benefits, contact the local office of the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training or the Office of Human Resources.

## **Employee Assistance Program**

The EAP provides confidential assessment and referral services and short-term counseling to help you and your household members work through life's challenges.

## **VI. TIME OFF**

### **Holidays**

Paid holidays for union employees are specified in various union contracts. The Cambridge Public Schools generally recognizes the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Eid ul-Fitr or Eid al-Adha
Presidents Day	1/2 day before Thanksgiving
Patriots Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Independence Day (July 4th)	Christmas Eve (1/2 day)
Labor Day	Christmas Day
Columbus Day	New Year's Eve (1/2 day)
Veteran's Day	

In some instances, holidays that fall on a Saturday are observed on the preceding Friday and holidays that fall on a Sunday are observed on the following Monday. Union contracts should be consulted for specific details where applicable.

For employees who are eligible for paid holidays to receive pay for the specific holiday, the holiday must fall within the employee's regular work week. For example, an employee whose regular work year is from September to June would not be eligible for the July 4th holiday; similarly, an employee who normally works a three day schedule consisting of Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays would not be eligible to be paid for Labor Day, which traditionally falls on a Monday.

Employees who are on an unpaid leave of absence or are otherwise absent without pay are not eligible to be paid for holidays.

### **Personal Days**

Regular School Department employees are generally granted up to three (3) personal days each year. In general, the last two of these days are deductible from sick leave balance (refer to applicable union contracts for exceptions). These days may be used for personal situations beyond the control of the individual including individual religious holidays. Sick leave is not to be used for these purposes. Employees must notify their supervisor as far in advance as possible when they plan to take a personal day. Personal days may not be carried over from year to year and may not be taken on Fridays or Mondays preceding or following school vacation periods or holidays.



## **Vacation**

Many School Department employees work a 10-month or 11-month schedule which includes time off during school vacation weeks and during the summer. Generally, additional vacation time is not associated with these work schedules (refer to applicable union contracts for exceptions). Other employees may be eligible for annual vacation leave based on the nature of their position, length of service, union contract and other factors. Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements should consult their union contract for specific vacation eligibility requirements.

Administrative employees under union or with individual employment contracts should consult such contracts for vacation entitlements, if any. Other staff are subject to a standard vacation entitlement schedule which is available in the Office of Human Resources.

Although every effort will be made to grant vacation requests at the time an employee desires, adequate coverage must be maintained to ensure effective and safe operations. Therefore, vacation requests must be approved by the supervisor in advance and vacation preference is not guaranteed. For purposes of earning and using vacation time, the work year is July 1 through June 30. Generally, vacation time is not credited in advance and is accrued and credited to the employee's vacation record as of July 1 each year. Vacation time earned and credited as of July 1 is to be used by June 30 of the following year in accordance with union contracts and School Department policy.

Vacations are meant to be taken in the year they are earned. Except as noted in certain collective bargaining agreements, an employee may only request that un-used vacation time be carried over into the following year under very extenuating or emergency circumstances. Routine carry-over requests will not be approved. Your Supervisor must sign off on all requests for vacation carry-over, subject to approval by the Chief Financial Officer. Vacation time that is not used or pre-approved for carry-over will be forfeited as of June 30 (refer to applicable union contracts for exceptions). Questions concerning vacation eligibility may be referred to the Office of Human Resources.

When an employee leaves the employ of the Cambridge Public Schools or is terminated, the Cambridge Public Schools will pay the employee for any accrued unused vacation days.

## **Sick Leave**

Regular full-time employees and part-time employees are eligible to accrue sick leave. Sick leave is to be used in the event of personal illness or eligible documented personal or family leave, non-job related injury or disability. Sick leave may also be applied to supplement Workers' Compensation payments up to the level of regular pay. Sick leave may be used for doctor's visits which cannot be

scheduled outside normal work hours. Please refer to the Family/Medical Leave Policy which follows this section. For a copy of the policy, contact the Office of Human Resources. Sick leave may not be used for reasons other than legitimate illness or disability.

Unused sick days may accumulate from year to year up to maximums specified within union or individual employment contracts. Employees are encouraged to use sick leave days only when medically necessary to allow the accumulation of sick leave towards income protection in the event of a lengthy illness or disability.

Under certain circumstances, an employee may “buy back” his or her accumulated sick leave days upon retirement within certain limitations. Generally a per diem rate will be applied. Please refer to applicable union or individual employment contracts for specific requirements.

## **Family and Medical Leave Act**

### **A. Basic Leave Entitlement**

- FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:
- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

### **B. Military Family Leave Entitlements**

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a

member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the

service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in out-patient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

### **C. Benefits and Protections**

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

### **D. Eligibility Requirements**

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

### **E. Definition of Serious Health Condition**

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

### **F. Use of Leave**

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

## **G. Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave**

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

## **H. Employee Responsibilities**

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the re-requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

## **I. Employer Responsibilities**

Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

## **J. Unlawful Acts by Employers**

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

## **K. Enforcement**

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

**FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice.**

### **Personal Medical Leave**

Employees who are absent for 10 or more consecutive days (fewer days under certain union contracts) are required to promptly submit written medical documentation verifying the need for absence to the Office of Human Resources.

If written medical documentation verifying the need for absence is not received in a timely manner, the absent employee is subject to being placed on unpaid status, and is also subject to being deemed as having resigned employment by abandoning his or her job or having terminated his or her employment. Medical documentation verifying the need for absence from work may also be required to support absence at any time, including, without limitation, in the event of excessive sporadic absence.

Employees may use their accumulated sick leave to be paid during the period of a documented medical FMLA leave due to their own personal illness.

### **Extended Personal Medical Leave**

If an employee's need for leave extends beyond twelve (12) weeks due to his or her own medically documented illness or disability, he or she may request to be granted an extended medical leave following expiration of the 12 weeks. The employee may request to continue to be paid using accumulated sick leave.

Once personal sick leave and any approved Sick Leave Bank days granted under union contracts has been exhausted, the leave will be unpaid. While on approved personal medical leave, employees are eligible for group health insurance coverage on the same basis as when they were working, including premium contributions from the City. Requests to extend Personal Medical Leaves of Absence must be made in writing to the Office of Human Resources, with appropriate medical documentation.

## **Parental Leave**

Employees who are not eligible under the FMLA may nonetheless be eligible under state law for maternity leave.

Under this leave, employees are eligible for up to eight (8) weeks of unpaid leave for the purpose of giving birth to or for adopting a child under the age of eighteen, or for adopting a child under the age of twenty-three if the child is mentally or physically disabled, or having a child placed with the eligible employee pursuant to a court order. In accordance with the state law two eligible employees shall only be entitled to (8) weeks of parental leave in aggregate for the birth or adoption of the same child. Where leave is not foreseeable, notice must be given as soon as practicable if the delay is for reasons beyond the individual's control. At least two weeks written notice of the anticipated date of departure and intention to return is required. Once personal sick leave has been exhausted, the leave will be unpaid. While on approved personal medical leave, employees continue to be eligible for group health insurance coverage on the same basis as when they were working, including premium contributions from the City. Employees who return from covered parental leaves will be reinstated to their same or equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms are required by the applicable state or federal law. Under school committee policy up to four week of adoption leave may be paid using accrued sick leave.

Requests to extend Personal Medical Leaves of Absence must be made in writing to the Office of Human Resources.

This leave does not diminish any greater leave that may be provided for in a collective bargaining agreement or other school policy. Also consult the "Adoption Leave" portion of this handbook.

## **Employee Leave for Family Obligations (Small Necessities Leave)**

Under state law, eligible employees are able to take up to 24 hours leave for family obligations during any fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). This law applies to employees who have been employed for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1,250 hours in the prior 12 month period and who are seeking leave for the purpose of participating in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of the employee's son or daughter, such as parent-teacher conference or interview for a new school; to accompany a son or daughter to a routine medical or dental appointment such as a routine check-up or vaccination; or to accompany an elderly (60 years or more) relative to a routine medical or dental appointment or for other professional services such as inter-viewing at a nursing home. Leave may be taken in increments of at least one hour for up to 24 hours in a fiscal year. This leave augments leave taken under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, as it is for a different purpose.

This leave is unpaid unless an employee chooses to apply accrued paid vacation, sick or personal time as provided in applicable collective bargaining agreements, school department policy and except as may be provided for in state law or city ordinance.

This leave does not diminish any greater leave that may be provided for in a collective bargaining agreement or other school policy. Seven days notice in writing is required, whenever foreseeable, to the extent possible. If the need is not foreseeable, the employee must notify his/her immediate supervisor as soon as practicable.

### **Domestic Violence Leave**

Employees may take up to fifteen (15) days of unpaid leave from work in any twelve month period if:

- (i) the employee or a family member of the employee is a victim of abusive behavior;
- (ii) the employee or family member of the employee, is seeking assistance as a result of abusive behavior (i.e., legal or medical services, counseling or victim's services); and the employee is not the perpetrator of the abusive behavior against such employee's family member. Domestic violence leave is not available unless all other available leave (i.e., vacation, personal, sick, family and medical leave) is exhausted.

Employees who return from a domestic violence leave will be reinstated to their same or equivalent job with the equivalent pay, benefits or other employment terms are required by applicable state or federal law. However, time spent on leave does not count towards length of service credit, except for purpose of retirement or other purposes as identified within applicable bargaining agreements. Employees shall provide notice of leave as far in advance as possible to the Office of Human Resources within three workdays that a domestic violence leave has been taken. Documentation such as a copy of a protective order, court documentation, police report, signed admission of guilt by perpetrator, medical documentation and/or sworn statement by social worker, medical care worker, shelter worker, lawyer of employee must be provided to support leave that is taken.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Employees who have been employed at least six months are eligible for bereavement leave in the event of a death of a close relative or member of the household. Most employees receive up to five calendar days of paid bereavement leave for the death of a spouse, child, parent, sister or brother. A one-day paid bereavement leave is granted for other relatives or household members.

Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements should consult those collective bargaining agreements for more detailed information with respect to bereavement leave. Bereavement leave days are to be taken at the time the event occurs, and cannot be carried over.

## **Military Leave**

When an employee is called to military service (including active duty, active duty training, inactive duty training, full-time National Guard duty or an absence to determine fitness to perform services), the employee must give advance notice to the Cambridge Public Schools Office of Human Resources of the military leave. Written notice of military service may include provision of copies of orders or other written documentation with respect to being called to service. If, however, military necessity precludes providing notice or giving notice is otherwise impossible or unreasonable, the employee may have an appropriate military officer provide such notice.

Employees in the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve who participate in annual two-week active duty or training program may apply for a paid short-term military leave of absence provided that such service cannot be scheduled during a school vacation period. Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements should consult those collective bargaining agreements for additional information with respect to military leave.

Consistent with the practices of the City of Cambridge, the Cambridge Public Schools pays an employee who is on approved military leave the difference in salary between the amount of military pay received from the government and the amount of regular salary for those on approved military leave (with the exception of any employee who is assigned to theatres of combat operations as de-scribed below). The employee is required to provide to the Payroll Department documentation of the amount of military pay he or she received from the government so that appropriate offset can be made.

Under special statute employees of the City of Cambridge including employees of the Cambridge School Department who are assigned and present in a theatre of combat operations such as Iraq or Afghanistan after September 11, 2001 are eligible for the following pay and benefits: continuation of full base salary without any reduction for pay or allowances received from the U.S. government during the period of military leave; up to five (5) calendar days of pre-deployment paid leave for those required to be on such military leave for 90 days or more, such leave not to be deducted from personal, sick, vacation, or other leave, or be deducted from creditable service for retirement purposes; no loss of seniority during period of leave; no loss of accrued vacation, sick, or personal leave during such period of military leave; and no loss of service credit towards retirement during such period of military leave.

## **Jury Duty**

Employees shall be granted time off with pay to serve Jury Duty. Appropriate documentation should be provided to the employee's supervisor for submittal to the Payroll Department. The School Department will make up the difference, if any, between Jury Duty pay and regular salary for the period of Jury Duty service.



## **Unpaid Personal Leaves of Absence**

Unpaid personal leaves of absence for individual educational or other valid reasons may be requested and are subject to approval by the Superintendent of Schools. Such leaves may not exceed one (1) year except as otherwise specified in union contracts. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the Office of Human Resources , within the deadlines specified in union contracts. Additional information can be obtained from the Office of Human Resources.





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**AA/EEO Employer**

CPS is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the provision of quality educational programs for all students. CPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, genetic information, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran or marital status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.