

Whitefish Housing Authority Board of Commissioners Regular Monthly Meeting Agenda

Date: February 25, 2026

Location: Whitefish City Hall

Time: 5:15pm

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

II. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of January 2026 Meeting Minutes (attached)
- B. Approval of Agenda

III. Continuing Business (Old/Unfinished)

- A. Updated Personnel Manual (Resolution #301, attached)
- B. RAD/Section 18 Conversion Updates
- C. HUD Compliance Review / Corrective Action Plan Discussion

IV. Public Comment

V. Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee

Members: Kate Berry + Thomas Shea

B. Affordable Housing Committee

Member: Paul Leisher

C. Financial Reports (attached)

D. Executive Director's Report (attached)

VI. New Business

- A. Approval of FY 2026 Payment Standards (Resolution #303, attached)

VII. Closed Session (if necessary)

Pursuant to MCA 2-3-203 for legal or personnel discussion, during this meeting, the board may elect to enter a closed-door session for reasons related to legal and/or personnel issues. Per Montana Code Annotated 2-3-203: The presiding officer of any meeting may close the meeting during the time the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy and then if and only if the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains and, in that event, the meeting must be open.

VIII. Adjourn

Whitefish Housing Authority
Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

Date: January 28, 2026

Meeting Type: Regular Monthly Meeting

Location: Whitefish City Hall Conference Room, 418 East 2nd Street, Whitefish, Montana

1. Call to Order: 5:19 pm

Adjourned: 7:18 pm

Staff Present: Riss Getts

Meeting Chaired By: Kate Berry

2. Roll Call: Kate Berry, Thomas Shea, Jason Suazo, Roxann, Katie Boyd, Nick Farmer. A quorum was present.

3. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

B. Approval of Agenda

Discussion: Motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the addition of “Board Engagement with Ned Cooney” under Continuing Business.

- **Motion:** Thomas Shea
- **Second:** Katie Boyd
- **Vote:** Unanimous, motion carried

4. Continuing Business (Old/Unfinished)

A. Northwest Montana Community Land Trust (NWMTCLT) – Partnership Discussion

Discussion: The Board received a report from the Executive Director regarding potential collaboration with NWMTCLT for administration and management of homeownership programs, including LHP, WALT, and Trailview properties. Discussion included administrative capacity, financial impact, ground lease structures, maintenance reserves, and potential revenue implications. The Board requested:

- Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Case study and financial impact analysis
- Clarification of projected revenue changes
- Future discussion regarding unrestricted Railroad homes

B. RAD / Section 18 Blend & LIHTC Application: Resolution No. 298

Discussion: The Executive Director requested authorization to submit applications for

RAD conversion, Section 18 Blend, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credit financing. Discussion included due diligence, Purchase and Sale Agreement review, and scope of Executive Director authority. Resolution language provides that documents must be reviewed by the Board prior to execution.

- **Motion:** Roxann Lucas
- **Second:** Thomas Shea
- **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Result:** Resolution No. 298 adopted.

Action Item: Provide indemnification and related disclosure documents to Commissioners upon receipt.

C. Updated Personnel Manual: Resolution No. 301

Discussion: The Board reviewed proposed updates to the Personnel Manual, including holiday alignment considerations.

Action Item: Commissioner Berry and the Executive Director to collaborate on revisions prior to final adoption.

D. Radon Mitigation – Mountain View Manor

Discussion: The Board reviewed cost estimates and discussed mitigation feasibility, contractor proposals, and capital planning considerations.

Board direction included:

- Obtain additional estimates
- Contact State Radon Program
- Circulate detailed proposal documentation

E. Board Engagement – Ned Cooney

Discussion: Board training scheduled for February 3, 5:30–7:00 p.m.

Action Item: Kate Berry to confirm location

5. Public Comment: None

6. Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee (Kate Berry and Thomas Shea)

a. No updates

B. Finance Committee (Kate Berry + Nick Farmer)

a. No updates

C. Affordable Housing Committee (Paul Leisher)

Discussion: The Executive Director reported on Legacy Homes Program revisions, implementation of an online application and waitlist system (anticipated late spring), and projected onboarding of approximately 65 units. Administrative fee revenue anticipated.

D. Comprehensive Grant Report (Riss Getts, Acting Director)

No updates

E. Financial Reports (Riss Getts, Acting Director)

Discussion: The Board reviewed financial statements and the proposed amendment to the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026 Operating Budget. See below minutes under “New Business.”

F. Executive Director’s Report (Riss Getts, Acting Director)

Discussion: The Executive Director reported on unit turnover efforts and ongoing work with accountants to amend the FY2026 budget. The July–June fiscal year was reaffirmed. Discussion included maintenance expenses, revenue projections, HAP payments during construction, financing proceeds, and development of a cost-reduction strategy for maintenance.

7. New Business

A. Resolution No. 302 – Approval of Amended FYE 2026 Operating Budget

Discussion: The Board reviewed financial statements and the proposed amendment to the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026 Operating Budget. Discussion included maintenance expenditures, HAP revenue timing during construction, and projected financing close revenue.

- **Motion:** Thomas Shea
- **Second:** Nick Farmer
- **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Result:** Resolution No. 302 adopted.

8. Closed Session (if necessary): No closed door session

Time entered: N/A

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Adjourned: 7:18 pm

Whitefish Housing Authority

RESOLUTION #No. 301

ADOPTION OF THE NEW PERSONNEL MANUAL

WHEREAS, Whitefish Housing Authority recognizes the need to establish and adopt a comprehensive personnel policy to ensure consistent, equitable, and effective management of its workforce and to promote compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and best practices;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE WHITEFISH HOUSING AUTHORITY as follows:

1. The Board of Commissioners hereby approves the adoption of the attached, updated Personnel Manual
2. The Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Whitefish Housing Authority to take the necessary steps to implement this policy to ensure the efficient operation of housing programs.

ADOPTED AT THE MONTHLY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING OF THE WHITEFISH HOUSING AUTHORITY THIS 25th DAY OF February 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority, Whitefish, Montana

Katherine Berry, Board Chair, WHA Board of Commissioners

Marissa Getts, Acting Director

WHITEFISH HOUSING AUTHORITY

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Adopted by Board Resolution Number: _____

Date: _____

Revised: _____

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

This Personnel Policy Manual contains policies for the employees of Whitefish Housing Authority (WHA). All employees charged with the responsibility of administering policy must be familiar with its contents. This Manual is a guide to be used by the Executive Director and managerial employees to ensure uniform and nondiscriminatory applications of the conditions of employment. It is essential that these policies be administered in a systematic, fair, and impartial manner.

There will be situations that require administrative interpretation of these policies. Every effort will be made to ensure that such decisions are made objectively with the general intent of the policy in mind. The provisions outlined in this Manual are applicable to all regular full-time WHA employees. Temporary, contract, seasonal, casual, and part-time employees are expected to abide by the rules and policies of the agency, but do not have the same rights and benefits as regular full-time staff.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this Manual accurately reflects the pertinent laws, regulations, and policies as of the time of publication, provisions may be changed or cancelled at any time. Such changes, amendments or cancellations may be made with or without notice. While the employer is responsible for informing employees of changes to the policy manual, employees are responsible for keeping themselves informed of changes in those laws, regulations, and policies as well.

If you need further information or advice on matters covered in this Manual, please contact the Executive Director.

2. OBJECTIVES

It is the Employer's philosophy that providing personnel policies that aid in recruiting and retaining competent, dependable employees is vital to the success of the Whitefish Housing Authority. The policies and procedures stated in this Manual are designed to:

- A. Promote high morale and foster good working relationships among employees by providing uniform personnel policies and consideration of employee needs.
- B. Provide fair and equal opportunity for qualified employees to enter and progress in service based upon merit and fitness as determined through objective and practical personnel management methods.
- C. Enhance the attractiveness of a career with the Whitefish Housing Authority and encourage each of its employees to give their best effort to the Agency and the public.
- D. Encourage courteous and dependable service to the public.
- E. Ensure that all activities are conducted in an ethical and legal manner to promote the Agency's reputation as an efficient, progressive body in the community and the state; and
- F. Establish acceptable minimum standards of performance for employees.

It is the Agency's intention that these policies, procedures, and methods will hereafter govern the working relationship between the employee and the Whitefish Housing Authority.

3. MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

The Executive Director and/or their designee maintains the authority to establish, interpret, and administer policies and direct the operations of the departments under their jurisdiction. These rights include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. The right to:

- i. Determine the department's goals, objectives, programs, utilization of technology and services, and utilize employees in the manner designed to meet these purposes effectively and efficiently.
- ii. Exercise complete control and discretion over the budget, allocation of funds, organizational structure, and method of performing the work required.
- iii. Manage and determine the location, type, and number of physical facilities, equipment, and programs and the work to be performed.
- iv. Determine the adequacy, size, composition, and qualification of work forces, staffing patterns, and organizational structure.
- v. Set standards of service and determine the procedures and standards of selection for employment.
- vi. Determine the hours of work and work schedules; establish the work rules, policies, and procedures for all employees.
- vii. Manage and direct employees, including the right to select, hire, promote, transfer, assign, evaluate, supervise, layoff, recall, reprimand, suspend, discharge, and discipline for just cause, and to maintain order among employees.
- viii. Determine when a job vacancy exists, the duties to be included in each job description, and the standards of quality, productivity, and performance to be maintained.
- ix. Determine the necessity to schedule overtime and the amount required thereof.
- x. Determine and implement necessary actions in emergency situations.
- xi. Maintain the security of personnel and financial records, and other pertinent information.
- xii. Implement and enforce rules on workplace safety.
- xiii. Maintain and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations and take actions necessary to carry out the mission of the Housing Authority.

4. SCOPE OF COVERAGE

- A. These policies apply to all employees of WHA, except as may be specifically exempted by law.
- B. If an employee has a written contract of employment approved by the Board, this Manual shall be construed in a manner that does not conflict with the terms of that contract.
- C. These policies supersede and replace all prior policies, whether written or unwritten, and superficially supersede any past practices.
- D. This Manual does not apply to independent contractors who are paid pursuant to an invoice or purchase order.

5. POLICIES, CHANGES, DISSEMINATION AND SUGGESTIONS

- A. Each department head will keep a copy, and/or have access to, this Manual available for review by employees at any time. Supervisory personnel are responsible for administering the policies herein and shall ensure that subordinate personnel comply with all policies and procedures adopted by the Housing Authority.
- B. Any question about a provision of this Manual, or items not covered in the Manual, such as rules, written or unwritten, implied, or expressed, should be directed to the employee's supervisor.
- C. All employees shall be provided with an orientation of the Manual which shall include an abbreviated explanation of the policies herein that apply directly to such employees. Employees shall familiarize themselves with all policies herein.
- D. Employees are encouraged to make suggestions for improvements in policies and procedures. Suggestions should be shared with the employee's supervisor who then in turn will forward all suggestions to the Executive Director.
- E. Periodically, the entire Manual will be reviewed, revised, amended, or deleted to address changes in the law and current practice. All changes are subject to the approval of the Executive Director and the Board of Commissioners. Each employee will be promptly notified of changes prior to their effective date.

6. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

- A. WHA is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer, operating within all applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. It is the policy of WHA to provide equal opportunity to all persons without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliations, military status, genetic information, age, or any other status protected by applicable laws.
- B. No employee may aid, abet, compel, coerce, or conspire to discharge, harass, or cause another to resign because of race, creed, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, military status, genetic information, political affiliation, or a qualifying disability that may be reasonably accommodated.

- C. The Executive Director shall serve as the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer for WHA. All allegations of violation of this policy are to be reported to the EEO Officer unless that EEO Officer is the subject of the complaint. The EEO Officer shall confer with counsel on matters with legal implications.

II. GENERAL PRACTICES AND PROCESURES

1. HOUSING AUTHORITY STRUCTURE

- A. The Whitefish Housing Authority (hereby known as the WHA) is a public housing authority established by federal and state legislation. A seven-member board of commissioners is appointed by the Mayor of Whitefish. The Commissioners determine policies which are not set forth by the law; monitor contracts and regulations; oversee financial responsibilities; and appoint an Executive Director. The Commissioners are the governing body of the Housing Authority. The Executive Director works for the Commission and is responsible for carrying out policies as set by the Board of Commissioners. The Commission deals with administration only in a formal manner through the Executive Director. Administrative functions are not delegated to individual members of the Commission. The Housing Authority staff are selected and supervised by the Executive Director.

2. EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

B. Employer's Responsibilities

- i. Employees of the Housing Authority may expect:
 - a. Fair and impartial treatment always.
 - b. Adequate and competitive pay.
 - c. Safe working conditions.
 - d. Modern equipment and materials.
 - e. Informed supervision.

C. Employee's Responsibilities

- i. As an employer, WHA expects employees to be:
 - a. Fair and courteous in meeting the public and working with fellow employees.
 - b. Industrious.
 - c. Neat in work and personal appearance.
 - d. Prompt in reporting for work and in completing assignments.
 - e. Economical in the use of supplies and equipment.
 - f. Cooperative with the public and with fellow employees in getting the job done well.
 - g. Observant of all WHA policies and procedures.

- h. If certification of any type is required for a position, the employee must already be certified or must obtain certification within the described period that the job description requires.

3. HOURS OF WORK

- A. Normal work hours are Monday through Friday, 9:30am to 5:00pm with a 30-minute lunch break. Any alternative to your approved schedule needs to be pre-approved by your supervisor.
- B. It is your responsibility to notify your supervisor at the earliest opportunity if you are late arriving for work. Tardiness to work, unexcused, and/or excessive absences may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment.

4. REMOTE WORK

- A. Remote work privileges are not automatically awarded to any employee. Remote work is approved on a case by-case basis where it is in the best interests of the Whitefish Housing Authority and is a good fit for a particular job or specific employee. Remote work can also be approved in situations where public health concerns (such as a global pandemic) arise. Remote work is not an option for every position or employee. Remote work arrangements must be approved by the employee's direct supervisor. If an employee calls in to request remote work privileges and the supervisor denies the request, the employee must come into the office or take accrued vacation or sick leave. Regular remote work arrangements can be rescinded at any time, without reason, by the ED (or, in the case of the ED, the Board).

5. FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

- A. WHA recognizes that certain departments and positions can accommodate flexible start and end times. Individuals may request a flexible, but consistent work schedule by written proposal to the Executive Director, who may authorize a flexible and consistent work schedule based on organizational need.

6. LEGAL ACTIONS

- A. The Executive Director is the only authorized employee to accept any legal process served against the WHA. If a process server approaches an employee, the employee should direct the server to the Executive Director without accepting or signing anything.

Employees should not discuss any aspect of a situation that is subject to a lawsuit or hearing without first consulting the Executive Director.

7. MEDIA RELATIONS

- A. All inquiries from the media must be referred to the Executive Director. If a member of the media service approaches an employee, the employee should direct the member of the media to the Executive Director.

Employees should not discuss any aspect of a situation that is specific to the operations of the WHA with the media without first consulting the Executive Director. An individual appointed by the Board of Commissioners may speak for the WHA if the Executive Director is unavailable.

III. EMPLOYMENT

1. ADMINISTRATION

- A. As adopted by resolution of the Board, the Executive Director (hereby known as the ED) is directed to administer all personnel actions. The ED shall be responsible for ensuring the effective administration of these policies and may delegate such functions as deemed necessary for the implementation of this system. The ED may adopt, amend, or rescind written administrative policies consistent with these rules and regulations and by adoption by a resolution of the Board.

2. FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT DEFINITIONS

- A. When you are hired, you are designated as Regular Full-time, Regular Part-time, Temporary, or Intermittent; and either exempt or non-exempt (according to the Fair Labor Standards Act and Montana Wage and Hour laws). If you are uncertain of your designation, clarify this with the Executive Director.
 - i. Probationary Employee: All employees are in an introductory period for 90 days from their date of hire. During this time, employees can be terminated at any time without warning and without cause. In some cases, the initial probationary period may be extended. The employee will receive notification of the extension. When an employee transfers to a new position within the agency, the employee will serve a new 90-day trial period. During this time both the employer and employee can determine if the transfer is beneficial to the organization. If the employee fails to successfully complete the trial period, the employee may be transferred back to the original or comparable position, subject to position availability.
 - ii. Regular Full-time Employee: an employee designated to work at full-time status, an average of 40 hours per week.
 - iii. Regular Part-time Employee: an employee with regularly scheduled work assignments of between 20 and 40 hours per week. Benefits are pro-rated according to number of hours designated.
 - iv. Temporary Employee (includes Seasonal): an employee hired for a specific period or as needed for the completion of a specific project. The job assignment, work schedule and duration of the position will be determined on an individual basis. Whether part-time or full-time, a temporary employee is not eligible for benefits except where required by state or

federal laws or specifically provided for in this Personnel Policy. As an incentive, the Executive Director reserves the right to schedule benefits for practicum students or interns, if they are scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week.

- v. Intermittent Employee: an employee who normally works less than 20 hours per week and no more than 1040 hours in a calendar year, or who is scheduled to work on an on-call basis. Intermittent employees are not eligible for benefits except where required by state or federal laws.

3. ANNIVERSARY DATE OF HIRE

- A. The first day you report to work and begin working is your official anniversary date of hire. Your anniversary date is used to compute various benefits and other conditions of employment described in this policy manual.

4. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

- A. Jobs are grouped based on similar duties and qualifications. Compensation is determined, in part, by the job descriptions.
- B. The duties and responsibilities of each job may be periodically reviewed and adjusted. The responsibility to update job descriptions is the Executive Directors. When the job duties have changed significantly, the employee or their supervisor may request that the position be audited for placement in a different pay grade.

5. ATTENDANCE

- A. Regular attendance is important in keeping the WHA running smoothly. In the event of illness or late arrival, the employee should notify the immediate supervisor before or upon the start of business hours explaining the reason for the delay or absence. Tardiness and absenteeism that is unexcused or occurs twice in a pay period without good reason is cause for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- B. If an employee is absent without proper authorization, a deduction shall be made from the employee's pay for the period of absence.

6. HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, AND RETALIATION

- A. Unlawful workplace harassment and retaliation are strictly prohibited. The Whitefish Housing Authority is committed to providing a workplace environment that reasonably accommodates all qualified employees of the Agency so that they may fulfill their essential job functions and carry out the mission of the Agency in a professional manner and to the best of their ability. All employees are expected to act in a manner consistent with standards of personal conduct that contribute to a professional working environment in all departmental workplaces. The Agency takes allegations of unlawful harassment and retaliation very seriously.

Prohibited unlawful workplace harassment includes but is not limited to unwelcomed or unsolicited speech or conduct based upon race, sex, religion, national origin, age, color, creed, genetic information, or disabling condition and which creates workplace harassment or constitutes quid pro quo sexual harassment.

B. DEFINITIONS

- i. **Aggrieved individual:** Any individual, including any applicant, agent, or employee (whether current or former, full-time, or part-time, permanent, temporary, or introductory), who reasonably believes that they have been subjected to conduct by any employee or agent of the Agency in violation of the unlawful workplace harassment policy.
- ii. **Complainant:** An aggrieved individual who files a complaint or (if appropriate) on whose behalf a complaint is made with the Agency, which states allegations concerning the possible violation of the Agency's unlawful workplace harassment policy.
- iii. **Respondent:** An individual against whom allegations is filed with the Agency concerning a possible violation of the Agency's unlawful workplace harassment policy.
- iv. **Workplace Harassment:** An environment where a reasonable person would find hostile or abusive and one which the person who is the object of the harassment in fact perceives to be hostile and abusive. Workplace harassment is determined by looking at all the circumstances, including the frequency of the allegedly harassing conduct, the severity of the conduct, and whether the conduct is physically threatening or humiliating, or unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance.
- v. **Quid Pro Quo sexual harassment:** Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment, or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual.
- vi. **Vendor/Contractor:** Conduct towards an outside vendor or contractor that would constitute unlawful workplace harassment toward an employee could constitute unacceptable personal conduct.
- vii. **Retaliation:** Adverse action taken against an employee for engaging in legally protected activity, including an employee's opposition to conduct or action the employee reasonably believes constitutes unlawful workplace harassment.
- viii. **Interim Measures/Steps:** Temporary measures taken for the good of the agency pending completion of an investigation or remedial action. These measures are generally taken to minimize workplace disruption and assist in the timely resolution of a complaint investigation or completion of remedial action. Interim steps, including temporary reassignment or suspension of an employee, are not disciplinary actions. Interim measures do not indicate that any determination regarding the truth of the allegations or employee wrongdoing has been made.

Examples of Prohibited and Legally Dangerous Conduct

The Agency recognizes that a determination of whether speech or conduct violates the law is determined by many factors, including whether the speech or conduct was offensive to the person who experienced it. HOWEVER, the Agency reminds all

employees that are engaging in any of the below listed activities may constitute unacceptable personal conduct without regard to whether it violates state or federal law, and the Agency may take disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for engaging in it. This list includes, but may not be limited to:

- i. Threats of physical violence or harm; displaying items that imply such a threat.
- ii. Slurs, epithets, humiliating and derogatory jokes or comments concerning race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age.
- iii. Off-color, sexually suggestive, sexist, or risqué email, stories, jokes, items, songs, personal accounts, or pictures.
- iv. Questioning others about personal matters, including the nature, existence, or details of relationships with spouses or lovers, sexual preferences, or history.
- v. Physical touching other than handshakes, including rubbing, hugging, stroking, kissing, or grabbing any part of someone else's body or personal items on their body without their consent.
- vi. Sexually aggressive conduct, including bumping, cornering, or touching in any manner the area around (or clothing on) someone's buttocks, upper leg, thigh, crotch, chest, or breasts; and
- vii. Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, comments containing sexual language or references with sexual innuendo or implications, obscene gestures.

C. PROMPT INVESTIGATION, INTERIM MEASURES AND REMEDIAL ACTION

Complaints of alleged workplace harassment or retaliation will be promptly investigated and as warranted, remedial action will be taken. Pending completion of an investigation, interim steps, such as temporary employee reassignment(s) and shift changes, may be taken. Interim measures are neither disciplinary action nor an indication of belief regarding the truth of allegations or the outcome of the investigation.

D. CONFIDENTIALITY

By their nature, allegations concerning conduct that may violate the unlawful workplace harassment policy may have serious implications for the personal and professional lives of affected employees. The Agency recognizes the concern employees have regarding their privacy and the confidentiality of personnel information. The Agency also recognizes that both the accuser and accused deserve a fair investigation. Therefore, employees are directed that no confidential personnel or investigation information may be released other than as necessary to conduct the investigation or agency business in compliance with agency policy and directives, and other applicable legal standards. Further, directors and managers are admonished to be cautious regarding the transmittal of sensitive information relative to allegations of unlawful workplace harassment so that the information does not inadvertently become known. Directors and managers should NOT disclose the existence or nature of such allegations to anyone unless that individual has a business need to know the information or the director or manager is under an

affirmative obligation to disclose the information (e.g., court order). Questions concerning whether information should be disclosed may be directed to the Executive Director.

E. RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT AND ZERO TOLERANCE

Every departmental employee is encouraged to report immediately conduct which they reasonably believe constitutes unlawful workplace harassment. The Agency has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for workplace harassment. The failure of an employee to report conduct that reasonably appears to violate the unlawful workplace harassment policy negatively impacts the Agency's ability to identify and eliminate unlawful workplace harassment. Therefore, it is imperative that every employee report conduct he or she reasonably believes may violate the unlawful workplace harassment policy.

F. DIRECT REPORTING TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A complaint or allegation concerning possible violation(s) of the unlawful workplace harassment policy may be submitted directly to the Agency's Executive Director. No employee is required to submit a complaint of (or allegations concerning) unlawful workplace harassment to a supervisor against whom the allegations are made or involve. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Executive Director will advise an appropriate level of management regarding the complaint.

G. AN AGGRIEVED PARTY SHOULD REPORT COMPLAINTS IMMEDIATELY OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Any aggrieved individual who thinks that they have been subjected to conduct in violation of the unlawful workplace harassment policy should report it to an appropriate manager or the Agency's Executive Director immediately or as soon as possible of the alleged harassing conduct.

H. RESPONSIBILITY TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS

The Agency is legally obligated to investigate all allegations that concern possible violations of the unlawful workplace harassment policy. Any manager or supervisor who becomes aware of allegations that reasonably may constitute a violation of the unlawful workplace harassment policy must report the allegations to the Executive Director immediately.

- i. A manager or supervisor must report the allegations even if the manager or supervisor receives the information from an individual who is not under his or her supervision or chain of command.
- ii. A manager or supervisor must report the allegations even if the witness or complainant requests that the manager or supervisor NOT report the matter.

The Agency is aware that an employee may advise a supervisor of allegedly inappropriate conduct of another employee and then request that the supervisor take no action. In some cases, an employee may request that they be allowed to resolve the matter directly with the offending party and without a report to the Executive Director, or the chain-of-command. While the Agency is sympathetic to an employee's desire for privacy, nevertheless, due to the serious legal implications of the situation and the Agency's legal duty to investigate, the manager or supervisor must report the allegations. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to determine if the allegations require investigation or if other resolution efforts are appropriate.

I. UNSUBSTANTIATED COMPLAINTS

It is recognized that the very nature of workplace harassment circumstances may make it difficult or impossible to substantiate a particular complaint. Nevertheless, every aggrieved individual is strongly encouraged to report violations of the unlawful workplace harassment policy without regard to whether they are personally aware of corroborating evidence. The failure to report workplace harassment severely restricts the ability of the Agency to identify and take remedial action to stop such conduct from continuing, and to prevent further harm. The Agency recognizes that the inability to corroborate or substantiate a complaint does not necessarily mean the complaint was untruthful. However, where it is determined that an individual has made a complaint in willful disregard of the truth or has been intentionally dishonest, that individual may be subject to disciplinary action, as is true when any employee provides false, misleading, or known to be inaccurate or incomplete information in an investigation.

J. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Complaints that are submitted without identifying the complaining individual make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Agency to adequately investigate, respond or take appropriate action. Employees with complaints are strongly encouraged to contact the Executive Director directly if there are specific concerns about filing a complaint.

K. INFORMATION FOR THE RESPONDENT

An individual who is the subject of allegations of unlawful workplace harassment must be informed of the complaint, the specific allegations, the identity of the complainant(s) (depending on the severity of the complaint) and given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. Additionally, at the conclusion of the investigation, the respondent is entitled to be advised that the investigation has concluded and its outcome.

L. FREE SPEECH

The Agency respects the constitutionally protected right of free speech. However, conduct or language that constitutes unlawful workplace harassment is NOT legally protected as free speech.

M. CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND NOTICE TO OTHERS WHEN OFFENDED

The Agency recognizes that on occasion employees engage in conversation or conduct with (or within sight or hearing of) co-workers at the workplace concerning current affairs or other matters of personal interest. Additionally, the Agency appreciates that the workplace brings together culturally diverse individuals who may have differing viewpoints and sensitivities. As a result, a conversation, music, conduct or a personal item that one individual finds enlightening or amusing may be offensive to someone else who sees, hears or is exposed to it.

The lawful balancing of free speech with the prohibitions on unlawful workplace harassment (and admonitions regarding professional conduct) does not guarantee that one will never be exposed in the workplace to any word or conduct that one may find personally offensive. Nevertheless, the Agency desires all employees to work in an environment that is reasonably culturally sensitive and one that enhances work performance. Therefore, employees are encouraged to promptly and politely advise an offending co-worker (or the co-worker's manager) when exposed to speech, conduct or any matter that is personally offensive, so that the situation may be resolved as quickly and amicably as possible. Managers are encouraged to consult as needed with the Executive Director when conflicts arise resulting from social and cultural diversity in the workplace.

N. WARNING TO SUPERVISORY LEVEL EMPLOYEES

Supervisors are held to a higher liability standard for conduct constituting illegal harassment or discrimination of subordinate level personnel. Any individual who is or reasonably appears to be in a position of workplace authority or control over another may be held to be a supervisor for purposes of determining liability for harassment or discrimination. Therefore, it is imperative that supervisory level personnel carefully manage all interpersonal relationships with subordinate personnel, at the work site and away from work.

O. PROHIBITION OF RETALIATION AND IMPEDING AN INVESTIGATION

The Agency shall not tolerate co-workers or supervisors committing acts of retaliation against an employee who has filed an unlawful workplace harassment complaint and/or an employee assisting in a complaint. Furthermore, the Agency will not tolerate interfering with or impeding in any manner the investigation of a complaint alleging unlawful workplace harassment or discrimination. Retaliation can include remarks, threats, or the involuntary transfer to another location, post assignment, or shift change of the person making the complaint unless the individual filing the complaint requests the transfer. Acts of retaliation shall be

viewed as unacceptable personal conduct, which shall result in immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

P. DISCIPLINE

Unlawful workplace harassment shall be viewed as unacceptable personal conduct resulting in immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any incidents of unlawful harassment shall be addressed under the Agency's current personal conduct disciplinary policy. No disciplinary action will be issued without guidance from and consultation with the Executive Director to ensure the appropriate level of corrective action and/or disciplinary action, and that such action is consistently applied agency-wide for the purpose of fair and impartial treatment.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- A. Employees must avoid conflict of interest. Employees shall also avoid using their knowledge or awareness of any Housing Authority actions or potential actions that are not public knowledge for personal gain, financial or otherwise. Violation of one or more of the following rules of conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. All employees must complete an acknowledgement form for our conflict-of-interest policies and procedures on an annual basis. As in all other facets of their duties, employees dealing with suppliers, contractors, or any person doing or seeking to do business with WHA are to act in the best interest of the Authority. Each employee should make prompt and full disclosure in writing to his or her manager and the Executive Director of any potential situation which may involve a conflict of interest.
- B. Acquiring An Interest
 - i. No employee of WHA shall acquire any interest direct or indirect in any housing project or in a project included or planned to be included in any project, nor shall (s)he have any interest direct or indirect in any contract or proposed contract for materials or services to be furnished or used in connection with any housing project.
 - ii. If any employee of WHA owns or controls an interest direct or indirect in any property included or planned to be included in any housing project(s), (s)he shall immediately disclose the same in writing to the Authority. Failure to disclose such interest shall constitute misconduct and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- C. Tips, Gifts, and Discounts
 - i. No employee of WHA shall directly or indirectly solicit any gift or accept or receive any gift having a value of \$50.00 or more, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him or her, or could be reasonably be expected to influence him or her, in the performance of his or her duties, or was intended as a reward for any official action on his or her part.
- D. Employment of Relatives/Nepotism

- i. The employment of relatives can cause various problems including but not limited to charges of favoritism, conflicts of interest, family discord and scheduling conflicts that may work to the disadvantage of both the agency and its employees.
 - ii. For the purposes of this policy the term "relative" shall include the following relationships: relationships established by blood, marriage, or legal action. Examples include the employee's: spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, grandparent, grandson, or cousin. The term also includes domestic partners (a person with whom the employee's life is interdependent and who shares a common residence) and a daughter or son of an employee's domestic partner.
 - iii. It is the goal of the agency to avoid creating or maintaining circumstances in which the appearance or possibility of favoritism, conflicts or management disruptions exist. The agency may allow existing personal relationships to be maintained under the following circumstances:
 - a. Individuals may not work under the supervision of the same manager.
 - b. They may not create a supervisor/subordinate relationship with a family member.
 - c. They may not supervise or evaluate a family member.
 - d. The relationship will not create an adverse impact on work productivity or performance.
 - e. The relationship may not create an actual or perceived conflict-of-interest.
 - f. They may not audit or review in any manner the individual's work.
 - g. They may not be employed if a member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, children, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, stepfamily members, in-law family members) serves on the agency's Board or any Committee or Council which has authority to review or order personnel actions or wage and salary adjustments which could affect their job.
- E. No personal employee relationship covered by this policy will be allowed to be maintained, regardless of the positions involved, if it creates a disruption or potential disruption in the work environment, creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest or is prohibited by any legal or regulatory mandate.
- F. This policy must be considered when hiring, promoting, or transferring any employee.
- G. Should relationships addressed within this policy be identified with either candidates for employment or current employees, the matter should be immediately reported to the Executive Director and the following policies and procedures will be followed:
 - i. A determination will be made whether the relationship is subject to the agency's Nepotism policy based on the conditions described above.
 - ii. If the relationship is determined to fall within one or more of the conditions described in this policy the Executive Director in consultation with the affected employees will attempt to resolve the situation through

the transfer of one employee to a new position or identifying some other action (e.g., Supervisory reassignment) which will correct the conflict or issue identified. If accommodation is not feasible then, with affected employees' suggestions, the Executive Director shall determine which employee must resign to resolve the situation.

- H. The agency reserves the right to exercise appropriate managerial judgment to take such actions as may be necessary to achieve the intent of this policy. The agency reserves the right to vary from the guidelines outlined in this policy to address unusual circumstances on a case-by-case basis. The agency will attempt to accommodate current employees that have nepotism issue(s).
- I. It is the responsibility of every employee to identify to the agency's Executive Director any potential or existing personal relationship which falls under the definitions provided in this policy. Employees who fail to disclose personal relationships covered by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment. To be clear, the Whitefish Housing Authority will not apply this policy in any way that violates the Montana Human Rights Act.
- J. **Fraternization**
 - i. Fraternalization between the following groups is strictly prohibited when it leads to potential conflict of interest:
 - a. WHA employees and WHA residents'
 - b. WHA employees and Housing Authority contractors.
 - c. WHA employees and other Housing Authority employees.
 - ii. Regarding fraternization, a conflict of interest shall be defined as (but not limited to) any social relationship that has potential to cause negative impact on staff morale, unlawful favoritism/discrimination, interfere with general business operations or creates workplace harassment.
 - iii. For this Policy Manual, fraternization is defined as a relationship that is romantic and/or intimate in nature.
- K. **Relationships with WHA Residents**
 - i. People and families who occupy WHA dwelling units are referred to as residents. All employees who have contact with residents are to conduct themselves in a cordial, but business-like manner. An employee who has business with a WHA resident should conduct those duties promptly and efficiently. Employees who are also residents shall be treated the same as all other residents about services, reviews, rent payment and all legal actions.
 - ii. Employees are prohibited from having any personal relationships with residents which may cause embarrassment to the Agency or complaints with Agency service. Failure to adhere may result in discipline up to and including termination. Employees who are not related to residents are prohibited from becoming signatories on any legal documents, such as Social Security papers, Power of Attorney, checks and bank accounts, and similar documents. Employees are also prohibited from loaning money to residents or doing favors that would otherwise obligate residents to employees.
 - iii. Sexual harassment of residents is prohibited. Residents should not be subjected to any type of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for

sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Complaints from residents will be treated swiftly and seriously under the Agency's Complaint and Remedy Procedure (see Section on Workplace and Other Forms of Harassment). Employees have a duty to report witnessing any such behavior.

8. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

- A. All members, officers, and employees of WHA whose employment constitutes their principal employment, are subject to the provisions of Federal Hatch Act Statute 5 U.S.C. 1501 and 1502.
- B. Employees must not:
 - i. Use their official authority to influence elections or nominations, or for any other political purpose.
 - ii. Directly or indirectly, coerce, attempt to coerce, solicit, command, or advise a state or local officer, resident, or employee to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to any party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes.
 - iii. Solicit or receive political contributions on the premises of WHA.
 - iv. Require or advise other employees or residents to make political contributions.
 - v. Use political influence in connection with their employment status. However, employees are free to vote as they choose and to express their opinions on all political subjects and candidates.
 - vi. Staff are not allowed to use WHA property (computers, emails, office equipment) for political purposes.

Employees who have any questions regarding this policy should contact the Executive Director. Questions concerning the appropriateness of a political activity should be referred to the Executive Director.

9. DRESS CODE

- A. All WHA employees are expected to exercise reasonable judgment in dressing appropriately for their jobs. Employees should dress in a manner that always reflects professionalism. Prior approval must be obtained from the appropriate department head to dress in a manner that is not in accordance with this policy. Some employees may be required to wear uniformed attire according to WHA's organizational needs and health and safety requirements.
- B. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to monitor the dress of their subordinates to ensure that WHA employees comply with this section.
- C. Employees that fail to adhere to the Dress Code may be asked to leave the worksite and return in appropriate attire; time the employee spends away from the worksite to change attire in response to a failure to adhere to the Dress Code may be taken out of the employee's vacation leave. Further infractions may subject the employee to disciplinary action. Consideration will be given to employees who have a legitimate reason for being unable to comply with the Dress Code.
- D. Reasonable Accommodation If an employee requires a reasonable accommodation regarding their dress for bona fide health and/or religious reasons, they should contact their supervisor or the Executive Director to discuss an exception to the

Dress Code. Unless it constitutes an undue hardship or safety hazard, WHA will accommodate such requests.

10. PERSONNEL RECORDS

- A. The Executive Director maintains a complete file of each employee's employment history. These files are confidential, and access is restricted to administrative staff that have a legitimate business need to review such information. If an outside party requests employment information, the administration department will verify your job title, job responsibilities, and the dates of employment and/or termination. No other employment information will be released without your written consent or as required by law.
- B. It is your responsibility to notify the Executive Director whenever there is a change that might affect any aspect of your employment, compensation, benefits, or tax status.
- C. To ensure that your personal records are current, please notify the Executive Director promptly of the following changes:
 - i. Name Address
 - ii. Telephone Number
 - iii. Marital Status
 - iv. Dependents
 - v. Awards and Honors
 - vi. Beneficiaries
 - vii. Person to be notified in case of emergency
 - viii. Additional education and training

11. MEDICAL RECORDS

- A. Employee medical records are maintained in a file separate from their personnel file.
- B. Records that pertain to an employee's medical history, diagnosis, prognosis, or medical condition and that are generated and maintained in the process of medical treatment are confidential and may not be disclosed under the Public Records Act. Medical records may be released only in the following circumstances:
 - i. Supervisors and department heads may be informed of restrictions and accommodations that are a part of an agreed upon plan of reasonable accommodation.
 - ii. First aid and safety personnel may be informed if an employee may require emergency treatment.
 - iii. Government officials investigating compliance with the law may be provided with relevant information. A subpoena may be required at the discretion of WHA.
 - iv. Employers may give information to state workers' compensation offices in compliance with law requirements.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. All records and files, oral and written communication and other data relating to our program participants, applicants, and personnel are to be always safeguarded from unauthorized use and disclosure. All employees must maintain confidentiality, even after leaving the organization. Breach of confidentiality will be reason for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

13. PERSONAL CONDUCT

- A. As an employee of WHA, you are expected to accept certain responsibilities, adhere to acceptable principles in matters of personal conduct, and always exhibit a high degree of personal integrity.
- B. Types of behavior and conduct that the WHA considers inappropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Falsifying employment or other WHA records.
 - ii. Creating or maintaining a hostile work environment.
 - iii. Violating WHA nondiscrimination or sexual harassment policy.
 - iv. Failure to follow the chain of command as outlined in the personnel policy.
 - v. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
 - vi. Reporting to work or working while intoxicated or under the influence of non-prescribed drugs while engaged in WHA business on or off WHA premises.
 - vii. Fighting or using obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures.
 - viii. Abuse of property belonging to the WHA.
 - ix. Theft of property from co-workers, tenants, or the WHA.
 - x. Unauthorized possession of weapons on WHA premises or while on Housing Authority business.
 - xi. Unauthorized access to WHA property.
 - xii. Disregarding safety or security regulations, i.e., the use of safety goggles and masks.
 - xiii. Insubordination.
 - xiv. Unsatisfactory work performance.
 - xv. Failing to maintain confidentiality of WHA, staff or tenant information. All matters observed in a tenant's house are strictly confidential and are to be discussed with no one.
 - xvi. Violation of WHA policies and procedures.
 - xvii. Conducting conversations with tenants or fellow employees to cause discord between the WHA and fellow employees.
 - xviii. Violation of tenant privacy.
 - xix. Conducting political or religious activities or conversations during working hours.
 - xx. Distribution of pornographic literature.

- xxi. Handling tenant personal possessions.
- xxii. Employees are expected to adhere to WHA rules, regulations and work requirements; employees are not expected to perform maintenance at the direction of the tenants.

14. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

- A. All full-time employees engaging in outside employment shall comply with the following guidelines:
 - i. Outside employment shall not have any conflict, real or implied, with the official duties of the employee.
 - ii. Outside employment shall not require such a degree of commitment that it would tend to prevent an employee from rendering primary service to the WHA.
 - iii. The outside work shall not reflect discredit or derogation upon the employee or the WHA.
 - iv. It shall be understood that the WHA has prior call upon the services of its employee whenever the need arises, regardless of any impingement upon secondary employment.
 - v. Any WHA employee or business in which the employee has an ownership interest providing or desiring to provide goods or services to the WHA on a contractual basis shall declare the stated interest in writing to the ED.

15. USE OF WHA PROPERTY

- A. Your office or workspace, its material and furniture, and the computers in or on the premises of WHA are the property of the Housing Authority. None of the materials and information created, transmitted, or stored while performing your job or on Whitefish Housing Authority's computers are private but is the property of Whitefish Housing Authority. Accordingly, this information and materials may be accessed by authorized personnel of the agency who may enter your office to do so. This policy includes hard copy files and papers, e-mail messages, voice mail messages, and all computer files and applications. You should not have the expectation of privacy with respect to such materials and information. Normally any inspection would be carried out in the event of suspected misconduct, but the agency explicitly reserves the right to inspect for any purpose.
- B. Internet use during work time is limited to business-related purposes. Employees may use personal time (i.e., break time, lunch hour, before or after work) to access the Internet, but are advised to exercise discretion and good judgment for viewing appropriate sites in consideration of fellow employees and visitors to Whitefish Housing Authority. Personal use must not interfere with the normal business use of the Internet. The underlying philosophy of this policy is that Internet access should be limited to legitimate WHA business including communicating with customers, clients, colleagues, to research relevant topics, and to obtain useful business information. All existing laws and WHA policies apply to your conduct on the Internet. The use of the Internet to view, send or

obtain information which could be in any way disruptive to WHA, or considered defamatory, abusive, pornographic, threatening, biased against a protected class, discriminatory, or illegal is prohibited. It is also prohibited to send or receive information that the employee knows or should have known to be false and/or inaccurate with the intention of, or the result of, harming the agency, any employee, client, board member, or other person. Internet use by employees may be monitored; those employees found to be abusing Internet privileges may be subject to disciplinary measures.

- C. To safeguard WHA's computer network from viruses or other hostile infiltration from outside the agency, employees are prohibited from adding programs or downloading programs from the Internet without the permission of the Executive Director. Use of WHA property for political purposes under the Hatch Act is not allowed, see "Political Activities" section.

16. USE OF VEHICLES FOR WORK PURPOSES

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish and specify policy on vehicle transportation for Housing Authority officials and employees in the conduct of official Housing Authority business.
- B. Privately-owned vehicles being operated for Housing Authority business shall be operated in accordance with all safety and legal requirements of WHA, State and any other jurisdictions in which they are operated.
- C. Employees will carry the appropriate levels of insurance coverage in order to use privately-owned vehicles for company business and will provide the Executive Director with proof of insurance coverage on an annual basis.
- D. An employee may be held liable for accidents in which he/she is involved if it is determined that the accident is the result of their negligence. An employee will be personally responsible for paying any citation received while operating a Housing Authority vehicle or their personal vehicle for WHA matters.
- E. PROCEDURE IN CASE OF VEHICLE ACCIDENT IN CASE OF ACCIDENT:
 - i. At The Scene
 - a. CALL for Police.
 - b. CALL for emergency assistance of an ambulance if necessary.
 - c. CALL for a tow truck from WHA current provider.
 - d. OBTAIN – Name, Address and Phone of each driver and passenger and witness.
 - e. OBTAIN - Name of the Insurance Company– and Policy Number of each vehicle involved.
 - ii. When you return to office:
 - a. REPORT accident to the Executive Director and your Manager and complete Accident Report.

17. USE OF WHA COMPUTER, INTERNET AND EMAIL

A. Most Housing Authority employees will require access to computers, email addresses, and/or the Internet to perform their Housing Authority job duties. The security, integrity, and proper usage of WHA computers, email addresses, and internet access is a necessity for the effective conduct of WHA business. The intent of this policy is to safeguard the security and integrity of WHA's information system, assure reasonable access to computer-based information, and prevent inappropriate use of Housing Authority computers, email addresses, or internet access.

i. Applicability

- a. This policy covers all WHA owned or issued computers, email addresses, and Housing Authority provided internet access, regardless of the time or location of use. **Please note this includes, but is not limited to, email or internet access obtained through Housing Authority issued electronic communications devices such as cellular phones, smart phones, and PDA's.
- b. This policy applies to all employees of the Housing Authority. Additionally, this policy applies to all outside contractors and consultants who have been given authorized access to any of the Housing Authority's computer-based information systems.

ii. Prohibited Uses

- a. WHA employees may not engage in misuse of Housing Authority computers, Housing Authority email addresses, or Housing Authority provided internet access. Examples of misuse include, but are not limited to:
- b. Downloading software without approval from a supervisor, software that is approved for downloading must be registered to WHA.
- c. Copying software, unless such copying is for legitimate, back-up purposes and has been approved by a supervisor or the Executive Director.
- d. Knowingly introducing a computer virus, worm, "Trojan horse", or any other contaminating or destructive features into the Housing Authority's computers.
- e. Transmitting copyrighted materials without permission.
- f. Downloading files from the Internet except for an express business purpose.
- g. Transmitting, forwarding, or downloading material that is offensive, abusive, pornographic, obscene, profane, discriminatory, harassing, fraudulent, or otherwise prohibited by federal, state, or local law. Using e-mail or the Internet for any purpose that is illegal, against company policy, or contrary to WHA's best interest.

- h. Transmitting or disseminating confidential WHA or resident information or other proprietary materials without an express business purpose or authorization.
 - i. Sending or forwarding any chain e-mail, or spam.
 - j. Gambling.
 - k. Using a Housing Authority e-mail address or internet access for personal gain including outside employment, self-employment, and family-owned businesses.
 - l. Post their Housing Authority e-mail addresses on the internet when not business related.
 - m. Receive or forward unsolicited e-mails that violate company policy.
 - n. Download radio, video, or music transmissions from internet sites without Housing Authority approval.
 - o. Attempt to defeat any security mechanisms to gain unauthorized access to computer files or other information on the Housing Authority's telephone systems, electronic communication systems, or information systems.
 - p. Attempting to read, intercept, copy, or delete e-mails sent or received by other users.
 - q. Posting or transmitting any message anonymously or under a false name or permitting any other individual to do so.
 - r. Impersonating another person.
 - s. Collecting information about others, including e-mail addresses, without their consent.
- iii. Misuse of Housing Authority computers, email addresses, or internet access may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. In addition, such misuse may also be reported to appropriate federal, state, or local authorities.
- iv. Ensuring Compliance, The Housing Authority has the right, but not the duty, to monitor all aspects of its computer system, including employee e-mail, and internet usage to ensure compliance with this policy. Therefore, employees should be aware of the following:
- a. Employees should not have an expectation of privacy in anything they create, send, or receive using a Housing Authority computer, email address, or any other form of electronic communication.
 - b. All information generated on the computer is the property of WHA and is subject to subpoena for legal purposes.
 - c. Unless otherwise provided by law, any document, file, or other record a Housing Authority employee creates, sends, or receives using a Housing Authority computer, email address, or other

electronic communications device will be subject to disclosure under the Montana Public Records Law.

18. SOCIAL MEDIA

- A. WHA encourages employees to share information with coworkers and with those outside the company for the purposes of gathering information, generating new ideas, and learning from the work of others. Social media provides inexpensive, informal, and timely ways to participate in an exchange of ideas and information. However, information posted on a website is available to the public, and therefore, the company has established the following guidelines for employee participation in social media.

Note: As used in this policy, “social media” refers to blogs, forums, and social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat, among others.

- B. Off-duty use of social media. Employees may maintain personal websites or weblogs on their own time using their own facilities. Employees must ensure that social media activity does not interfere with their work. In general, the company considers social media activities to be personal endeavors, and employees may use them to express their thoughts or promote their ideas. In addition, employees may not post on a personal blog or webpage or participate on a social networking platform for personal purposes during work time or at any time with WHA equipment or property.
- C. On-duty use of social media. Employees may engage in social media activity during work time provided it is directly related to their work and approved by their manager and does not identify or reference company clients, customers, or vendors without express permission. The company monitors employee use of company computers and the Internet, including employee blogging and social networking activity.
- D. Respect. Demonstrate respect for the dignity of the company, its owners, its customers, its vendors, and its employees. A social media site is a public place, and employees should avoid inappropriate comments. For example, employees should not divulge WHA confidential information such as trade secrets, client lists, or information restricted from disclosure by law on social media sites. Similarly, employees should not engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior that targets other employees or individuals because of their protected class status or make defamatory comments or engage in other behavior that violates the company’s policies.
- E. Post disclaimers. Employees who identify themselves as company employees or discuss matters related to the company on a social media site must include a disclaimer on the front page stating that it does not express the views of the company and that the employees are expressing only personal views—for example, “The views expressed on this website/blog are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer.” Place the disclaimer in a prominent position and repeat it for each post expressing an opinion related to the company or the company’s business. Employees must keep in mind that if

they post information on a social media site that is in violation of company policy and/or federal, state, or local law, the disclaimer will not shield them from disciplinary action.

- F. Confidentiality. Employees should not identify or reference company clients, customers, or vendors without express permission. Employees may write about their jobs in general but may not disclose any confidential or proprietary information. For examples of confidential information, employees should refer to the confidentiality policy. When in doubt, ask before publishing.
- G. New ideas. Employees should remember that new ideas related to work or the company's business belong to the company. Do not post them on a social media site without the company's permission.
- H. Trademarks and copyrights. Employees should not use the company's or others' trademarks on a social media site or reproduce the company's or others' material without first obtaining permission.
- I. Discipline. Violations of this policy may result in discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

19. BUSINESS TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT

- A. It is WHA's policy to provide for the most efficient means of transportation for Housing Authority business at the least cost, and to provide for the accurate accounting of travel expenses and for their timely reimbursement.
- B. All requests for travel and reimbursement must be submitted to the WHA Board of Commissioners.
- C. The Board Chair or their designee will review all employees' travel requests. The Board Chair or their designee must authorize the means of transportation prior to the trip. The means of transportation to be used should be based on cost and convenience. Possible choices are WHA vehicles, personal vehicles, or aircraft.
- D. The Board Chair or their designee must authorize the use of commercial rental cars prior to the trip.
 - i. Allowable Expenditures
 - a. Registrations fees for conferences, conventions, and seminars
 - b. Transportation fares – airplane, train, bus, tax, automobile mileage
 - c. Parking fees
 - d. Lodging
 - e. Meals
 - f. Road tolls
 - ii. Non-Allowable Expenditures:
 - a. Tips and gratuities
 - b. Entertainment, including (but not limited to) alcohol expenses.
 - iii. Employees must comply with the travel advance procedure for WHA for travel reimbursements and travel advances to be approved. In cases where WHA travel is using federal funds, the employee will attempt to receive government rates or the most reasonable rates for accommodations.

Reimbursement Policies

- iv. Personal Vehicles – Employees using personal vehicles for Housing Authority business will be reimbursed at the current IRS rate for in-town

- and out-of-town travel. The number of miles driven in-town or out-of-town must be entered on the "Mileage Reimbursement form". Traveling from home to work or from work to home is never reimbursed.
- v. Air, Bus, etc. – All fares will be arranged and paid for by the Housing Authority in advance. The Executive Director and/or their designee will be responsible for making and paying for such arrangements. Employees must turn in a copy of the paid ticket.
 - vi. Rental Vehicles – To the extent possible, rental vehicles are to be used for out-of-town travel, particularly when group conferences or trainings with multiple staff are being attended. Use of personal vehicles for out-of-town trips must have prior authorization of the supervisor or Executive Director.
 - vii. Employees Traveling Together – No employee will be reimbursed for mileage when transported by another employee.
 - viii. Lodging – Charges for lodging will be secured and paid for in advance of the travel by the Housing Authority. A receipt must substantiate the cost of lodging.
 - ix. Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) – The cost of meals, and incidental expenses will be provided at per diem rates published by the General Services Administration or similar publication. The per diem for cities not listed will be the per diem for the county the intended destination is located in. The per diem rate is used to gauge reasonableness of travel expenses. Reimbursement for taxi and incidental items not covered by the per diem rate must be supported by receipts and other documentation of actual expense.
 - x. When computing per diem, official travel starts at the time the traveler leaves their home, office, or other point of departure and ends when the traveler returns to their home, office, or other point of the trip's conclusion. When an overnight stay is required, the applicable per diem rate for Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) will be prorated at 75% of the per diem rates on the date of departure and the date of return based on GSA rules.

20. CODE OF CONDUCT, ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Each Housing Authority employee, officer, commissioner, or agent is expected to adhere to a Code of Conduct that supports this purpose and pledges to:
 - i. Perform work responsibilities with the highest degree of integrity and professionalism to merit the respect of the beneficiaries of programs, elected officials, and the public.
 - ii. Conduct business with active knowledge and affirmative compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
 - iii. Comply with federal, state, and local fair housing laws.
 - iv. Refrain from engaging in any discrimination against people based on their protected-class status.
 - v. Exercise diligence, objectivity, and honesty in executing professional responsibilities.
 - vi. Serve the public with dedication, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness.
 - vii. Continually strive for professional excellence personally and encourage and support associates in their professional development efforts.
 - viii. Promote and encourage the highest level of ethics.

- B. In addition, each employee, officer, commissioner, or agent acknowledges that:
 - i. It is prohibited to engage in any activity that poses a real or apparent conflict of interest.
 - ii. It is prohibited to solicit or accept gifts or gratuities for personal benefit more than minimal value (the amount set by the Personnel Policy Manual at \$50.00).
 - iii. It is prohibited to disclose information given in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which is believed to be of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorized to give it, or unless they are required by law to do so; nor to prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
- C. The Whitefish Housing Authority reserves the right to deny, suspend or terminate business relationships with anyone who knowingly and repeatedly violates this Code of Conduct and fails to rectify any violations promptly and properly. Different funding sources may have their own requirements for identifying and handling potential conflicts of interest, which generally will exclude the party from receiving project benefits. However, if the potential conflict is not excluded, public disclosure, a legal opinion, and approval by the administering agency may be required.
- D. We trust and expect our employees to perform their work based on the highest ethical standards of conduct and to devote their best efforts to the interests of the Whitefish Housing Authority. We value our reputation, and it is important that you, as a representative of the WHA, avoid any conduct that may be interpreted as unethical, either in appearance or in fact. In general, situations representing a conflict of interest include, but are not limited to, accepting gifts, money, or special favors with a monetary value over \$50.00 from an affiliated agency or supplier; having an undisclosed outside job or affiliation which creates a conflict of interest; or using Whitefish Housing Authority's property, equipment, or facilities for unauthorized personal gain. Any situation that you feel might be construed as not being in WHA's best interest should be immediately resolved through early disclosure and discussion with the Executive Director.
- E. All records and files, oral and written communication and other data relating to our program participants, applicants, and personnel are to be always safeguarded from unauthorized use and disclosure. All employees must maintain confidentiality, even after leaving the organization. Breach of confidentiality will be reason for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

21. SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION

- A. Unauthorized people are not permitted on Agency property for solicitation and distribution.
- B. Solicitation, distribution, or selling by non-employees is prohibited, except by authorized vendors engaged in sales of equipment, services, and supplies to the Agency.
- C. Sales efforts by vendors are allowed when scheduled and authorized by the Executive Director.

- D. Solicitation, distribution, or selling among employees is restricted to off-duty periods in non-work areas.
- E. The Agency may authorize certain charitable programs and social or recreational activities that may involve solicitation or support from employees, such as United Way campaigns. An employee may volunteer to assist in these programs. However, an employee will not be discriminated against because of their unwillingness to participate.

22. THEFT OF PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

- A. Definition of Theft:
 - i. Removing the Employer's equipment, tools, or supplies (except items that are assigned to the employee) for personal use without written permission will be considered theft. In addition, stealing, pilfering, destroying, or defacing Employer property or the property of residents or employees including any materials that are discarded, scrap metals, and personal property of former residents; and
 - ii. Falsifying any Employer record, including, but not limited to, time sheet, leave sheet, work order, receipt, mileage record, Workers' Compensation form, or other similar documents.
- B. Consequence:
 - i. The Housing Authority will decide on disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the infraction. However, an employee who disregards this policy may be suspended or discharged.
 - ii. If the theft is serious, there may be cause for police investigation, and criminal action may be indicated.

IV. WORKPLACE SAFETY

1. COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

- A. It is Housing Authority policy to provide safe working conditions for all employees. The Housing Authority will comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and other applicable federal, state, and local safety laws. All Housing Authority employees must promote accident prevention by using all protective equipment supplied to them by the Housing Authority, and by observing the safety regulations of the Housing Authority.
- B. The Housing Authority will periodically provide safety training sessions for employees to reduce or eliminate the occurrence and recurrence of accidents on the job. The goal of safety training is to educate all employees to be able to (1) recognize hazards to life, health, property, and work practices, (2) avoid and eliminate unsafe conditions and (3) properly and safely use inherently hazardous material and equipment.
- C. Additional departmental safety guidelines and procedures are outlined below and may be set forth in separate documents as deemed necessary.
- D. WHA regards workplace safety as a fundamental value of the organization. WHA is committed to the safety and health of all employees and the public it serves.

The Agency will ensure that work processes and work sites are regularly inspected to anticipate and prevent harmful incidents.

- E. Employees will receive periodic training in all aspects of the safety policies and procedures.
- F. An employee must notify their supervisor immediately of any accident or incident that occurs on the job or on Agency property. Damaged or malfunctioning machines or equipment must be reported immediately.
- G. An employee who observes a hazard must immediately report their observations to their supervisor.
- H. Employees shall immediately report the use of any prescribed medication which may impair or otherwise alter the employee's ability to perform their normal job functions. Employees operating Employer-owned vehicles are prohibited from operating such vehicles while using prescribed medications which may cause impairment. Failure to report the use of prescribed medication may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- I. Negligent failure to follow the above requirements may result in disciplinary action. Deliberate failure to follow the above requirements shall result in termination of employment. Each offense will be examined based on: the seriousness of the violation; the potential for serious damage, injury, or liability; the resulting damage or injury; and the employee's discipline record.
- J. Safety Training:
 - i. An employee will receive appropriate safety training upon hire.
 - ii. Training will include proper safety measures for the general work site and specific safety training on any equipment, machinery, or other elements that are considered a normal part of the job.
 - iii. An employee is required to attend periodic retaining sessions, as determined by the Agency.
 - iv. It is the employee's responsibility to request retraining if he/she is not certain of the safety practices for any part of their job.
 - v. An employee will be paid for attendance at any required training sessions.
- K. Violations of this policy by any individual will be subject to legal action, as appropriate, and/or may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination, in accordance with the applicable law, rule, or collective bargaining agreement.

2. REPORTING ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

- A. If you are injured because of an accident while on duty, regardless of how minor it may seem, you are required to report your injury at once to your supervisor.
- B. Accidents involving Housing Authority-owned equipment should also be reported immediately to your supervisor.
- C. Failure to report an accident or injury could result in the loss of Worker's Compensation benefits as well as medical attention needed.

3. EXPOSURE TO CONTAGIOUS DISEASE

- A. An employee is required to report any exposure to a contagious disease that might pose a direct threat to health and safety in the workplace.

- B. The Executive Director and/or designee may remove, or reassign, an infected or contagious employee or co-worker, if a secondary infection poses a higher than usual risk to the employee, co-workers, or others.
- C. An employee who is at risk of exposure to blood-borne or contagious diseases will follow a system of “universal precautions” to limit the spread of infection in the workplace. Supervisors will instruct employees about any special precautions necessary in individual work areas.
- D. An employee concerned about being infected with a contagious disease while in the workplace should convey this concern to their supervisor. An employee who refuses to work with or perform services for a person known or suspected of having a contagious disease that does not present a current direct threat in the workplace, is subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.
- E. Information relating to a contagious disease in the workplace will be disclosed to employees when the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of employees or others. The necessity of disclosure will be determined by the Executive Director and or designee.

4. DRUG-FREE AND ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE

- A. WHA promotes the safety of the workplace by having a policy requiring the workplace free from the effects of substance abuse. Whitefish Housing Authority has the right to ensure the workplace is drug and alcohol free.
 - B. As a recipient of federal grants, the Housing Authority must comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.
 - C. Employees are expected to work free from the effects of alcohol and other performance-impairing substances and are prohibited from engaging in either the unlawful or unauthorized use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensing, or sale of any controlled substance or alcohol while at work or at work sites.
 - D. Any arrest or conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace must be reported to the Executive Director within five (5) days of the arrest or conviction.
 - E. The appropriate use of legally prescribed drugs and non-prescription medication is not prohibited. However, the use of any substance which carries a warning label indicating that mental functioning, motor skills, or judgment may be adversely affected must be reported to your supervisor and medical advice must be sought, as appropriate, before starting work.

5. SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

- A. It is the policy of WHA to prohibit smoking on all Agency premises to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. The law defines smoking as the "act of lighting, smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind." Smoking also includes electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vaping, and smokeless tobacco products.
- B. The smoke-free workplace policy applies to:
 - i. All areas of Agency buildings.
 - ii. All vehicles owned or leased by the Agency.
 - iii. All visitors (customers and vendors) to the Agency premises.

- iv. All contractors and consultants and/or their employees working on the Agency premises.
- v. All employees, temporary employees, and student interns.

6. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- A. The Housing Authority is committed to maintaining a safe environment for its employees, free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior. Such behavior will be taken seriously and will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm. Individuals who commit such acts may be removed from Housing Authority premises and may be subject to disciplinary action, criminal penalties, or both.
- B. Employees of the Housing Authority should not ignore violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or other disruptive behavior. If anyone on Housing Authority premises displays such behavior, whether he/she is an employee, such behavior should be reported immediately to the Executive Director and their supervisor. The Executive Director will promptly investigate the incident and initiate appropriate action.
- C. Procedure for Staff When Threatened or Endangered: If employees find themselves in, or have reason to believe they may be in or entering, a situation that would endanger their safety, they should:
 - i. First and foremost, the employee should remove himself/herself from the situation immediately.
 - ii. In extreme situations where an individual (the employee or other individual) is in immediate danger of bodily harm and immediate intervention by law enforcement is needed, the employee should contact the police department. The employee should be prepared to give a detailed description of the situation. The employee should then contact their supervisor to inform them of the situation. The supervisor should then notify the Executive Director. For example, a domestic situation where an individual is being beaten by someone.
 - iii. In less urgent situations, the employee should contact the Executive Director and their supervisor to evaluate the situation and then they will contact the police department as warranted. The employee should be prepared to give a detailed description of the situation. For example, after entering the unit, the employee observes large amounts of illegal drugs.
 - iv. Employees should not allow themselves to be in situations that would endanger their safety. Employees must use common sense and be always alert to their surroundings. If an employee has reason to believe they are entering into a situation that they believe may endanger their safety, they should always take another person with them.
 - v. Threats or assaults that require immediate attention by police should be reported first to police at 911, then the Department supervisor and the Executive Director.

7. WORKPLACE BULLYING

- A. WHA defines bullying as “repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment.” Such behavior violates the Agency Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect.
- B. The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors, managers, and executives, that the Agency will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including termination.
- C. Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when meeting out discipline. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual that is important. WHA considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:
 - i. Verbal bullying: Slandering, ridiculing, or maligning a person or their family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
 - ii. Physical bullying: Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault, or threat of physical assault; damage to a person’s work area or property.
 - iii. Gesture bullying: Nonverbal threatening gestures or glances that convey threatening messages.
 - iv. Exclusion: Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

8. EMERGENCY CLOSURES

- A. Except in the most extreme circumstances, WHA will remain open during regular office hours. However, WHA recognizes that on certain days it may be difficult for employees to travel to/from work due to excessive snow, ice, or inclement weather. Departments who are not required to maintain 24-hour emergency services shall allow employees who have difficulty working scheduled hours due to severe weather conditions the option of working from home with supervisor approval, using annual leave, flex time or leave without pay for hours not worked.
- B. Weather-related and Emergency Closing:
 - i. The Executive Director or their designee has the authority to declare the early release of staff, a delayed start to the workday, or full day closing of their office due to emergency conditions.
 - ii. An employee may be required to work even though the office is closed due to an emergency. The employee is entitled to straight time pay for regular hours worked unless he/she has overtime status.
 - iii. An employee not scheduled to work because of scheduled vacation or continuing sick leave will be charged for the leave, regardless of the declared emergency.

V. BENEFITS

1. HEALTH INSURANCE

- A. Health insurance shall be provided for each full-time employee of WHA. The ED may, with approval from the board, offer health insurance or a health stipend as a benefit for employees working more than 20 hours a week when necessary or useful to recruit or retain employees.

2. RETIREMENT

- A. A full-time WHA employee holds a mandatory membership in the Public Employees' Retirement System. Each employee's membership is effective with the first day of employment. The employee's share of the retirement plan cost (or contribution) will be automatically deducted from the employee's paycheck.
- B. If an employee terminates employment for any reason other than death or retirement, the employee can elect to withdraw the employee's contributions plus interest accrued on those contributions.
- C. The Public Employees' Retirement System provides:
 - i. Retirement Benefits
 - ii. Disability Benefits
 - iii. Death Benefits
- D. These benefits are more fully described in member information materials provided by the Public Employees' Retirement System.

3. SHORT-AND LONG-TERM DISABILITY

- A. Regular employees who incur incapacitating physical or mental conditions that temporarily prevent them from performing assigned job duties, including pregnancy and childbirth which has a duration of more than (5) workdays but fewer than ninety (90) calendar days must have the disability certified in writing by the employee's physician. The WHA reserves the right to have a physician of its choice examine an employee for purposes of determining the existence and extent of a disability. Subsequent certifications may be required at any time during the leave. Accrued sick and annual leave must be used during short-term leave until such leave is gone.
- B. Should a certified disability extend beyond (90) calendar days, the employee may be considered on long-term leave. Long-term leave may extend up to six (6) months. After six (6) months the employee will be considered to have terminated employment.
- C. Disability leave shall be granted to employees unable to continue employment due to injury or illness. This leave shall be leave without pay unless the employee has accrued sick leave and vacation leave to use. After this time is used the employee may be granted further leave without pay by the ED. This leave without pay shall not accrue benefits. In cases where the ED is the person needing leave and leave extension; the Board shall make the above decisions.
- D. Employees requesting to return to work from disability leave must furnish a physician's statement verifying their capability of returning to work and must demonstrate within a reasonable time (one month) the ability to perform assigned duties.

4. WORKERS' COMPENSATION

- A. The Housing Authority, as required by state law, carries Worker's Compensation insurance covering all employees. Coverage may be provided for job-related accidents which occur during working hours.
 - i. An employee who is injured and/or involved in an accident (regardless of how minor) arising out of and in the course of employment with WHA must notify their supervisor immediately and must complete First Report of Injury recording all pertinent and factual information about the accident. This report must be completed for each work-related accident or injury, whether the employee requires medical attention. The report is to be forwarded to the Executive Director within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident and/or injury. In the event of a serious injury, the Executive Director must be notified immediately so that an investigation can be initiated. A Workers' Compensation claim for an unreported injury will not be certified unless the injury required immediate medical attention and was documented by the supervisor.
 - ii. The employee is responsible for providing the "Physicians Report of Injury" to the Executive Director. An injured employee is required to comply with all treatment plans prescribed by the attending health care provider.
 - iii. Should an employee who is injured in the line of duty leave work before completing the workday, he/she will be paid at their regular rate for the balance of time left in the scheduled workday (eight (8) hours). If the employee is unable to participate in the Early Return to Work Program (inability to participate is based on physician's recommendations concerning the severity and extent of injury), further absence may require the employee to apply for benefits pursuant to Workers' Compensation.
 - iv. Any employee who suffers a compensable work-related injury or occupational illness and is unable to participate in the Early Return to Work Program may elect to use accrued sick leave and/or vacation prior to receiving payments from Workers' Compensation.

5. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT as AMENDED

- A. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act, known as the ADAAA, are federal laws that prohibit employers with 15 or more employees from discriminating against applicants and individuals with disabilities and when needed provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodations, so that they may perform the essential job duties of the position.
- B. It is the policy of WHA to comply with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of people with disabilities and to act in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Furthermore, it is our Agency policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities regarding application procedures,

hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

- C. The Agency will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the 16 workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to WHA. Contact the Executive Director with any questions or requests for accommodation.
- D. Any employee who requests a reasonable accommodation should make the request in writing to the Executive Director. The request for accommodation should include the following:
 - i. Name of person seeking accommodation
 - ii. Position
 - iii. Date of request
 - iv. Identification of the condition(s) and how the person believes that each condition affects his or her ability to perform job duties
 - v. Statement of the accommodation(s) being requested and any alternatives
 - vi. Documentation from a medical professional verifying the need for the accommodation when the disability and/or the need for accommodation is not obvious.
 - vii. The Executive Director will involve the appropriate person(s), as necessary, to determine if the requested accommodation(s) is/are approved or denied. The Executive Director will provide a notice to the requestor as to whether the requested accommodation(s) was/were approved or denied within ten business days. If the accommodation(s) is/are approved, the notice will also include the accommodation(s) that will be implemented. All requests and responses will be maintained in a confidential file with the Executive Director. The information will only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis.

6. HOLIDAYS

- A. The Whitefish Housing Authority will be closed for the following holidays:
 - i. New Years Day – January 1st
 - ii. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday – Third Monday in January
 - iii. President’s Day – Third Monday in February
 - iv. Memorial Day – Last Monday in May
 - v. Juneteenth – June 19th
 - vi. Independence Day – July 4th
 - vii. Labor Day – First Monday in September
 - viii. Columbus Day / Indigenous People’s Day– Second Monday in October
 - ix. Veteran’s Day – November 11th
 - x. Thanksgiving Day – 4th Thursday in November
 - xi. Thanksgiving Friday
 - xii. Christmas Eve – December 24th
 - xiii. Christmas Day – December 25th
 - xiv. New Years Eve – December 31st

- B. If any of the above holidays fall on a Sunday, the following Monday will be observed as the holiday. If any of the above holidays fall on a Saturday, the previous Friday will be observed as the holiday.
- C. Some employees may be required to work on a holiday. Salaried employees may schedule another day off. A non-exempt employee required to work on a holiday will be paid time and ½ for holiday hours worked.
- D. Any holidays that fall during the period that an employee is on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave with pay will be charged as a holiday and not taken off the employee's accumulated leave.

7. VACATION/ANNUAL LEAVE

- A. Annual leave with pay shall be earned by all regular full-time employees at the rate of:

| Completed Years of Service | Hourly Accrual Rate | Max Accrual Per Year (Hours) |
|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 0 - less than 10 years | .05775 | 120 |
| 10 - less than 15 years | .06925 | 144 |
| 15 - less than 20 years | .08075 | 168 |
| 20 years or more | .09225 | 192 |

However, a staff member must be employed for (3) consecutive or qualifying months before using accrued vacation. The maximum annual leave accumulation will be measured as of December 31st. No additional time will be accumulated until previously accumulated leave has been used.

- B. Employees, generally, shall be encouraged to take annual vacation to the extent of the amount of earned annual leave.
- C. Annual leave must be scheduled in advance with the immediate supervisor.
- D. An employee who is permanently separated shall be paid in a lump sum for any accumulated leave at the current rate of pay, except where dismissal is due to malfeasance. Withholding of annual leave pay shall be determined by the WHA Board.
- E. In no event shall an employee be paid for annual leave not taken except as provided in the previous paragraph.
- F. In the event of an employee's death, compensation for unused vacation leave will be directed to the employee's heirs.
- G. An employee on temporary layoff status may use accrued vacation leave during the layoff period.

8. SICK LEAVE

- A. Sick leave is the necessary absence from duty caused when an employee has suffered illness, injury, pregnancy-related illness, exposure to contagious disease that requires quarantine, or the necessary absence from duty to care for

an immediate family member. Medical and dental appointments are covered with sick leave.

- B. Each full-time employee of the WHA who has been on duty for at least ninety (90) days, will accumulate sick leave from the first full pay period of employment. Sick leave may be used after a person has been employed ninety (90) consecutive days.
- C. Sick Leave Accrual: All full-time employees are eligible for sick leave. Eligible employees earn sick leave at the same accrual rate of 0.046125 hours per hour in a paid status for a maximum rate of 3.69 hours per paycheck or 96 hours per year.
- D. A maximum accumulation of sick leave is two times the number of days an employee receives per annum in accordance with length of service and full- or part-time status.
- E. Sick leave shall be granted in the case of sickness or injury, for medical, dental or optical diagnosis or treatment and for necessary care or death of a member of the employee's immediate family. Immediate family shall be defined as wife, husband, child, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother, sister or relative living in the same household.
- F. If sick leave is taken for the care or death of immediate family, the employee shall have prior approval from the immediate supervisor.
- G. Sick leave is granted for pre-natal or post-natal care. Should sick leave and annual vacation leave not cover the time off, the employee may be granted an authorized leave of absence without pay for the period of the disability.
- H. The employee must notify the immediate supervisor, when sick leave is needed and may be required to furnish a doctor's statement if sick time exceeds two consecutive days. The employee must call in each day sick leave is taken unless the situation is catastrophic. Abuse of sick leave is cause for disciplinary action or possible termination.
- I. Should an employee discontinue employment with the WHA, the employee is entitled to a lump sum payment equal to 25% of accumulated sick leave.

9. DONATION OF ACCUMULATED LEAVE

- A. After you are eligible to use paid leave, you may donate sick and vacation leave hours to be used by another employee who does not have sufficient leave credits to remain in an active pay status during an extended absence due to illness or injury. Donating employees may donate sick or vacation leave hours on a one-for-one basis. This donation cannot result in a budget deficiency.
- B. The donation is based on the number of hours, not on rate of pay. You may donate up to 40 hours of sick and vacation leave to an individual employee, and up to 80 hours total in a twelve-month period.

- C. You must have a minimum balance of 96 hours of sick leave accrued to donate to another employee, and a balance after any donation of at least 40 hours. There is no minimum balance for vacation leave. If the recipient employee does not need all the donated hours, they will be returned to the donor. Hours will be returned to the donating employees in reverse order of their donation.
- D. Employees may receive a maximum of 160 donated hours in a twelve-month period. To be eligible to receive donated hours, the employee must have no personally accrued paid leave available, must not be eligible for Workers' Compensation benefits, must be in an employed status with WHA, and, if requested by the Executive Director, must provide certification of the illness or accident. WHA reserves the right to limit the amount of donated leave an employee may accept based on the needs of the organization.

10. JURY AND WITNESS DUTY LEAVE

- A. A summons or subpoena must be legally served and may be for serving as a witness or for jury duty. All employees, when actually summoned, shall immediately inform the ED.
- B. The pay of any employee who has received a subpoena for jury duty or as a witness, will continue at the regular rate.
- C. Each employee who is under proper summons as a juror shall be entitled to collect and keep all fees and allowances payable as a result of the service.

11. MILITARY LEAVE

- A. The Housing Authority complies with Uniformed Service Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA, as amended). The Housing Authority will not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment because of their service in the uniformed services.
- B. Employees who leave their position at the Housing Authority to serve in the uniformed services will be carried on the payroll in a military leave status without pay. Said employees will be eligible to return to work at the Housing Authority provided that (1) the Housing Authority be given advance notice of the service, unless such notice is impossible or unreasonable, (2) the service member serves for five (5) years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services, (3) the service member returns to work in a timely manner after conclusion of service, and (4) the service member is not separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other dishonorable conditions. In addition, the Housing Authority provides for health care benefits for employees who are absent from work due to military service in accordance with USERRA.
- C. For employees who are members of the Military Reserves or National Guard and are required to attend annual training, the Housing Authority will pay the difference between Housing Authority pay and military base pay for two regular work weeks. When returning from training, employees must provide their

supervisor with written evidence from their commanding officer which shows the pay received while training. Employees should notify their supervisor as soon as they have been informed of the dates on which they must participate in training.

- D. Should you anticipate military leave of any type, please contact the Executive Director to discuss your reinstatement rights and privileges.
- E. In compliance with House Bill 5136 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2011, the Housing Authority will permit a spouse, son or daughter or parent of a member of a uniformed service to take up to two work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period where a family member has received notification of an impending call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation. The leave may be taken on intermittent or a reduced leave at the discretion of the employee. Employees may substitute accrued vacation or sick leave for unpaid leave during this time.
- F. The employee must provide notice of the need for such leave “as is reasonable and practicable.” The Housing Authority may require that leave be supported by a certification of entitlement to such leave prior to granting leave. A copy of the notice, call, or order is considered sufficient certification. An employee has the right to be restored to the position the employee held prior to taking the leave, or to equivalent rights and benefits.

12. MATERNITY LEAVE

- A. Procedures
 - i. Maternity leave is an unpaid leave of absence available to female employees for temporary disability because of pregnancy and delivery.
 - ii. Parental leave is an unpaid leave of absence not to exceed 15 working days available to birth fathers or permanent employees who are adopting a child.
- B. Requesting Leave
 - i. Employees should give at least a 30-day advance oral or written notice of the need to take leave or as soon as practical when advance notice is not possible.
 - ii. WHA management may establish procedures for the request and approval of leave in compliance with this policy. The leave request should include the anticipated length of absence and the employee’s intended use of accrued paid leave while on maternity or parental leave.
- C. Maternity-Leave Use
 - i. Montana law requires female employees receive a reasonable leave of absence for maternity leave (49-2-310, MCA). “Reasonable” is determined case-by-case and is based upon the employee’s ability to perform her job. In the case of normal pregnancy and delivery, agency management must

grant a minimum of six calendar weeks after the birth of a child as a reasonable period for recovery.

- ii. Leave may be longer if the employee is unable to perform her job prior to delivery or if there are complications like illness or surgical delivery. If the agency and the employee cannot agree on a reasonable period for maternity leave, agency management should rely on the judgment of the employee's medical provider.
- iii. An employee shall not be required to obtain medical certification of a temporary disability for the initial six weeks of leave following the birth of a child. However, agency management may require the employee to provide medical certification to extend the maternity leave beyond the minimum six-calendar-week period. The certification should state that the employee is unable to perform her employment duties and give the estimated duration of the extended leave.
- iv. The employee is responsible for providing timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification. Employees must provide the certification within 15 calendar days after the agency's request unless it is not practicable to do so despite an employee's diligent, good-faith efforts.
- v. WHA managers should not ask employees probing questions regarding their medical condition that may elicit genetic information about an employee or an employee's family members. See the Non-Discrimination EEO Policy (ARM 2.21.4001 et seq.) and the Sick Leave Policy for further guidance.
- vi. Nothing in this policy prohibits an employee from voluntarily returning to work sooner than six calendar weeks after the birth of a child.

D. Parental Leave Use

- i. Parental leave is available to birth fathers immediately following a child's birth or to permanent employees who are adopting a child (2-18-606, MCA).
- ii. WHA management must approve a reasonable leave of absence not to exceed 15 working days for parental leave immediately following the birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption.
- iii. WHA management may approve less than 15 working days if they determine the length of leave requested is unreasonable. WHA management must provide the employee with a written response explaining why the request is unreasonable. The written notice must also include the length of leave, considered reasonable and approved.
- iv. WHA may require documentation for the use of parental leave. For example, a birth father may need to provide a birth certificate or another document identifying the birth father. Documentation from an adoptive

parent may include, but is not limited to, an affidavit of intent to adopt or another agreement indicating a child's placement for adoption.

E. Accrued Paid Leave Use

- i. Both maternity and parental leaves are unpaid. However, employees may use accrued paid leave concurrently with maternity or parental leave. Employees must request the use of additional leave consistent with state and agency policy applicable to the type of leave requested.
- ii. State law limits the use of sick leave to 15 days for birth fathers and adoptive parents (2-18-606, MCA) unless the absence qualifies for the use of sick leave for another reason.

F. Reinstatement

- i. Employees returning to work at the end of a reasonable leave of absence for maternity or parental leave must be reinstated to their original job or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay and accumulated longevity, retirement, and leave benefits.

G. Payroll Records

- i. WHA management must maintain documentation for requests for and use of maternity and parental leaves as part of the employee's permanent employment record.

H. Prohibited Acts

- i. As provided in 49-2-310, MCA, it is unlawful to:
 - a. terminate employment because of pregnancy.
 - b. refuse to grant the employee a reasonable leave of absence for the pregnancy.
 - c. deny the employee who is disabled as a result of pregnancy any compensation to which the employee is entitled as a result of the accumulation of disability or leave benefits accrued, provided that the employer requires the disability to be verified by medical certification indicating the employee is not able to perform employment duties; or
 - d. require an employee to take a mandatory maternity leave for an unreasonable length of time.

13. ACCOMODATIONS FOR NURSING MOTHERS

- A. The Housing Authority will adhere to all Federal and Local laws as they pertain to accommodating nursing mothers. The Housing Authority will comply with the break time requirement for nursing mothers in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("PPACA") which took effect on March 23, 2010. This law amended Section 7 of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
- B. The Housing Authority will provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for 1 year after the child's birth each

time such employee has a need to express milk. A place, other than a bathroom, will be provided that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk.

- C. An employee who used break time to express milk must be compensated the same way that other employees are compensated for break time (according to the FLSA and Housing Authority policies and procedures)

14. LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

- A. Leave without pay may, when necessary, be granted not to exceed two (2) months in any one calendar year.
- B. Absence without proper authorization or approval may be considered sufficient cause for suspension or dismissal of the employee at the discretion of ED. An employee absent without authorization for two consecutive days will be considered as having resigned.
- C. If an employee is absent without proper authorization, deduction shall be made from the employee's pay for the period of absence.

VI. RECRUITMENT

1. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF EMPLOYEES

- A. When a budget authorized position opens within the WHA, or a need arises to create a new position, the director shall submit notification to the Board.
- B. The ED shall post positions in a place where all employees will see the announcement. Open recruitment procedures shall be used to inform the community of position openings. Priority will be given to WHA employees when positions are available for which they are qualified and interested, and when the transfer or promotion will benefit the employee and the WHA. In all cases, the best-qualified candidate for the opening will be sought.
- C. All applications will be reviewed and screened by the ED. The ED will interview a select number of the most qualified applicants. The ED will make all final decisions as to the hiring of new employees. The only exception to this is the hiring of an ED, which is done by the Board.
- D. Probation Period. New employees of the WHA will serve a probationary period of 90 days and, if they successfully complete the probationary training, will become regular members of the staff. All credit toward vacation leave and other such benefits shall accrue from the date of employment. The probationary employee will accrue vacation and sick leave during the probationary period but is not eligible to use them until they have completed the probationary period (3 months)
- E. An employee shall not receive paid holidays during the probation period.

- F. Upon hire, an employee will receive a full description of the job for which they are being hired.
- G. An employee may be terminated at any point in the probationary period without cause. The ED may extend this probationary period not to exceed an additional 6 months. All new employees must sign the terms of the probationary period as created by the ED. Any extension of the probationary period must also be done in writing and signed by the ED and the employee.

2. EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY

- A. Successful applicants (as defined by the qualifications for the position) are hired subject to the following constraints. An offer of employment to an otherwise qualified applicant may be withdrawn or a current employee may be discharged, if he/she fails to satisfy the following employment requirements:
 - i. Immigration/Citizenship Status:
 - a. The Agency will not discriminate in recruitment, hiring, or discharge based on a person's national origin, or citizenship status. However, it will not knowingly employ any person who is, or becomes, an unauthorized alien.
 - b. A newly hired employee must provide suitable documentation, and complete INS form I 9 to verify identity and employment eligibility.
 - c. A newly hired employee refusing to provide suitable documentation within three (3) business days of start date, or providing false documentation, will be subject to discharge for cause.
 - ii. Professional Verification:
 - a. An employee in a position requiring an educational degree or license will have their qualifications verified at the time of employment.
 - b. Failure to maintain a current required license may result in disciplinary action up to, and including, discharge.
 - c. Payment of any license, registration, or examination fee is the responsibility of the employee, unless otherwise authorized by the Executive Director.

VII. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

1. PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

- A. The Housing Authority may require an evaluation of each employee's performance on an annual basis. Special evaluations may be necessary for purposes of transfers, promotions, demotions, and other purposes. Performance evaluations are not necessarily linked with a transfer, promotion, or demotion and may take place regardless of whether an employee is eligible for a transfer, promotion, etc. Employees will be evaluated based on current

performance and the standards and requirements of their respective position as outlined in their job description.

- B. Performance evaluation shall be filed in each employee's personnel file and may be considered in any personnel actions.
- C. If, at the time the employee's performance evaluation becomes due, and the employee is on a performance improvement plan for unsatisfactory job performance or an infraction, the evaluations will be postponed for up to three (3) months (with a new evaluation date) after the end of the improvement plan period, providing there are no other infractions between the end of the performance improvement period and the new evaluation date.

2. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

- A. The Department Head and/or Supervisor have the primary responsibility for initiating, scheduling, and completing performance evaluations.
- B. Each employee will be evaluated against the established position description for their assignment.
- C. The Department Head and/or supervisor will meet with the employee to review concerns, expectations, duties, and responsibilities and to set measurable objectives for the next evaluation period. The employee will be given the opportunity to read the evaluation, ask questions and comment in writing on the evaluation document. The employee must sign the document indicating he/she has been given the opportunity to review the evaluation.
- D. The completed performance evaluation, including any employee comments, will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

3. INTRODUCTORY EVALUATIONS

- A. The job performance of a newly hired or promoted classified employee will generally be evaluated twice during the introductory period. The first evaluation will be midway through the 90-day introductory period. The purpose of this check-in will be to discuss training, progress, and any areas for growth required to be met before the conclusion of the introductory period. The second evaluation will occur at the conclusion of the 90-day introductory period.

4. EMPLOYEE TRAINING

A. INITIAL TRAINING

- i. When a new employee is hired, the individual goes through orientation, which includes information about the Housing Authority in general, as well as departmental information. The relationships and responsibilities between departments are covered in detail.
- ii. The Personnel Policies are reviewed during this orientation so that the employee has a good understanding of the benefits, rules, and regulations.

- iii. The department head is responsible for providing and coordinating job-specific training of their employees, if necessary.

B. IN-SERVICE TRAINING

- i. When certain training courses are required by management, employees must successfully complete the training courses in the specified time frame (as determined by management) to ensure continued employment in their current position.
- ii. If the employee is unable to successfully complete and pass the required course(s)/certifications, the Housing Authority reserves the right to demote or terminate the employee based on organizational and budgetary needs.
- iii. Per the request of their supervisors or management, regular employees may take training courses which are related to their present job or will help them qualify for jobs requiring a higher level of responsibility or skill. Prior to enrollment and payment for training and/or certification courses, approval must be obtained by the Executive Director or their designee.

C. DETERMINATION PROCEDURE

- i. In reviewing requests for class work, training or attendance at meetings, the following criteria will be considered:
 - a. Nature and purpose of the activity.
 - b. Benefits to be derived by the employee and the Agency.
 - c. Level of responsibility, performance, and length of service of the employee.
 - d. Estimated cost and available funds.
 - e. Potential lost time away from work; and
 - f. Ability to adequately staff services during the employee's absence.

D. SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

- i. Whenever there are a limited number of openings for an activity or if attendance will be during an employee's regularly scheduled workday, the Executive Director or their designee will determine which participants may participate.

5. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- A. WHA expects employees to comply with the company's standards of behavior and performance and to correct any noncompliance with these standards.
- B. Under normal circumstances, WHA endorses a policy of progressive discipline in which it attempts to provide employees with notice of deficiencies and an opportunity to improve. It does, however, retain the right to administer discipline in any manner it sees fit. This policy does not modify the status of employees as employees at will or in any way restrict the company's right to bypass the disciplinary procedures suggested.
- C. The following steps are suggested in the discipline procedure. All steps should be documented in the employee's personnel file.

- i. Step 1: Informal discussion. When a performance problem is first identified, the nature of the problem and the action necessary to correct it should be thoroughly discussed with the employee.
- ii. Step 2: Counseling. If a private informal discussion with the employee has not resulted in corrective action, following a thorough investigation, the supervisor should meet with the employee and (a) review the problem, (b) permit the employee to present information regarding the problem, (c) advise the employee that the problem must be corrected, (d) inform the employee that failure to correct the problem will result in further disciplinary action that may include discharge, and (e) issue a counseling notice to the employee.
- iii. Step 3: Reprimand. If satisfactory performance and corrective action are not achieved under Steps 1 and 2, the supervisor and the ED should meet with the employee in private and proceed via (a) through (d) above and issue a reprimand notice to the employee.
- iv. Step 4: Suspension. Supervisors have the authority to temporarily remove employees from the workplace, with or without pay, if approved in advance by the department director and the ED. An exempt employee generally may not be suspended without pay for less than a full day, and the suspension must be related to written workplace conduct rules applicable to all employees, such as a written policy prohibiting sexual harassment or workplace violence.
- v. Step 5: Failure to improve. Failure to improve performance or behavior after the written warning or suspension can result in termination.
- vi. The progressive disciplinary procedures described above also may be applied to an employee who is experiencing a series of unrelated problems involving job performance or behavior.
- vii. In cases involving serious misconduct, or any time the supervisor determines it is necessary, such as a major breach of policy or violation of law, the procedures contained above may be disregarded. Typically, the supervisor should suspend the employee immediately (with or without pay), and an investigation of the incidents leading to the suspension should be conducted to determine if any further action, such as termination, should be taken.

6. SUSPENSION

- A. Suspension may be given for serious infractions of employee rules of conduct which are not deemed sufficient justification for immediate discharge, for repeated offenses, or for failure to correct an action for which a written warning was previously given. A suspension shall be defined as time off without pay for disciplinary reasons and will be for as long as the Authority determines is reasonable and necessary for a specific violation, but not to exceed fifteen days. An investigatory suspension may be used in cases where investigation is needed to determine what further disciplinary action may be justified.
- B. If after investigation it is determined that the employee was not guilty of any violation the employee will normally be returned to the position held, paid for

any lost time, and a statement of the facts will be placed in the personnel file. If, however, the employee is found in violation, the appropriate disciplinary action will take effect on the date that the investigatory suspension began.

- C. In each case of disciplinary suspension, a written memorandum will be prepared indicating the following:
 - i. The event or events which led to the suspension
 - ii. The duration of suspension.
 - iii. A statement indicating required corrective action on the part of the employee
 - iv. If appropriate, the employee's explanation or comment
 - v. If appropriate, a statement indicating that it is a "final warning" and further indicating that the employee will be discharged upon the occurrence of another infraction or unless corrective action is taken within the stated time.
 - vi. A signature field for the employee and employer to sign.

7. TERMINATION

- A. An employee may be terminated by the Housing Authority with or without prior notice. All terminations must be approved by the Executive Director or their designee.
- B. If an employee is terminated, he/she may be notified by their supervisor, director, or Executive Director or their designee in writing of the reasons for the termination. Such writing should be delivered personally to the terminated employee or delivered by certified mail to their last known address. A copy of the termination letter will be placed in the employee's personnel file and is to be treated as confidential and subject to inspection only in accordance with State law.

8. AGENCY COMPLAINT AND APPEALS

- A. WHA encourages employees to attempt to resolve their work-related concerns informally with the persons involved. If you have attempted to resolve the issue informally without success, the next step would be to speak with your direct supervisor and/or the Executive Director. Your supervisor or Executive Director will investigate the situation and attempt to resolve it. If satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this level, the Complaint Policy steps should be followed. This procedure may be used for any complaint concerning working conditions, including discipline, harassment, interpretations of policies and procedures, or even termination of employment. Use the following steps to present your concern as a grievance.
 - i. Step 1. Within seven (7) working days of your knowledge of the situation, you must submit a complaint in writing to your supervisor and to the Executive Director, including a concise, but complete statement of the

- facts relevant to your complaint, your suggested resolution to the problem, and identify persons and any other information that will assist in an investigation and resolution of the matter. You will normally receive a written response acknowledging the complaint at this level within ten (10) working days of the date the written summary was presented. Resolution will depend on how much investigation is needed and work demands.
- ii. Step 2. If your complaint involves the Executive Director, you should submit a written complaint to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners. An appropriate investigation will be undertaken by the Board or its designee(s). You will normally receive a written acknowledgement within ten (10) working days and you will receive a written decision when a determination has been made. In addition to following the complaint procedures described above, any employee who believes he or she or another employee or applicant for employment has been subjected to unlawful discrimination may contact the Human Rights Bureau, 616 Helena Avenue, Suite 302, P. O. Box 1728, Helena, Montana 59624-1728 (406) 444-2884.

VIII. COMPENSATION

1. SALARY ADMINISTRATION

- A. The Whitefish Housing Authority completes performance appraisals near the anniversaries of staff on an annual basis, and the Executive Director commits to notifying employees whether the Board is authorizing pay increases and to implementing authorized increases within two months of HUD budget approval.

2. PAY PLAN

- A. The beginning pay rate shall be the minimum rate of pay in the pay range for a position filled by an employee on their initial appointment to the position. Beginning rates of pay in excess of the minimum may be allowed to recruit persons with a higher level of skill or within a short labor supply market area. All beginning salaries in excess of the minimum require approval of the ED.

3. RECORDING WORK HOURS

- A. Each employee must complete a timesheet providing an accurate record of the hours actually worked and of the accrued leave time taken for each pay period.
- B. This form must be completed prior to the end of the pay period and submitted via the online portal to the ED for review.

WORK BREAKS

- A. Employees are entitled to two (2) fifteen-minute breaks during an eight-hour workday, or at the discretion of the work supervisor, a single 30-minute break.

4. ON CALL

- A. Employees who are placed in an on-call status are not required to remain on the WHA premises nor in a specific location and are free to engage in pursuits of their own choosing. When contacted, the employee must respond and be physically present at the workstation within approximately one (1) hour.
- B. An employee placed in an on-call status shall be compensated for actual time worked in accordance with the overtime/compensatory time pay policy.
- C. Whenever an employee is placed in an on-call status and is required to use their private vehicle for Housing Authority business, the employee shall use actual odometer mileage in computing travel reimbursement.

5. OVERTIME

- A. Overtime work shall be avoided to the extent possible but may be required by the Executive Director in the interest of efficiency or necessity. Overtime must be requested and approved by the attending supervisor prior to the work being performed. Overtime compensation will be administered in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
- B. If you are a non-exempt employee and you perform overtime work, you will be paid one and one-half (1½) times your regular hourly wage for time worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week (the work week being from Sunday at 12:01 a.m. through Saturday at 12:00 a.m.) If you take paid leave of any type (except holiday pay) during that same week, your leave time is not counted toward your total hours worked when calculating eligibility for overtime. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay.
- C. Non-exempt hourly employees may be granted flex time in lieu of overtime pay. Flex time must be used in the same week that the overtime would have occurred.
- D. The overtime provisions of this policy do not apply to exempt employees. Exempt employees are employees who are exempt from overtime provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act regarding overtime compensation. It is anticipated that exempt employees may be required to work more than 40 hours in a week.
- E. It is the policy of WHA to comply with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act and Montana's Wage and Hour statute. WHA specifically prohibits improper pay deductions from salaried exempt employees.
- F. If you believe that your pay has been improperly deducted in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act, please follow procedures outlined in WHA's Complaint Procedure.

- G. If it is determined that deductions were improperly made, WHA will reimburse the employee. WHA will make a good faith commitment to avoid such deductions in the future.

6. PAY PERIODS

- H. The payroll workweek begins on Sunday morning at 12:01 and ends on Saturday at 12:00 midnight. Non-exempt employees are responsible for maintaining and turning into their supervisor accurate records of hours worked. There are 26 pay periods a year. Paydays are normally every other Wednesday. WHA uses direct deposit to distribute payroll disbursements, however, physical checks are available as well if direct deposit is not preferred. Payroll deductions are limited to the following (except those deductions required by law):
 - i. Insurance (as applicable)
 - ii. PERS (as applicable)
 - iii. State and federal withholding
 - iv. Social Security tax
 - v. Medical tax

7. RECORDKEEPING

- A. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires the employer to keep an accurate daily record of each nonexempt employee's hours worked. Pay records include:
 - i. Employee's name, home address, job assignment, sex and birth date (if the employee is under 19 years of age);
 - ii. Hour and day workweek begins.
 - iii. Total hours worked on each workday and in each workweek.
 - iv. Total daily or weekly straight time earnings.
 - v. Regular hourly pay rate for any week when overtime is worked; and
 - vi. Total overtime pay for the workweek.

8. GARNISHMENTS

- A. A court-ordered legal claim by a creditor against the wages of an employee for non-payment of a debt that is served to the Agency by the constituted legal authority is a garnishment and will be recognized and executed by Finance.

9. PROMOTION, DEMOTION AND LATERAL TRANSFERS

- A. When an employee is promoted to a position in a higher pay range, the rate of pay is the greater of the entry level step for the new position, or a rate determined by multiplying the wage prior to promotion by 1.05 and rounding up to a step in the new range.
- B. An employee may be demoted if unable to satisfactorily perform the requirements of his or her current position. The demoted employee will be notified at least seven (7) days in advance and given an opportunity to appeal

the demotion in accordance with the Conflict Resolution section of this Personnel Policy. A demoted employee's compensation will be changed to the wage scale of the new position starting 60 days after the demotion or at the beginning of WHA's fiscal year, whichever occurs first.

- C. Based on the needs of the organization, employees may be temporarily reassigned to other positions or asked to assume other responsibilities temporarily. Prior to making a temporary reassignment, the Executive Director shall notify the employee in writing of the temporary assignment, the anticipated duration, and a statement that the employee will return to the former position, range, and rate of pay. Normally an increase or decrease in compensation will follow the procedure outlined for promotions or demotions in this section. The Executive Director may increase or decrease the temporary wage as he/she deems appropriate, depending on the circumstances of each situation.
- D. Employees may appeal classification or pay ranges as outlined in the Conflict Resolution section of this Personnel Policy.
- E. This plan shall be subject to necessary revisions to reflect changes in responsibility, economic conditions or for other valid reasons.

10. DEMOTION

- A. A demotion occurs when an employee cannot satisfy the requirements of their position as described in the job description for the position. When an employee is demoted, he/she will be paid at a rate that is within the approved range for the lower position. The rate within the pay range will be determined by the Executive Director or their designee.

11. LATERAL TRANSFER

- A. A Lateral transfer occurs when an employee's position is changed laterally to another position. The Executive Director or their designee may authorize lateral transfers Agency wide:
 - i. To promote better morale, job performance, and facilitate individual career development.
 - ii. To match current employees with available work or funds; and
 - iii. To meet other organizational needs.
 - iv. In the case of lateral transfers, the employee's pay rate will remain unchanged at the time of transfer, and the employee will remain in the salary range of the former position. At the discretion of the Executive Director or their designee, a transferred employee may be placed in the salary range of the new position if the salary range of the new position is higher than the salary range of the former position and if experience in their previous position is valuable to the performance of the new position.

IX. LEAVING EMPLOYMENT

1. LAYOFFS AND REDUCTION IN FORCE

- A. The Executive Director or their designee may lay off or reduce the number of personnel in any department for lack of work or lack of budgeted funds. If possible, an advance notice of at least two (2) calendar weeks from the effective date of separation should be given to each regular employee to be separated from employment due to a layoff or reduction in force. If a layoff or reduction in force becomes necessary, and to the extent possible, consideration will be given to each employee's past performance, and to the organizational needs of the Housing Authority.

2. RESIGNATION

- A. Resignation:
 - i. Employees who plan to voluntarily resign must notify their immediate supervisor in writing at least two (2) weeks (14 days) in advance of the effective date of termination, as resignations require personnel action that may involve the start of replacement procedures. It is, therefore, expected that a resignation be carefully considered and submitted only when the person has decided to depart. Withdrawal of resignations will generally not be accepted.
 - ii. Any employee who resigns is encouraged to give the reasons for resigning and discuss with the supervisor any working conditions which he or she feels are unsatisfactory.
 - iii. A formal letter of resignation shall be requested by the Authority and shall include:
 - a. A statement indicating the employee's intention to resign from Housing Authority service.
 - b. The date the notice was given.
 - c. The effective date of the resignation.
 - d. The reason for the resignation (optional); and
 - e. The employee's signature.
 - iv. The Housing Authority reserves the right to accept any resignation immediately upon receiving it from the employee. In such instances, the employee's position with the Housing Authority is terminated effective immediately, and the employee will receive appropriate compensation plus any vacation/sick leave payments due.
 - v. Failure to give proper notification will result in ineligibility for reinstatement.
 - vi. A person who resigned in good standing may be reinstated, at the discretion of the Employer, in his or her former type of position within one

(1) year following resignation, provided the person remains qualified to perform the duties of the position, a position becomes available, and reinstatement would be in the best interest of the Housing Authority.

- vii. All properties of the Housing Authority must be accounted for and turned into the Executive Director or designee including but not limited to manuals, handbooks, ID cards, equipment, uniforms, keys, etc.

B. Abandonment:

- i. An employee who fails to return from leave of absence within three (3) working days of its expiration or has three (3) days of “no call, no show” is subject to removal.
- ii. If at any time within 10 days from termination, due to abandonment, an employee makes a satisfactory explanation of the cause of their absence to the Executive Director, he/she may be reinstated.
- iii. An employee who has abandoned their position is not eligible for future employment with the Agency.

C. Retirement:

- i. An employee should notify the Agency at least 90 days in advance of the date when he/she intends to retire.

Employee Acknowledgement Form

My signature below acknowledges that I have received a copy of the Whitefish Housing Authority Personnel Manual. I understand that it contains important information about the Whitefish Housing Authority's general personnel policies and my privileges and obligations as an employee. I further acknowledge that it is my responsibility to read, understand, and comply with these policies and that if I have questions, I should consult my supervisor or the Executive Director.

I understand that I am governed by the contents of this manual and that the Whitefish Housing Authority may change, rescind, or add to any policies, benefits or practices described in this manual from time to time at its sole and absolute discretion, with or without prior notice. If changes are made, they will be communicated to me.

I acknowledge that this manual is not a contract of employment. Nothing contained in this manual or in any other statement of philosophy including statements made during performance evaluations and compensation reviews should be taken as constituting an express or implied promise of continuing employment. I agree to comply with the policies and procedures described herein.

Employee Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Statement of Activity

Whitefish Housing Authority
January 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|---|--------------------|
| Income | |
| 3000.1 HCV HAP PMTS Received | 15,954.00 |
| 3000.2 HCV Admin Fees | 1,093.00 |
| 3110.00 MVM Rent | 17,938.00 |
| 3111.00 Other MVM Tenant Revenue | \$10.00 |
| 3111.10 Excess Utilities | 40.00 |
| Total for 3111.00 Other MVM Tenant Revenue | \$50.00 |
| 3630.00 RR House Rent | 1,460.00 |
| 3690.00 Other Income | |
| 3690.03 Rehab Income (admin fee) | 0.00 |
| Total for 3690.00 Other Income | \$0.00 |
| 8020 HUD Operating Subsidy | 2,981.00 |
| Total for Income | \$39,476.00 |
| Gross Profit | \$39,476.00 |
| Expenses | |
| 4100.00 Administrative Expenses | |
| 4170.00 Accounting | |
| 4175.10 Outside Accounting / Bookkeeping Fees | 2,607.50 |
| Total for 4170.00 Accounting | \$2,607.50 |
| 4190.00 Sundry - other Admin Expense | |
| 4190.10 Office Expenses | 24.14 |
| 4190.20 Bank Fees | 49.51 |
| 4190.40 Postage & Delivery | 29.24 |
| 4190.70 Office Lease Expense | 313.06 |
| 4190.85 Membership Dues/Subscription | 275.00 |
| 4190.90 Admin Services Contract | 323.75 |
| Total for 4190.00 Sundry - other Admin Expense | \$1,014.70 |
| Total for 4100.00 Administrative Expenses | \$3,622.20 |

Statement of Activity

Whitefish Housing Authority
January 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 4300.00 Utilities | |
| 4300.05 Utilities - Internet | 341.49 |
| 4320.00 Electricity | 1,151.00 |
| Total for 4300.00 Utilities | \$1,492.49 |
| 4420.00 Materials | |
| 4420.07 Cleaning | 296.99 |
| Total for 4420.00 Materials | \$296.99 |

Statement of Activity

Whitefish Housing Authority

January 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|---|--------------------|
| 4430.00 Maintenance Contract(or) Costs | |
| 4430.25 Equipment Repair and Maintenance | 790.00 |
| 4430.50 Unit Turnaround | 2,615.00 |
| 4433.00 Safety and Security | 155.25 |
| Total for 4430.00 Maintenance Contract(or) Costs | \$3,560.25 |
| 4500.00 General Expenses | |
| 4540.00 Employee Benefit Contribution | |
| 4540.10 Employee Benefits - Admin | 1,640.76 |
| Total for 4540.00 Employee Benefit Contribution | \$1,640.76 |
| Total for 4500.00 General Expenses | \$1,640.76 |
| 4610.00 Extraordinary Maintenance | 12,515.40 |
| 4715.00 Housing Assistance Payments | \$10,539.00 |
| 4715.02 HAP - Resident Utility Reimbursement / Payment | 225.00 |
| 4715.1 PORT IN Housing Assistance Payments | 1,426.00 |
| Total for 4715.00 Housing Assistance Payments | \$12,190.00 |
| 4800.00 Depreciation Expense | 3,688.34 |
| Total for Expenses | \$39,006.43 |
| Net Operating Income | \$469.57 |
| Net Other Income | |
| Net Income | \$469.57 |

Statement of Activity YTD Jan 31 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority
July, 2025-January, 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|---|---------------------|
| Income | |
| 3000.1 HCV HAP PMTS Received | \$88,695.00 |
| 3000.3 PORT HAP Received | 2,476.00 |
| Total for 3000.1 HCV HAP PMTS Received | \$91,171.00 |
| 3000.2 HCV Admin Fees | \$8,779.00 |
| 3000.4 Admin Fees - PORT | 233.76 |
| Total for 3000.2 HCV Admin Fees | \$9,012.76 |
| 3110.00 MVM Rent | 135,554.00 |
| 3111.00 Other MVM Tenant Revenue | \$1,639.50 |
| 3111.10 Excess Utilities | 880.00 |
| 3111.20 Laundry Machine Income | 3,895.00 |
| Total for 3111.00 Other MVM Tenant Revenue | \$6,414.50 |
| 3630.00 RR House Rent | 10,220.00 |
| 3690.00 Other Income | \$25.00 |
| 3690.03 Rehab Income (admin fee) | 0.00 |
| Total for 3690.00 Other Income | \$25.00 |
| 4620.04 Casualty Loss Ins Proceeds | 66,402.07 |
| 8020 HUD Operating Subsidy | 38,198.00 |
| 8029.25 Capital Fund 2025 | 95,000.00 |
| Total for Income | \$451,997.33 |
| Gross Profit | \$451,997.33 |
| Expenses | |
| 4100.00 Administrative Expenses | |
| 4110.00 Administrative Salaries | \$59,719.11 |
| 4110.01 Compensated Absences - Admin | 2,655.00 |
| Total for 4110.00 Administrative Salaries | \$62,374.11 |
| 4120.00 Payroll Taxes | 5,759.85 |
| 4130.00 Legal Expense | 10,580.45 |

Statement of Activity YTD Jan 31 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority
July, 2025-January, 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|---|--------------------|
| 4140.00 Staff Training | 1,033.40 |
| 4170.00 Accounting | \$910.00 |
| 4175.10 Outside Accounting / Bookkeeping Fees | 16,147.50 |
| Total for 4170.00 Accounting | \$17,057.50 |

Statement of Activity YTD Jan 31 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority
July, 2025-January, 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|---|---------------------|
| 4190.00 Sundry - other Admin Expense | |
| 4190.10 Office Expenses | 1,910.45 |
| 4190.20 Bank Fees | 225.21 |
| 4190.30 Advertising & Marketing | 122.86 |
| 4190.40 Postage & Delivery | 284.40 |
| 4190.60 Telephone | 780.52 |
| 4190.70 Office Lease Expense | 1,977.67 |
| 4190.85 Membership Dues/Subscription | 2,256.40 |
| 4190.90 Admin Services Contract | 4,065.00 |
| Total for 4190.00 Sundry - other Admin Expense | \$11,622.51 |
| Total for 4100.00 Administrative Expenses | \$108,427.82 |
| 4210.00 Tenant Services | |
| 4220.00 Tenant Services - Other Expense | 675.79 |
| Total for 4210.00 Tenant Services | \$675.79 |
| 4300.00 Utilities | |
| 4300.05 Utilities - Internet | 2,407.93 |
| 4310.00 Water | 5,839.32 |
| 4320.00 Electricity | 8,306.05 |
| 4330.00 Gas | 4,589.64 |
| 4390.00 Sewer | 4,255.56 |
| 4390.01 Trash Removal | 1,996.02 |
| Total for 4300.00 Utilities | \$27,394.52 |
| 4420.00 Materials | |
| 4420.02 Plumbing | 234.25 |
| 4420.03 Paint | 24.75 |
| 4420.04 Lawn & Garden | 52.00 |
| 4420.05 Other Materials | 1,354.67 |
| 4420.06 Electrical | 524.68 |

Statement of Activity YTD Jan 31 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority
July, 2025-January, 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|--|-------------------|
| 4420.07 Cleaning | 420.03 |
| 4420.08 HVAC | 76.05 |
| 4420.10 Small Tools and Equipment | 266.70 |
| Total for 4420.00 Materials | \$2,953.13 |
| 4430.00 Maintenance Contract(or) Costs | |
| 4430.01 Nonspecified Repairs and Maintance | 540.00 |
| 4430.10 Heating & Cooling Contract | 8,025.32 |
| 4430.20 Snow Removal Contract | 2,123.80 |

Statement of Activity YTD Jan 31 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority
July, 2025-January, 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|---|--------------------|
| 4430.25 Equipment Repair and Maintenance | 1,964.58 |
| 4430.30 Elevator Maintenance Contract | 4,819.80 |
| 4430.40 Landscape & Grounds Contract | 4,661.38 |
| 4430.50 Unit Turnaround | \$11,395.75 |
| 4430.51 Carpet Cleaning | 65.00 |
| 4430.52 Paint | 23.98 |
| Total for 4430.50 Unit Turnaround | \$11,484.73 |
| 4430.70 Plumbing Contract | 12,179.88 |
| 4430.80 Extermination Contract | 2,300.00 |
| 4430.90 Janitorial Contracts | 2,189.50 |
| 4430.95 Routine Maintenance Contract | 1,037.50 |
| 4433.00 Safety and Security | 1,352.25 |
| Total for 4430.00 Maintenance Contract(or) Costs | \$52,678.74 |
| 4450 RR House General Maintenance | 5,105.54 |
| 4500.00 General Expenses | |
| 4501.11 Property Taxes | -2,271.17 |
| 4510.00 Property Insurance | -38.99 |
| 4510.20 Liability Insurance | 12,603.52 |
| 4540.00 Employee Benefit Contribution | \$3,870.49 |
| 4540.10 Employee Benefits - Admin | 5,815.20 |
| Total for 4540.00 Employee Benefit Contribution | \$9,685.69 |
| Total for 4500.00 General Expenses | \$19,979.05 |
| 4610.00 Extraordinary Maintenance | 88,696.74 |
| 4715.00 Housing Assistance Payments | \$74,574.61 |
| 4715.02 HAP - Resident Utility Reimbursement / Payment | 931.00 |
| 4715.1 PORT IN Housing Assistance Payments | 5,328.00 |
| Total for 4715.00 Housing Assistance Payments | \$80,833.61 |
| 4800.00 Depreciation Expense | 25,818.38 |

Statement of Activity YTD Jan 31 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority
July, 2025-January, 2026

| Distribution account | Total |
|---|---------------------|
| 66000 Payroll Expenses | 536.92 |
| 7520.00 Capital Expenditures | |
| 7520.01 Appliances & Stoves | 1,278.00 |
| Total for 7520.00 Capital Expenditures | \$1,278.00 |
| 7540.02A Boiler System | 407.95 |
| Total for Expenses | \$414,786.19 |
| Net Operating Income | \$37,211.14 |

Statement of Activity YTD Jan 31 2026

Whitefish Housing Authority
July, 2025-January, 2026

| | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Distribution account | |
| Other Expenses | |
| 80000 Ask My Accountant | 0.00 |
| Total for Other Expenses | \$0.00 |
| Net Other Income | \$0.00 |
| Net Income | \$37,211.14 |

Executive Director Report

Whitefish Housing Authority

February 2026

MVM / Section 18

- Public Housing occupancy: 47/50 available units with 2 pending move-ins and other pending waitlist applications.
- New part-time maintenance technician hired. Will likely work with handymen for larger projects moving forward, but day-to-day tasks currently stabilized.
- LIHTC + Section 18/RAD Blend conversion applications submitted with management agreement in draft form.

HCV

- Voucher issuance: 16/19 vouchers leased with one port-in voucher.
- Updating payment standards but keeping at last year's calculations so we can keep funding as many vouchers as possible.
- If there is no funding resolution or attrition by May, will likely need to decrease payment standards for June or close some clients' assistance (possibly shift to other programs).

HO&D

- Working on LHP updates and administration with the City of Whitefish.
- WALT Homes meeting – determined that people tried to pay and were turned away & misinformed that they no longer needed to pay.
- Met with area housing EDs and began to work on inventory of deed-restricted housing across the Flathead Valley. Emphasis on need for collective asset inventory & eventually partnership strategy for housing work in Flathead County.

Operations & Administration

- Working with MRI for additional software training to better streamline our digital processes.
- 14/52 remaining items for compliance review. Increased pressure from HUD to complete, plus should complete these items as soon as possible so there are no hiccups in RAD/Section 18 conversion.
- Updated audit timeline:
 - FY2023 – Draft form, should be complete by mid-March
 - FY2024 – Complete by April 31st
 - FY2025 – Complete by May 31st

Finance

- Receiving final reimbursement for water damaged units.
- Beginning to work on FY2027 Operating Budget – strong planning needed to see WHA through the Section 18 / RAD conversion.

Whitefish Housing Authority

RESOLUTION #No. 303

ADOPTION OF THE UPDATED 2026 PAYMENT STANDARDS FOR FLATHEAD COUNTY AND THE CITY OF WHITEFISH, MT

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development has released the 2026 Fair Market Rent Standards for Flathead County, which includes the City of Whitefish; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and the State of Montana require compliance with these standards effective immediately to satisfy regulations

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE WHITEFISH HOUSING AUTHORITY as follows:

1. The Board of Commissioners hereby approves the adoption of 110% of the revised 2025 Fair Market Rent Standards as set forth by HUD (Dept. of Housing and Urban Development) as Whitefish Housing Authority's HCV 2026 Payment Standard
2. The Board of Commissioners hereby approves the adoption of the 2026 Utility Allowance Schedule (attached) as set forth by HUD (Dept. of Housing and Urban Development) for Region 10: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties
3. The Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Whitefish Housing Authority to take the necessary steps to implement rent & utility allowance standards to ensure the efficient operation of housing programs.

ADOPTED AT THE MONTHLY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING OF THE WHITEFISH HOUSING AUTHORITY THIS 25th DAY OF February 2025

Whitefish Housing Authority, Whitefish, Montana

Katherine Berry, WHA Board of Commissioners

Marissa Getts, Acting Director

Whitefish Housing Authority
100 4th Street
Whitefish, MT 59937

February 25, 2026

PAYMENT STANDARDS

Due to systemically low budget authority across the US and several PIH notices regarding the necessity of cost control actions, the Whitefish Housing Authority has chosen to continue to use 2025 FMR to calculate WHA's 2026 Payment Standards for the HCV program:

| | 0 BR | 1BR | 2BR | 3BR | 4BR |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Revised Fair Market Rent (HUD) 2025 | \$ 1,202 | \$ 1,249 | \$ 1,639 | \$ 2,184 | \$ 2,752 |
| Fair Market Rent (HUD) 2026 | \$ 1,267 | \$ 1,289 | \$ 1,691 | \$ 2,224 | \$ 2,837 |
| WHA Payment Standard 2026 @ 110% of the 2025 FMR | \$ 1,322 | \$ 1,374 | \$ 1,802 | \$ 2,402 | \$ 3,027 |

In addition, through this resolution, WHA adopts:

- The Region 10 Utility Allowance Schedule (attached) as released by Montana Department of Commerce on 2/1/2026.

2026 HCV Payment Standard & Utility Allowance: Adopted by Resolution #303, dated

Acting Director

Date

Utility Allowance Schedule

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169
exp. 04/30/2026

The following allowances are used to determine the total cost of tenant-furnished utilities and appliances.

| Locality/PHA | | Unit Type Semi-detached | | | | | Date (mm/dd/yyyy) |
|--|----------------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| Region 10: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties | | Older Home Converted (Semi Detached), Two/Three Family (Duplex) | | | | | 02/01/2026 |
| Utility or Service | | 0 BR | 1 BR | 2 BR | 3 BR | 4 BR | 5 BR |
| Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$33 | \$43 | \$57 | \$71 | \$84 | \$94 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$91 | \$116 | \$156 | \$193 | \$230 | \$258 |
| | c. Electric | \$51 | \$65 | \$88 | \$108 | \$129 | \$145 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$134 | \$172 | \$230 | \$285 | \$340 | \$381 |
| Cooking | a. Natural Gas | \$3 | \$4 | \$6 | \$7 | \$9 | \$10 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$24 | \$26 |
| | c. Electric | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$17 | \$21 | \$22 |
| Other Electricity | | \$27 | \$34 | \$46 | \$57 | \$71 | \$76 |
| Air Conditioning | | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$13 | \$15 |
| Water Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$4 | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$12 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$11 | \$15 | \$20 | \$24 | \$30 | \$32 |
| | c. Electric | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$25 | \$27 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$17 | \$22 | \$30 | \$37 | \$46 | \$49 |
| Water | | \$31 | \$34 | \$38 | \$43 | \$47 | \$51 |
| Sewer | | \$49 | \$57 | \$65 | \$75 | \$82 | \$90 |
| Trash Collection | | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 |
| Other -- specify | | | | | | | |
| Range/Microwave | | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 |
| Refrigerator | | \$5 | \$5 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$7 |

Actual Family Allowances - May be used by the family to compute allowance while searching for a unit.

Head of Household Name _____

Unit Address _____

Number of Bedrooms _____

| Utility or Service | per month cost |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Heating | _____ |
| Cooking | _____ |
| Other Electric | _____ |
| Air Conditioning | _____ |
| Water Heating | _____ |
| Water | _____ |
| Sewer | _____ |
| Trash Collection | _____ |
| Range/Microwave | _____ |
| Refrigerator | _____ |
| Other | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |

Utility Allowance Schedule

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169
exp. 04/30/2026

The following allowances are used to determine the total cost of tenant-furnished utilities and appliances.

| Locality/PHA | | Unit Type | | | | | Date (mm/dd/yyyy) |
|---|----------------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| Region 10: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties | | Rowhouse/townhouse Row House/Garden Apt. | | | | | 02/01/2026 |
| Utility or Service | | 0 BR | 1 BR | 2 BR | 3 BR | 4 BR | 5 BR |
| Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$29 | \$38 | \$52 | \$65 | \$78 | \$91 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$78 | \$105 | \$142 | \$177 | \$214 | \$249 |
| | c. Electric | \$44 | \$59 | \$80 | \$99 | \$120 | \$140 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$116 | \$155 | \$210 | \$261 | \$316 | \$368 |
| Cooking | a. Natural Gas | \$3 | \$4 | \$6 | \$7 | \$9 | \$10 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$24 | \$26 |
| | c. Electric | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$17 | \$21 | \$22 |
| Other Electricity | | \$27 | \$34 | \$46 | \$57 | \$71 | \$76 |
| Air Conditioning | | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$13 | \$15 |
| Water Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$4 | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$12 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$11 | \$15 | \$20 | \$24 | \$30 | \$32 |
| | c. Electric | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$25 | \$27 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$17 | \$22 | \$30 | \$37 | \$46 | \$49 |
| Water | | \$31 | \$34 | \$38 | \$43 | \$47 | \$51 |
| Sewer | | \$49 | \$57 | \$65 | \$75 | \$82 | \$90 |
| Trash Collection | | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 |
| Other -- specify | | | | | | | |
| Range/Microwave | | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 |
| Refrigerator | | \$5 | \$5 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$7 |

Actual Family Allowances - May be used by the family to compute allowance while searching for a unit.

Head of Household Name _____

Unit Address _____

Number of Bedrooms _____

| Utility or Service | per month cost |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Heating | _____ |
| Cooking | _____ |
| Other Electric | _____ |
| Air Conditioning | _____ |
| Water Heating | _____ |
| Water | _____ |
| Sewer | _____ |
| Trash Collection | _____ |
| Range/Microwave | _____ |
| Refrigerator | _____ |
| Other | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |

Utility Allowance Schedule

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169
exp. 04/30/2026

The following allowances are used to determine the total cost of tenant-furnished utilities and appliances.

| Locality/PHA Region 10: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties | | Unit Type Single family detached Single Family Detached (Single Family) | | | | | Date (mm/dd/yyyy) 02/01/2026 |
|--|----------------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| Utility or Service | | 0 BR | 1 BR | 2 BR | 3 BR | 4 BR | 5 BR |
| Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$38 | \$51 | \$62 | \$78 | \$88 | \$102 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$104 | \$140 | \$168 | \$212 | \$240 | \$279 |
| | c. Electric | \$58 | \$79 | \$95 | \$119 | \$135 | \$157 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$153 | \$207 | \$248 | \$313 | \$354 | \$412 |
| Cooking | a. Natural Gas | \$3 | \$4 | \$6 | \$7 | \$9 | \$10 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$24 | \$26 |
| | c. Electric | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$17 | \$21 | \$22 |
| Other Electricity | | \$27 | \$34 | \$46 | \$57 | \$71 | \$76 |
| Air Conditioning | | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$19 | \$23 | \$26 |
| Water Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$4 | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$12 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$11 | \$15 | \$20 | \$24 | \$30 | \$32 |
| | c. Electric | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$25 | \$27 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$17 | \$22 | \$30 | \$37 | \$46 | \$49 |
| Water | | \$31 | \$34 | \$38 | \$43 | \$47 | \$51 |
| Sewer | | \$49 | \$57 | \$65 | \$75 | \$82 | \$90 |
| Trash Collection | | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 |
| Other -- specify | | | | | | | |
| Range/Microwave | | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 |
| Refrigerator | | \$5 | \$5 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$7 |

Actual Family Allowances - May be used by the family to compute allowance while searching for a unit.

Head of Household Name _____

Unit Address _____

Number of Bedrooms _____

| Utility or Service | per month cost |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Heating | _____ |
| Cooking | _____ |
| Other Electric | _____ |
| Air Conditioning | _____ |
| Water Heating | _____ |
| Water | _____ |
| Sewer | _____ |
| Trash Collection | _____ |
| Range/Microwave | _____ |
| Refrigerator | _____ |
| Other | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |

Utility Allowance Schedule

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169
exp. 04/30/2026

The following allowances are used to determine the total cost of tenant-furnished utilities and appliances.

| Locality/PHA Region 10: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties | | Unit Type High rise with elevator High Rise | | | | | Date (mm/dd/yyyy) 02/01/2026 |
|--|----------------|--|------|------|------|------|--|
| Utility or Service | | 0 BR | 1 BR | 2 BR | 3 BR | 4 BR | 5 BR |
| Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$30 | \$34 | \$40 | \$49 | \$55 | \$69 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | | | | | | |
| | c. Electric | \$40 | \$50 | \$60 | \$75 | \$92 | \$108 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | | | | | | |
| Cooking | a. Natural Gas | \$3 | \$4 | \$6 | \$7 | \$9 | \$10 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$24 | \$26 |
| | c. Electric | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$17 | \$21 | \$22 |
| Other Electricity | \$27 | \$34 | \$46 | \$57 | \$71 | \$76 | |
| Air Conditioning | \$5 | \$6 | \$8 | \$10 | \$12 | \$14 | |
| Water Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$4 | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$12 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$11 | \$15 | \$20 | \$24 | \$30 | \$32 |
| | c. Electric | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$25 | \$27 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$17 | \$22 | \$30 | \$37 | \$46 | \$49 |
| Water | \$31 | \$34 | \$38 | \$43 | \$47 | \$51 | |
| Sewer | \$49 | \$57 | \$65 | \$75 | \$82 | \$90 | |
| Trash Collection | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | |
| Other -- specify | | | | | | | |
| Range/Microwave | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | |
| Refrigerator | \$5 | \$5 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$7 | |

Actual Family Allowances - May be used by the family to compute allowance while searching for a unit.

Head of Household Name _____

Unit Address _____

Number of Bedrooms _____

| Utility or Service | per month cost |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Heating | _____ |
| Cooking | _____ |
| Other Electric | _____ |
| Air Conditioning | _____ |
| Water Heating | _____ |
| Water | _____ |
| Sewer | _____ |
| Trash Collection | _____ |
| Range/Microwave | _____ |
| Refrigerator | _____ |
| Other | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |

Utility Allowance Schedule

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169
exp. 04/30/2026

The following allowances are used to determine the total cost of tenant-furnished utilities and appliances.

| Locality/PHA | | Unit Type | | | | | Date (mm/dd/yyyy) |
|---|----------------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| Region 10: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties | | Low-rise Older Multi-Family (Low Rise) | | | | | 02/01/2026 |
| Utility or Service | | 0 BR | 1 BR | 2 BR | 3 BR | 4 BR | 5 BR |
| Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$31 | \$41 | \$54 | \$67 | \$81 | \$93 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$85 | \$111 | \$149 | \$184 | \$221 | \$254 |
| | c. Electric | \$48 | \$63 | \$84 | \$103 | \$124 | \$143 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$126 | \$165 | \$220 | \$271 | \$327 | \$375 |
| Cooking | a. Natural Gas | \$3 | \$4 | \$6 | \$7 | \$9 | \$10 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$24 | \$26 |
| | c. Electric | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$17 | \$21 | \$22 |
| Other Electricity | | \$27 | \$34 | \$46 | \$57 | \$71 | \$76 |
| Air Conditioning | | \$5 | \$6 | \$8 | \$10 | \$12 | \$14 |
| Water Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$4 | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$12 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$11 | \$15 | \$20 | \$24 | \$30 | \$32 |
| | c. Electric | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$25 | \$27 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$17 | \$22 | \$30 | \$37 | \$46 | \$49 |
| Water | | \$31 | \$34 | \$38 | \$43 | \$47 | \$51 |
| Sewer | | \$49 | \$57 | \$65 | \$75 | \$82 | \$90 |
| Trash Collection | | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 |
| Other -- specify | | | | | | | |
| Range/Microwave | | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 |
| Refrigerator | | \$5 | \$5 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$7 |

Actual Family Allowances - May be used by the family to compute allowance while searching for a unit.

Head of Household Name _____

Unit Address _____

Number of Bedrooms _____

| Utility or Service | per month cost |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Heating | _____ |
| Cooking | _____ |
| Other Electric | _____ |
| Air Conditioning | _____ |
| Water Heating | _____ |
| Water | _____ |
| Sewer | _____ |
| Trash Collection | _____ |
| Range/Microwave | _____ |
| Refrigerator | _____ |
| Other | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |

Utility Allowance Schedule

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169
exp. 04/30/2026

The following allowances are used to determine the total cost of tenant-furnished utilities and appliances.

| Locality/PHA | | Unit Type | | | | | Date (mm/dd/yyyy) |
|---|----------------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| Region 10: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties | | Manufactured home Mobile Home | | | | | 02/01/2026 |
| Utility or Service | | 0 BR | 1 BR | 2 BR | 3 BR | 4 BR | 5 BR |
| Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$29 | \$35 | \$45 | \$58 | \$72 | |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$79 | \$95 | \$123 | \$158 | \$198 | |
| | c. Electric | \$44 | \$54 | \$69 | \$89 | \$111 | |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$117 | \$141 | \$182 | \$233 | \$292 | |
| Cooking | a. Natural Gas | \$3 | \$4 | \$6 | \$7 | \$9 | \$10 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$24 | \$26 |
| | c. Electric | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$17 | \$21 | \$22 |
| Other Electricity | | \$27 | \$34 | \$46 | \$57 | \$71 | \$76 |
| Air Conditioning | | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$16 | \$19 | |
| Water Heating | a. Natural Gas | \$4 | \$5 | \$7 | \$9 | \$11 | \$12 |
| | b. Bottle Gas | \$11 | \$15 | \$20 | \$24 | \$30 | \$32 |
| | c. Electric | \$9 | \$12 | \$16 | \$20 | \$25 | \$27 |
| | d. Heat Pump | | | | | | |
| | e. Oil | \$17 | \$22 | \$30 | \$37 | \$46 | \$49 |
| Water | | \$31 | \$34 | \$38 | \$43 | \$47 | \$51 |
| Sewer | | \$49 | \$57 | \$65 | \$75 | \$82 | \$90 |
| Trash Collection | | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 | \$21 |
| Other -- specify | | | | | | | |
| Range/Microwave | | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 |
| Refrigerator | | \$5 | \$5 | \$6 | \$6 | \$6 | \$7 |

Actual Family Allowances - May be used by the family to compute allowance while searching for a unit.

Head of Household Name _____

Unit Address _____

Number of Bedrooms _____

| Utility or Service | per month cost |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Heating | _____ |
| Cooking | _____ |
| Other Electric | _____ |
| Air Conditioning | _____ |
| Water Heating | _____ |
| Water | _____ |
| Sewer | _____ |
| Trash Collection | _____ |
| Range/Microwave | _____ |
| Refrigerator | _____ |
| Other | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |