

**FILED**

1:16 pm, Mon, April 06, 2026

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK



**Seattle  
Public  
Utilities**

# Workplace Expectations

**Policy HR-150, SPU Workplace Expectations  
Effective Oct. 28, 2022, rev. no. 2**

## Table of Contents

<b>Workplace Expectations for Everyone .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Work Safely and Properly .....	3
Respect the Rights of Others.....	5
Embrace Diversity.....	6
Establish Trust with Others .....	7
Use Humor Wisely.....	7
Be Productive and Reliable.....	8
Display Integrity.....	10
Search for Creative Solutions .....	12
Build Partnerships .....	13
<b>Workplace Expectations for People Leaders .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Provide a Safe Work Environment .....	14
Provide a Work Environment Free of Discrimination.....	15
Forecast, Plan, Schedule, Coordinate and Manage Resources.....	16
Anticipate and Fill Vacant Positions in a Timely Manner in Compliance with Applicable Policies .....	17
Provide Leadership and Make Decisions .....	18
Foster Open Communication and Evaluate Job Performance.....	19

This document was produced by Seattle Public Utilities’ Human Resources Division.

**Seattle Public Utilities**  
Human Resources  
Seattle Municipal Tower  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 49<sup>th</sup> Floor

## Workplace Expectations for Everyone

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is a dynamic and multi-faceted organization committed to our mission of providing reliable, efficient, and environmentally conscious utility services that enhance the quality of life and livability in the communities that we serve. SPU is also committed to providing a safe, yet high-performance workplace with a diverse and inspired workforce. As an employee, you play an important role in helping the department carry out our mission.

Employees are our most important resource. We value your contribution and the teamwork of every branch, division and work unit that help us achieve our mission.

We can only achieve an effective and productive job performance by balancing many factors that keep us healthy as individuals and as an organization. SPU's core values should be reflected throughout our workforce and ultimately help us build a culture of teamwork – which we refer to as 'One Team'.

This Workplace Expectations document explains the department's general expectations for your conduct in the workplace. We believe it is essential to build a consistent and positive work atmosphere in which we all live up to these expectations.

If you have questions about any of the following expectations, please talk with your supervisor.

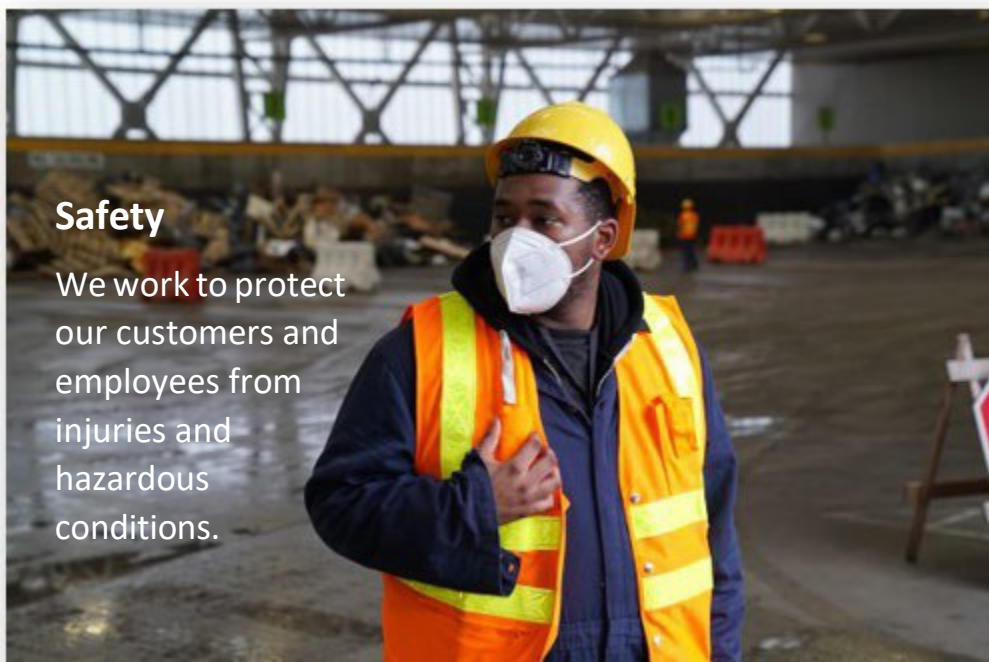


**! These expectations apply to all employees unless it is in conflict with the express provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, personnel rules or other city policies or ordinances, in which case the former shall prevail.**

## Work Safely and Properly

**You are expected to prevent injuries and accidents, and follow all governmental regulation and departmental safety programs**

- Understand and comply with applicable government and department safety regulations
- Wear protective clothing and use appropriate safety equipment while performing job duties
- Practice defensive driving at all times
- Select, purchase and use equipment and supplies that are safe
- Use property, equipment and supplies safely to avoid misuse of city property that could result in injury to yourself or others
- Report all accidents, injuries, close calls and hazardous conditions to your supervisor immediately



**You are expected to support and advance the department's safety culture**

- Accept safety as a personal responsibility for yourself and your co-workers
- Promote accident prevention by intervening, correcting and reporting unsafe acts or practices
- Work safely and look out for your co-workers

## Work Safely and Properly (cont.)

### You are expected to obtain all required safety training

- Secure, maintain and renew proper certifications and licenses required for your job title
- Verify and ensure that you maintain the legally required safety training for your job title
- Communicate with your supervisor to schedule and attend your required safety training

**Note:** SPU prohibits the possession and use of firearms and other dangerous weapons by its employees while conducting City business, while on City property, or while in a City vehicle.

### You are expected to remain alert and prepared for emergency situations

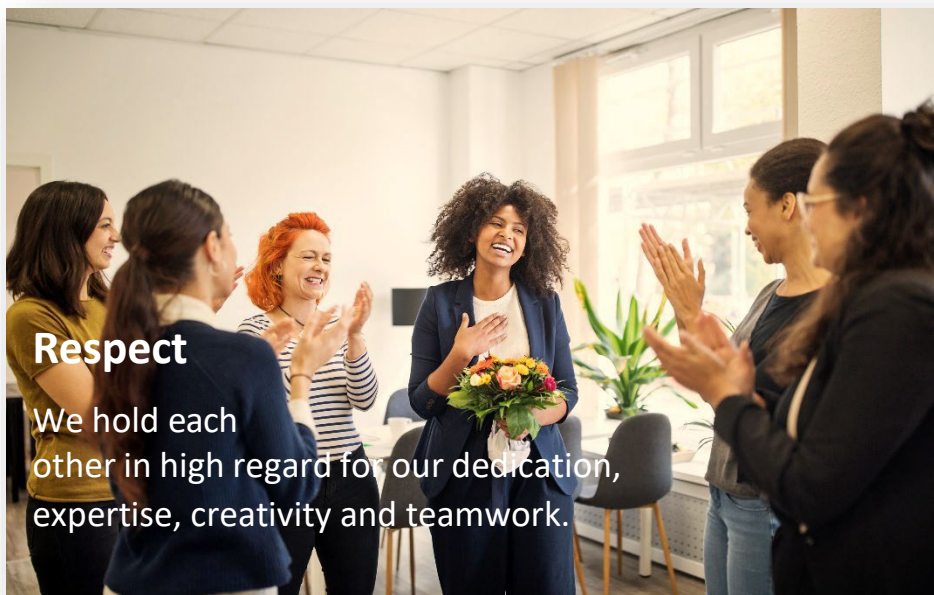
- Read and adhere to the department's [emergency, safety, and security policies](#)
- Keep your city identification card (SPU photo key card) on your person at all times
- Report any suspicious activity immediately to your supervisor



## Respect the Rights of Others

### You are expected to respect the rights of others

- Treat all people you meet in the workplace with dignity and respect and refrain from using insulting, threatening or offensive language
- Do not engage in unacceptable behavior including inappropriate gestures, touching, unwelcome sexual behavior, displaying offensive materials, etc.
- Report alleged discrimination or harassment to supervisors for immediate investigation and resolution
- Value the time, workloads and deadlines of others by being punctual and responds to requests in a timely manner
- Follow through with commitments and notify appropriate parties if you are unable to fulfill those commitments
- Show respect, courtesy and appreciation for all internal and external customers
- Be polite to co-workers, colleagues, supervisory staff and customers



### Respect

We hold each other in high regard for our dedication, expertise, creativity and teamwork.

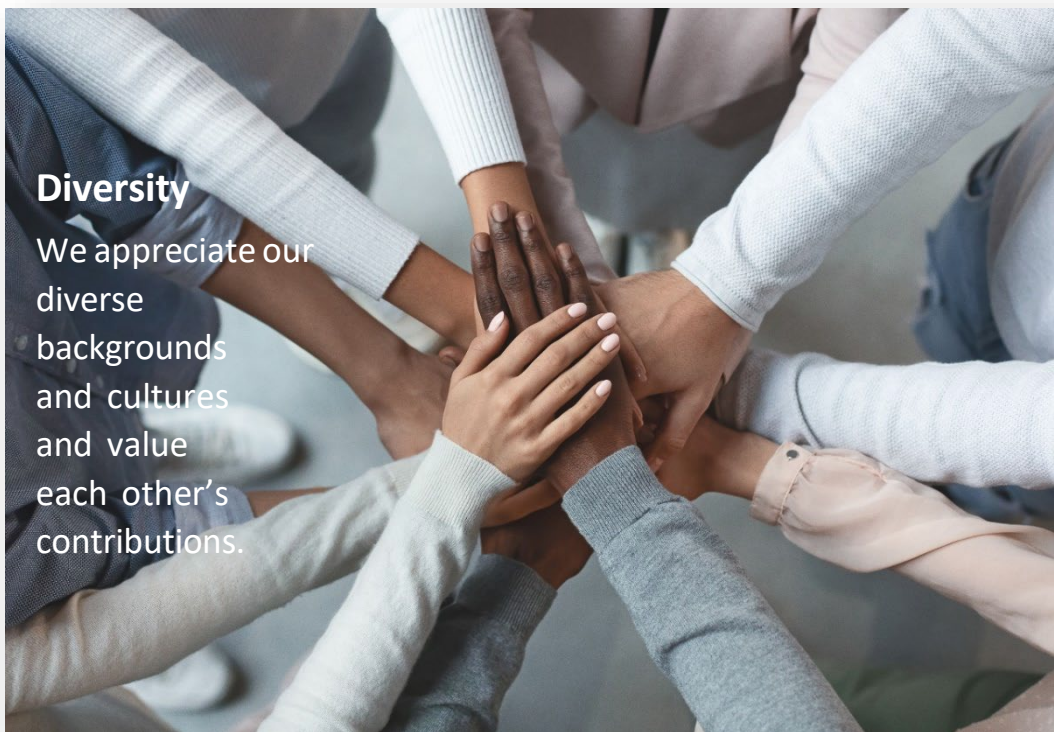
### You are expected to handle conflict appropriately

- Recognize that most conflicts can be resolved through good judgment, open communication and a willingness to seek compromise and build upon mutual interests
- Endeavor to resolve conflict at the lowest level through open and respectful discussion of the problem with those involved
- Bring the matter to the attention of your immediate supervisor and follow the normal chain of command to resolve conflict when necessary
- Keep your supervisor apprised of problems and conflicts and any resolutions achieved

## Embrace Diversity

### You are expected treat everyone equally

- Respect co-workers and recognize that the workforce is made up of individuals from various cultural, racial and social backgrounds and sexual orientations
- Promote a work environment that is hospitable to everyone and their diverse cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds
- Support a work environment free of discrimination and refrain from engaging in conversation or behavior that devalues human dignity
- Listen to and respect to others' point of view



### You are expected to eliminate biases based on race in order to promote social justice and equity

- Support the city's [Race and Social Justice Initiative](#)
- Be responsive to the needs of the diverse Seattle residents, customers and employees we serve and use the [Race and Social Justice tools](#) to identify and address service biases and inequity
- Design and implement relevant programs and services for our multi-cultural residents and businesses and those with fewer economic resources
- Enhance competitive opportunities for [Women and Minority Business Enterprises \(WMBE\)](#) vendors and contractors

## Establish Trust with Others

### You are expected to be honest, responsive and trustworthy

- Represent to the public in good faith the adopted or official position of the utility on an issue
- Provide accurate and complete information in response to requests as soon as possible
- Listen attentively to praise and criticism from customers, supervisors and co-workers
- Work honorably and professionally



## Use Humor Wisely

### You are expected to use humor wisely and refrain from offending co-workers, customers and other stakeholders

- Use humor that is not targeted at the expense of others (for example, poking fun at yourself and your difficulty in achieving a particular task may be acceptable, while fun at others may be offensive)
- Make no racial or sexual comments, jokes or slurs
- Incorporate humor to lighten a tense situation, put things into perspective, or gain a different point of view
- Use your personality and sense of humor to benefit others or to move past an obstacle
- Keep your use of humor relevant



### Humor

We have fun and promote a positive work environment.

## Be Productive and Reliable

### You are expected to perform job duties effectively and productively

- Take responsibility for your job performance
- Set work priorities and practices that support the department's [Strategic Business Plan](#) and assist your branch, division and work unit in achieving its performance goals
- Seek appropriate assistance to resolve problems or difficulties that interfere with your work
- Perform your job duties within the standards set for your position and notify your supervisor when backlogs or unexpected priority work threaten to delay essential tasks
- Recognize that you are providing important essential services and that you represent the department when dealing with the public and others



### Productivity

We are inspired by the work we do and demonstrate our enthusiasm through the results we achieve.

### You are expected to provide the best customer service possible

- Customer service is the responsibility of all employees
- Be easy to reach – be prepared – show you care – own the problem – act quickly
- Provide prompt, courteous and responsive customer service internally and externally
- Seek solutions to job-related problems that impede customer service
- Convey friendly and caring service, flexibility, problem solving and rapid recovery from mistakes

## Be Productive and Reliable (cont.)

### You are expected to report to work as scheduled, on time and able to work a full shift

- Notify your supervisor or designee of your absence as much in advance as possible and in accordance with established procedures and/or directions given by your supervisor
- Use sick leave appropriately, following city and department policies
- Comply with scheduling procedures for vacations, breaks and lunch time provisions
- Complete and submit timesheets on time and ensure that you report your time accurately
- Perform all assigned job duties effectively and productively, and within the standards set for your position
- Know in advance what expectations the department may have for you in the event of snow and ice or other emergencies and make every effort to report to work in these circumstances if the department and the city are depending on your crew or work unit
- Do not leave the workplace during working hours without your supervisor's knowledge



### You are expected to report to work fit for duty

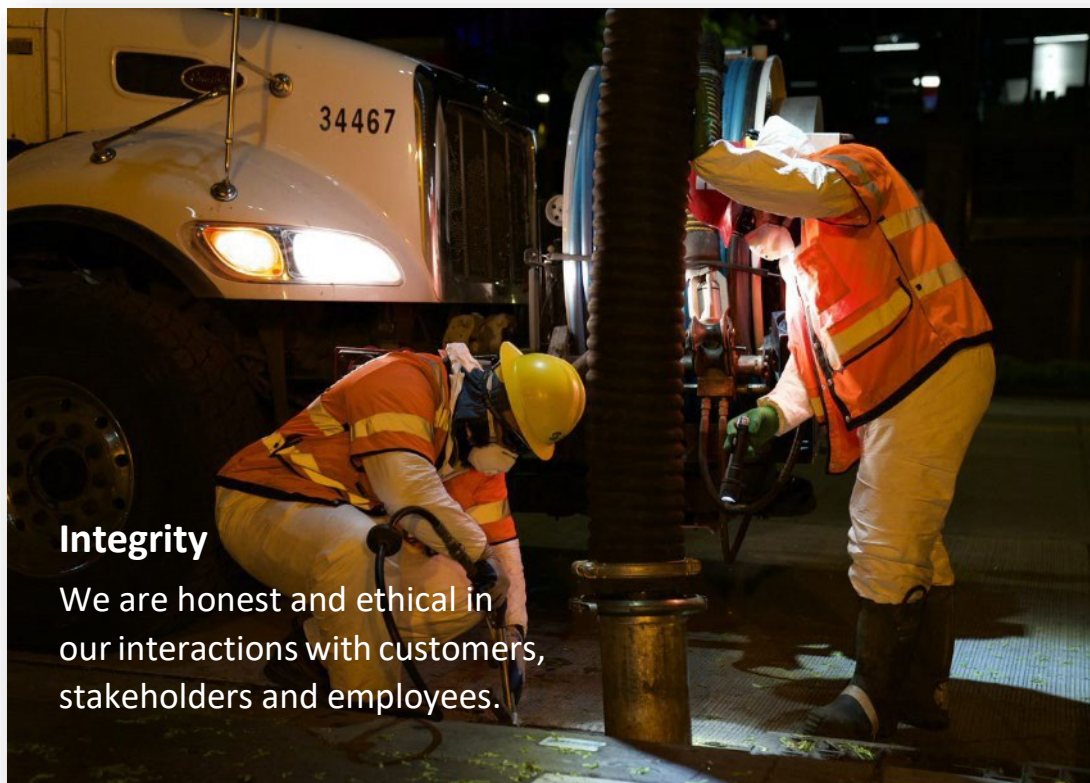
- Arrive well-rested and alert to ensure sound judgment and safe job performance
- Arrive free from the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol. Violations of the City's Drug-Free Workplace Policy may subject an employee to disciplinary actions
- Abstain from using, buying, selling or possessing alcohol and illicit drugs in the workplace

**Note:** Seattle Public Utilities will take necessary steps to ensure that its employees perform their duties.

## Display Integrity

### You are expected to work ethically

- Comply with all local, state and federal regulations and ordinances, including internal policies and procedures
- Comply with the City's [Code of Ethics](#) (*Seattle Municipal Code: Title 4 - Personnel, Chapter 4.16 - Code of Ethics*)
- Comply with SPU department policies regarding ethical standards
- Seek information regarding ethical standards, conflict of interest, and appearance of conflict of interest when you have questions regarding your job
- Inform the city of any entity doing business with the city when an employee or his/her immediate family has a financial interest in the business
- Bring questions about ethics to the attention of your supervisor or seek clarification in city or departmental policies



### Integrity









We are honest and ethical in our interactions with customers, stakeholders and employees.

## Display Integrity (cont.)

### You are expected to conduct yourself with integrity, honesty and professionalism

- Offer suggestions for improvement in the performance of your work unit and the department through your supervisor or other established means
- Work honorably and professionally
- Follow through with commitments and notify the relevant parties when unable to fulfill them
- Understand and distinguish between your role and responsibilities as a city employee and your role as a citizen volunteer in order to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest
- Keep sensitive business information and personnel issues confidential as appropriate

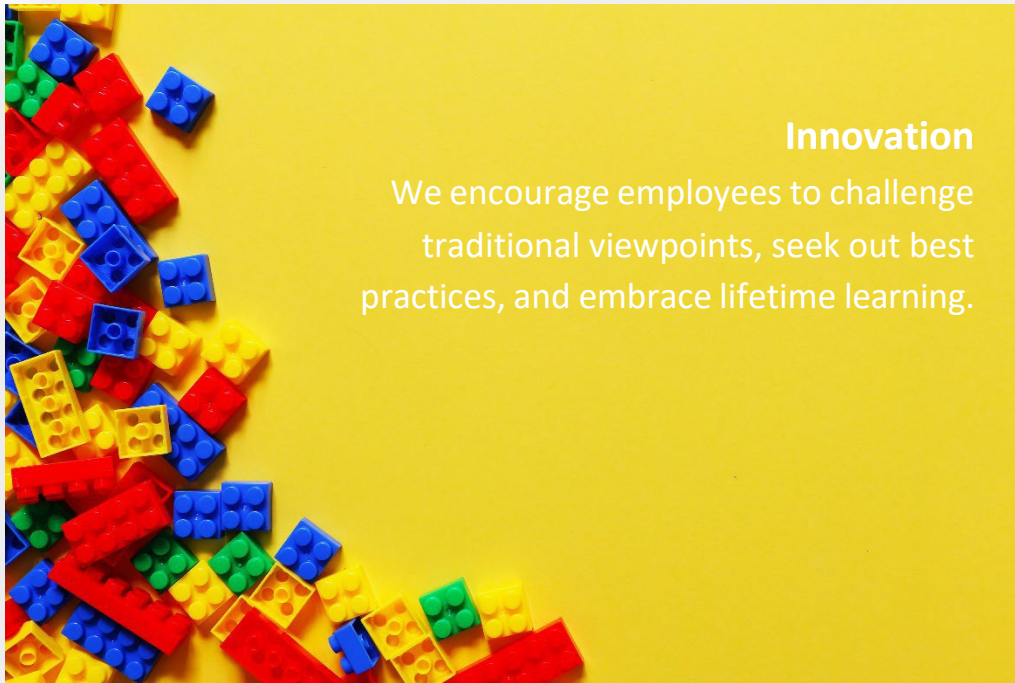
### Department and City policies prohibit:

-  Unsanctioned use of city property for private purposes (reasonable and limited use of the city's communications equipment is permitted as long as occurrences are occasional, brief and do not interfere with your assigned work)
-  Accepting gifts, gratuities and items of value in exchange for performing your regular job function or from people with whom the city does business
-  Conducting non-department business during work time and/or using department assets for this type of activity
-  Providing specific vendor recommendations to the public for repair or work on private facilities
-  Soliciting work on behalf of oneself, other individuals or businesses while on the job
-  Participating in the hiring, promotion or supervision of any relative/domestic partner, or any person with whom the employee has a significant financial interest
-  Working on campaigns for political candidates or ballot measures during business hours, or using office facilities for any political campaign
-  Performing transactions on your own SPU customer accounts or those of your coworkers, friends, family or other people that you know

## Search for Creative Solutions

### You are expected to embrace organizational change

- Maintain an open mind to new and creative initiatives and ideas
- Continually evaluate how and why services are provided
- Accept organizational change that occurs after discussion and input
- Seek out innovative solutions to challenges
- Preserve a creative environment that fosters new ideas, flexibility and change



## Build Partnerships

**You are expected to engage and promote healthy and open communications with co-workers, your supervisor and the public**

- Work cooperatively with others on common issues to achieve mutual goals – supporting SPU’s ‘One Team’ culture
- Recognize and acknowledge the excellent customer service and work performance of your co-workers in the workplace
- Maintain and exhibit a positive, can-do attitude toward your job and co-workers
- Keep an open mind to others’ perspectives
- Assist positively in implementing needed changes
- Discuss job concerns, actively listen to others, and resolve issues before they become problems
- Read all internal communications from the department and leaders from your branch, division or work unit



**You are expected to participate in a two-way relationship with your supervisor and others**

- Offer suggestions, through your supervisor and other established means to improve the performance of your work unit and the department
- Follow the direction of your supervisor and recognize that your input is an important factor, but that your supervisor’s decision is ultimately followed
- Verify the accuracy of information through appropriate supervisory channels or established work unit channels

# Workplace Expectations for People Leaders

Our success is based on many factors, including effective leadership and fair and consistent practices. Supervisors and managers are expected to set an example for employees and adhere to all expectations in this document including the following supervisory expectations.

These expectations apply to all people leaders unless in conflict with the express provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, personnel rules or other city policies or ordinances, in which case the former shall prevail.

## You are expected to provide a safe work environment

- Provide employees with the opportunity and a flexible schedule to obtain all required safety training
- Promote the department's accident prevention and wellness programs, develop safe work practices, and instill a concern for safe practices
- Hold each employee responsible for following safe work practices
- Require the appropriate certifications and licenses for use of equipment, supplies and specialized tools
- Implement the "Worker-Right-to-Know" laws
- Ensure appropriate procedures are followed in the event of on-the-job accidents or injuries
- Review each accident within your work unit to identify the cause, taking appropriate corrective action and training employees to prevent similar accidents in the future
- Correct dangerous working conditions
- Require the appropriate use of safety equipment



## You are expected to provide a work environment free of discrimination

- Respect the differences of the many cultural backgrounds in our workforce and communities
- Promote a work environment free of discrimination or harassment, and do not use or condone conversation or behavior that devalues human dignity
- Report any allegation of harassment promptly and take corrective action when necessary
- Investigate and resolve complaints and grievances promptly and at the lowest level possible with guidance from [SPU Employee & Labor Relations](#)
- Maintain and exhibit a positive attitude toward the job, the department and staff
- Make assignments based on overall qualifications and not based upon race, color, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, political ideology, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical handicap
- Deliver services to the public free from discrimination
- Use the [Race and Social Justice tools](#) to facilitate delivering equitable services to the public



## You are expected to forecast, plan, schedule, coordinate and manage resources

- Plan, organize, evaluate and set priorities that are clearly communicated to staff and management
- Develop budgets that support the department's [Strategic Business Plan](#) initiatives, monitor budget expenditures and revenues regularly, take corrective actions when there are variances, and report variances that cannot be corrected
- Assign work, schedule tasks and anticipate potential problems to ensure that work is completed within deadlines
- Be flexible in applying new ideas, methods, techniques or processes to improve the way work is performed



- Review and update field procedures and practices appropriately
- Evaluate and use available workload and accounting data to look for innovative ways to reduce costs and increase service levels and productivity
- Recognize symptoms of problems and resolve problems quickly before performances are affected
- Notify other divisions about changes in deadlines or projects which could delay their work

## You are expected to anticipate and fill vacant positions in a timely manner in compliance with applicable policies

- Support the department's efforts to develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve through recruitment, training and other special programs
- Orient, train and provide support to new and recently promoted employees in adjusting to their new positions



- Clarify responsibilities, procedures and performance expectations, verbally and in writing
- Create and annual training plan to address skill deficiencies, job enhancements and career development
- Seek effective training opportunities and budget funds to meet staff needs
- Encourage employees to attend schools or workshops to increase their skills, productivity and opportunities for upward mobility
- Evaluate and encourage employees to learn and implement new skills
- Adhere to appropriate personnel rules and union contracts

## You are expected to provide leadership and make decisions

- Accept delegated authority and responsibility for the work assigned to you and your staff, provide clear assignments, and delegate to your subordinates
- Foster teamwork and high employee morale through pride in performance and accountability
- Seek out employee suggestions for improving work environment and conditions
- Communicate to employees that every job in the department is important
- Maintain confidentiality with sensitive business information or personnel issues



- Take the initiative, be proactive instead of reactive, and solve problems before they escalate
- Make decisions within the scope of your responsibility, follow-through as required, and report appropriate information to higher supervisory personnel
- Communicate and carry out activities required by city and department rules, policies and procedures
- Request resources and guidance to get your job done correctly
- Maintain and update supervisory and leadership skills and attend all required supervisor training courses
- Set an example of the type of behavior and performance expected from your staff
- Clearly articulate job instructions and day-to-day directions to staff

## You are expected to foster open communication and evaluate job performance

- Promote an atmosphere of open communication with staff, other supervisors, management and the public
- Listen attentively to staff, other supervisors, management and the public
- Communicate needs in a clear, timely and complete manner
- Set clear and realistic standards, and communicate expectations and necessary improvements to employees
- Use existing employee recognition programs and additional oral and written accolades to encourage excellence
- Handle unpleasant or volatile situations involving employees in a manner that resolves the problem and defuses the situation
- Assist employees with work-related problems by referring them to the Employee Assistance Program when appropriate
- Cooperate with other supervisors by establishing a problem-solving atmosphere that is respectful, supportive and free from personal biases
- Give constructive performance feedback to employees on a continuous basis and develop corrective plans when performance is below acceptable standards
- Evaluate work performance fairly, consistently and honestly using the city's performance evaluation system
- Manage corrective counseling and disciplinary situations in a sensitive, constructive and consistent manner

