

**FLORIDA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION**  
**Employee Handbook**

Revised 09/14/23



# Table of Contents

WELCOME TO THE FLORIDA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION .....	4
GENERAL .....	5
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART.....	5
FAIR TREATMENT FOR ALL EMPLOYEES.....	7
OUR EMPLOYEES .....	7
OUR MEMBERSHIP.....	7
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES .....	7
YOUR JOB.....	8
YOUR WORKWEEK/HOURS OF WORK.....	8
PART-TIME AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES.....	9
WORK RULES .....	9
WHY TIME RECORDS ARE IMPORTANT .....	9
YOUR PERSONNEL RECORD .....	9
OUTSIDE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY .....	10
EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS .....	10
TRAVEL .....	11
PER DIEM - TRAVEL.....	12
INSURANCE (AUTO).....	12
COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT USAGE .....	12
COMMUNICATION REIMBURSEMENT .....	13
LEAVE .....	13
MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND DISABILITIES .....	15
BACKGROUND CHECK .....	16
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY .....	16
EMPLOYEE AND JOB APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY .....	22
HEPATITIS B VACCINATION.....	23
REMOVAL OF DOCUMENTS .....	23
OWNERSHIP OF OF WORK PRODUCTS AND DESTRUCTION OF ASSOCIATION RECORDS .....	23
PERSONAL APPEARANCE .....	24
POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT.....	25
RUMORS--THE ASSOCIATION GRAPEVINE .....	25
HOW TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS .....	25
CONTROLLING COSTS .....	25
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION .....	26
EMPLOYMENT STATUS .....	26
SEPARATION .....	27
TERMINATION PROCEDURE.....	27
CONTRACT AUTHORITY .....	28
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EQUIPMENT .....	28
CARE OF EQUIPMENT.....	28

SAFETY PROGRAM .....	28
ASSOCIATION COMMITMENT AND INVOLVEMENT POLICY STATEMENT .....	28
SAFETY RULES.....	29
POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR SPECIFIC OPERATIONS .....	29
GENERAL SAFETY RULES.....	29
ALL EMPLOYEES GENERAL.....	29
LIFTING .....	29
SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS .....	30
ELECTRICAL EXPOSURES .....	30
FUEL STORAGE .....	31
HEAT EXHAUSTION .....	31
STRUCK BY/CAUGHT AGAINST .....	31
LADDERS AND STEP LADDERS .....	31
POWERED/HAND-HELD TOOLS .....	32
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT .....	32
LIFELINES, SAFETY BELTS, AND SAFETY HARNESS WILL BE: .....	32
CONFINED SPACES.....	33
EXCAVATIONS .....	33
WATER/SEWER MAINTENANCE .....	33
CHEMICALS .....	34
MANHOLES/SEWERS.....	35
PUMP/LIFT STATIONS .....	35
WELLS, PITS, AND TANKS.....	35
SEWER CLEANING .....	35
JOB SITE AND TRAFFIC CONTROL.....	36
EQUIPMENT USE POLICIES .....	36
OTHER BOOKLETS AND LETTERS.....	38
SUMMARY .....	39

## **WELCOME TO THE FLORIDA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION**

We're glad to present you with this copy of Florida Rural Water Association's (FRWA) Employee Handbook. This handbook has been designed to help you know the Association better. Whether you have been with us for a short time or for many years, we want you to know that we appreciate the contribution you are making to the continued success of FRWA. We believe it is our responsibility to keep you accurately informed about your employment here at FRWA. This handbook is a summary of the principles for which we stand, the benefits provided to the Association employees, and the obligations and responsibilities you assume as an employee.

You and your job are important to the Association's continued growth because we are all working toward a common goal of building a stronger and better association. Working together, we can accomplish this goal.

We believe the information in this handbook will help you understand your employment at FRWA. The rules and guidelines set forth in this handbook are to let you know what to expect from FRWA and what we expect from you.

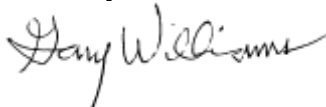
While this handbook is intended for all FRWA employees, it may contain information, which pertains to one specific group of employees and not to another group.

Please read your handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. If you have any questions concerning the information or benefits outlined in this handbook, please ask your Supervisor or Executive Director. They will be glad to help you.

Good working relationships among our employees are vital to providing the best possible service to our members, thereby enhancing the goodwill of FRWA. We are proud of our employees and look forward to their continued cooperation in providing the best service to the utilities of Florida.

It is a pleasure to welcome new employees and to extend best wishes for continued success to those existing employees whose careers have become a part of the growth and progress of the association.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary Williams".

Gary Williams  
Executive Director

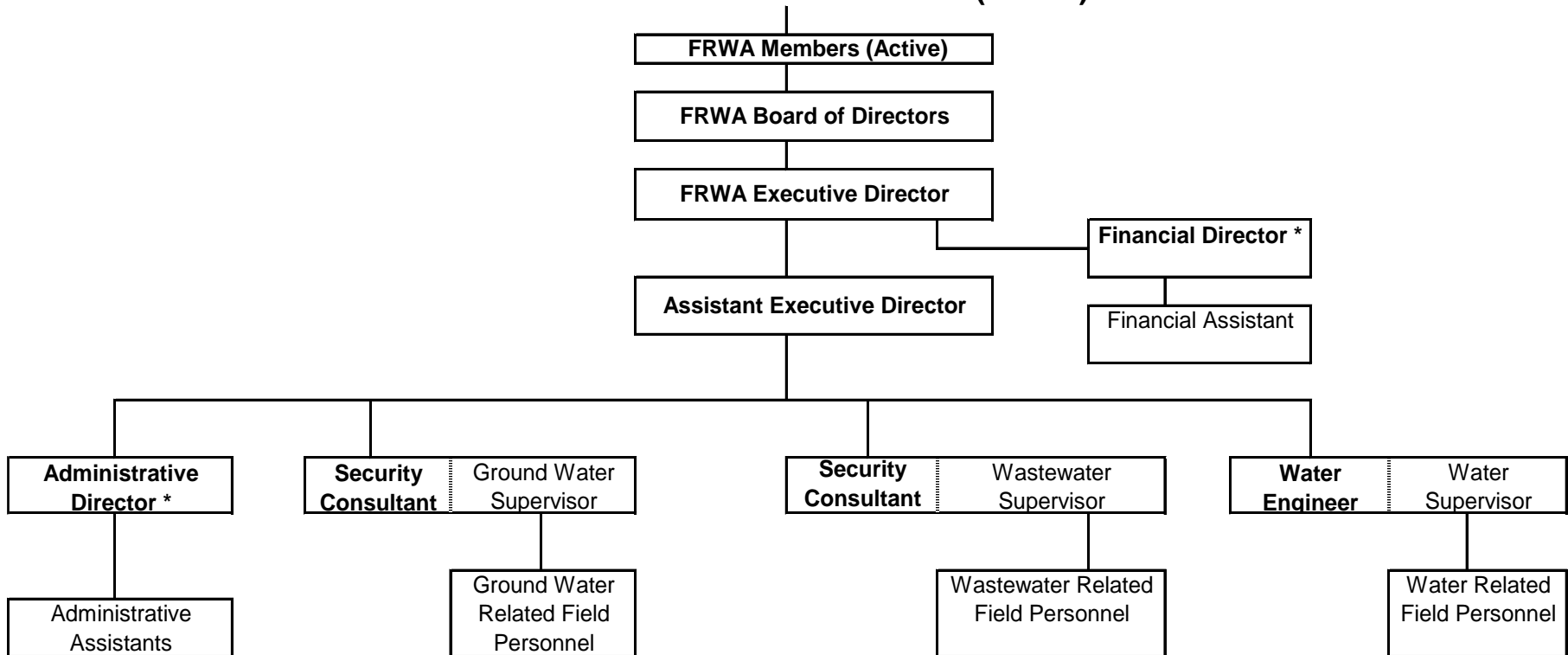
## **GENERAL**

The purpose of these Administrative Policies and Procedures is to set forth standards for the operation of the Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA) that is consistent with its non-profit public interest status. FRWA was organized to strengthen the operation of rural water systems throughout Florida and it is the intent of FRWA that its standards of operation meet or exceed the basic administrative requirements of local, state, and federal government.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

FRWA's Organizational Chart is on the following page.

# Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA)



\* Financial and Administrative Directors may share Assistants and Supervision of Assistants to maximize efficiency of office.

## **FAIR TREATMENT FOR ALL EMPLOYEES**

At the Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA), we recognize the importance of our employees and with that in mind, we have developed the following Values Statement.

We believe in...

1. treating each employee as an individual. Your rights are respected with courtesy, dignity, and consideration;
2. the value of cooperative, well trained, efficient, and loyal people working together for the benefit of each other and the Association;
3. providing fair wages, with good and safe working conditions;
4. frank and open discussion of any problems and/or misunderstanding; and
5. promotions on the basis of merit, ability, effort, and attitude with preference given those with greater length of service if all other factors are equal.

## **OUR EMPLOYEES**

The business of our FRWA has always been conducted in a progressive and professional manner. A progressive and professional association can offer its employees fair pay, good benefits, and working conditions.

The loyalty and good work performance of FRWA employees has been a great importance to the association. It is hoped that our association with you will be satisfying and rewarding for you as an employee and the Association as an employer.

## **OUR MEMBERSHIP**

The continued growth and success of the FRWA depends a great deal on the attitude and effort of each and every Association employee. In your contacts with utilities, you are the FRWA; as far as they are concerned at that moment, your daily performance goes a long way in maintaining the association of providing quality service with integrity and member concern.

FRWA's reputation with our membership is at stake -- it is in your hands. Your actions and your attitudes can strengthen each of us or can quickly turn the member against us. We have everything to gain by being courteous, neat, friendly, helpful, and everything to lose by being discourteous, unfriendly, and unhelpful.

No matter what work you perform within our organization, your job is important and vital to our basic objective of providing satisfactory and reliable service to our members and utilities.

## **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

FRWA employees must conduct their personal and non-Association affairs in such a manner that their duties and responsibilities to FRWA are not jeopardized, and that ethical and/or legal questions do not arise with respect to their association or work with FRWA. Compliance with this conduct requirement is the responsibility of every employee of the Association, both with regard to your own affairs and with respect to reporting any possible misconduct of which you may become aware.

## **YOUR JOB**

Your job duties and responsibilities have been developed consistent with the needs of the Association and good management procedures. Our first responsibility is to our members. We must be ready to meet any need they may have and we must remain flexible to adapt to changing situations.

Most of the time, your job duties will remain the same; however, you may occasionally be asked to perform job duties other than your regular job and when those situations occur, you are expected to cooperate. Management reserves the right to make work assignments to employees as necessary to meet the needs, goals, and objectives of the Association.

## **YOUR WORKWEEK/HOURS OF WORK**

Your particular work schedule will depend upon your job and the department to which you are assigned. Your supervisor or the Executive Director will explain your work schedule to you. Should you ever have any questions about when you are to be at your workstation ready to work, please ask your supervisor.

Regular attendance is required. If you must be absent for reasons beyond your control, unless the absence is during an association-approved leave of absence, each employee is expected to notify his/her supervisor as early as possible. Failure to notify your supervisor will result in an unexcused absence. Falsifying the reason for your absence when notifying your supervisor will result in immediate discharge. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness will result in disciplinary action and may result in termination.

FRWA's normal workweek is forty (40) hours, but this can be either longer or shorter depending on the needs of the Association.

Each employee is expected to complete a normal workday and workweek and work whatever reasonable additional hours may be required to meet the Association's needs.

- A. The work hours of the FRWA staff will be from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. with 60 minutes for lunch, Monday through Friday.
- B. The Executive Director may designate other hours of work and alter the administration workweek if such action is necessary or in the best interest of the FRWA.  
The Executive Director may require work to be performed during the lunch hour or after the regularly scheduled workday. Compensation of non-salaried staff at a pro-rated hourly rate will be arranged for all overtime over 40 hours weekly at one and one-half times the regular hourly rate. Compensation for overtime work (over 40 hours) for exempt salaried staff shall be by granting of compensatory time approved by the Executive Director on an hour for hour basis. Accrued comp time is not a payable benefit to be used towards worker's compensation leave or portion of salary not covered by worker's compensation payment. All exempt positions will be non-exempt until successful completion of his /her three month probationary period. Compensatory time is not vested or a vested benefit. Compensatory time is not a payable benefit at the end of employment.
- C. FRWA office is a tobacco free workplace.



## **PART-TIME AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES**

From time to time, it is necessary to hire employees for less than a full week's work. Any employee who regularly works thirty-two (32) hours or less per week is considered a part-time or temporary employee.

Personnel hired for part-time or temporary work are paid at the rate agreed on when employed and are not eligible for employee benefits.

## **WORK RULES**

It is the policy of FRWA to expect all employees to abide by certain work rules of general conduct and performance at all times. Supervisors are expected to monitor and enforce these work rules equally.

We have found that most employees have a keen sense of appropriate behavior and strive to present the best conduct at all times -- most employees do not break the rules.

Our rules here are very simple - if any employee engages in activity that is detrimental to the best interest of the Association, our member utilities, or our employees, then he will be appropriately disciplined. Discipline can include a verbal or written correction notice, suspension, or discharge.

Activity detrimental to the Association includes, negligence, inefficiency, inability, insubordination, abandonment of duties, unprofessional conduct, habitual tardiness, and/or absenteeism, destruction of property, contumacy, reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drug use, stealing, refusing to perform an appropriate assignment, and other improper actions. The following Work Rules are to be adhered to at all times.

## **WHY TIME RECORDS ARE IMPORTANT**

The requirements and regulations are very strict about recording the correct number of hours you work. A time record is used for payroll computation and gives you an accurate record of your earnings.

Please be sure to record your time accurately on your daily log report. When beginning work in the morning, do not clock in until you have completed all personal business and are ready to begin work.

Supervisors are responsible for checking the accuracy of their employees' daily log reports and that time is properly recorded.

## **YOUR PERSONNEL RECORD**

When FRWA first employed you, you completed an application form supplying us with various facts, which we must know about you. This information was transferred to a permanent and confidential file, which is the Association's employment record of you as an individual. Keeping this record correct and up-to-date is important because it enables the Association to reach you in an emergency, forward your mail, properly maintain your insurance and other benefits, and compute your payroll deductions. Your supervisor should be notified promptly of changes in:

1. Address and telephone number
2. Marital status (for insurance and withholding tax purposes)
3. Name
4. Beneficiary or dependents listed in your insurance policy
5. Number of dependents listed in your insurance policy
6. Person to notify in case of emergency

### **OUTSIDE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY**

Employees may undertake outside employment and professional activity/activities provided such activity/activities does not conflict or interfere with FRWA business responsibilities or interests. The Executive Director must approve any outside professional activity before accepting any such activity/activities.

### **The Paycheck Isn't All - There's More...**

Your paycheck is important but it does not represent all of the compensation you receive from FRWA. Not only do you receive your wages each payday, you also receive a substantial number of employee benefits while not cash, these benefits still represent real dollars to you and your family. These benefits include paid vacations, paid holidays, retirement, and various types of insurance. Part-time and temporary employees are not eligible for fringe benefits.

### **EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

**A. Social Security**

All employees whether full time, temporary, or part time are covered by the benefits of Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance as provided for by law. Contribution of the employee and FRWA will be made in accordance with the provisions of the law.

**B. Hospital and Medical**

The Association pays 99% for individuals and up to 50% for dependents for the cost of Association group policy coverage, if needed. FRWA Employees who are full-time and on the group plan are offered COBRA coverage at the end of employment, if needed.

An FRWA employee on worker's compensation or extended leave will be able to retain their health insurance coverage through FRWA for six months. If on extended leave the employee shall submit 100% of all applicable premiums to the FRWA office at least 10 days prior to the month of coverage, in order to allow timely payments to Insurance companies. After the six months the employee will be advised of their COBRA rights and removed from the FRWA group health insurance plan.

If an employee is on Worker' Compensation as only payment, (accrued sick leave, accrued vacation or employee choice not to use accrued leave as worker's compensation supplement) then employee shall submit to the FRWA office throughout the first six months of leave the employee portion of health and life insurance (25%), 100% of dental coverage or dependent life.

**C. Life Insurance**

Employees are covered by group term life insurance through the Association group plan not

to exceed twice the employee's annual salary. The Association will pay 100% of the premium on \$25,000 of term life insurance.

**D. Employee Contributions**

Employee Contributions for health and life benefits are made by payroll deduction.

**E. Retirement**

FRWA will contribute to a Simplified Employee Pension Fund (SEP) in each full time employee's name. The employee will have control over the investment direction of the contributions. The Association contribution will be 10% of current salary, contributed on a quarterly basis after successful completion of six months of employment. Worker's compensation payments are not payments or remuneration for services performed for FRWA, therefore, FRWA will be unable to contribute any payment to employee's SEP or retirement plan while work or services are not being performed by employees for FRWA.

**F. Relocation**

FRWA may consider appropriate, affordable, pre-approved (by Executive Director) relocation expenses. This may be a portion or all of actual moving expenses associated with the rental of moving equipment. Should an employee's employment last less than six (6) months, all of the relocation reimbursement by FRWA may be withheld from last salary and/or travel check.

**G. Long Term Disability**

After a waiting period of 30 days, active full time employees will be insured for Long Term Disability with an elimination period of 90 days. This benefit is 100% paid by FRWA.

**H. Dental**

A dental plan for all full-time employees will be offered. If the employee chooses to take advantage of this benefit, 100% of employee only premium is paid by FRWA. Additional spouse, family or dependant coverage can be purchased by the employee and collected through payroll deduction.

FRWA employees who are on the dental plan can purchase a dental plan directly from the agent that offers such coverage; therefore, the FRWA dental plan is not a COBRA option upon leaving employment.

## **TRAVEL**

Travel undertaken must be for purpose as defined in the scope of work activities for the Association. The allowable reimbursement for travel is as follows:

- A. Cost of airline travel at less than first class accommodations unless only first class space is available on a required flight.
- B. Cost of first class travel for overnight train trips and for coach daytime trips.
- C. Rent-a-car costs for travel in a compact automobile unless only a larger automobile is available.
- D. Tolls, baggage handling, official telephone messages.
- E. Registration and related fees at official meetings or functions

F. Taxi fares from common carrier to place of lodging or business and from lodging to place of business, and tips not to exceed 15% of the fare.

Travel expenses will be submitted to the Executive Director at end of month travel occurred and reimbursement will be made by check.

### **PER DIEM - TRAVEL**

Per Diem for Association Travel will follow the Association Travel Reimbursement Guidelines.

### **INSURANCE (AUTO)**

Each employee shall maintain a valid driver's license and automobile liability insurance. The minimum required shall be \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence.

### **COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT USAGE**

Each employee is reminded that all FRWA purchased computers and electronic communication equipment used by you for your work with FRWA (employer) is the sole and exclusive property of the employer.

Employees are reminded that there is no individual right to privacy on employer computer systems and that passwords do not guarantee confidentiality.

Employees are reminded that e-mail usage and other messaging methods may be monitored at any time.

Employees may use their computers for personal e-mail and other messaging, but remember that there is no right to privacy regarding such use.

Be aware that deleting e-mail or other messages from your computer does not purge the e-mails and messages from the system.

There is herewith set out a non-exclusive list of impermissible computer system uses and inappropriate conduct:

- Storage or intentional viewing of sexually explicit material of any kind.
- Transmitting, sending or forwarding sexually, racially, religiously, or ethnically offensive materials of any kind to any person or entity. If in question as to the appropriateness of any material, confer with the Executive Director or his designee.
- Transmission of privileged or private information regarding any aspect of employer operations or plans.
- Transmission of other information or data as may be designated by the Executive Director or his designee.

Any impermissible use or inappropriate content must be reported to the Executive Director or his designee immediately.

Only software purchased and controlled (including demonstration or trial basis software) by FRWA is authorized for use on FRWA computers.

### **COMMUNICATION REIMBURSEMENT**

Telephones, voice mail systems, and computers, including electronic mail systems (e-mail) are provided for association use, and excessive personal use of these devices is prohibited.

Communication through these devices is subject to monitoring by the Association, and the use of discriminatory, hostile, suggestive, or otherwise inappropriate language is strictly prohibited. Violation of these rules will be considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including, discharge.

- A. Maximum reimbursement per month is \$100.
- B. Usage must be separated between FRWA and personal use. If there is any personal use of the above items, detail bill must be provided with usage clearly separated.
- C. Secure and maintain a local Internet connection, e-mail address (submit the address to the office), e-mail account capable of attaching files for month end paperwork. (Should be able to secure account for around \$20.00 a month). Submit the original receipt/bill for repayment with Communications Reimbursement Request sheet each month.
- D. Secure and maintain a dedicated line for FRWA field people having a fax machine. The fax machine should be on at all times, unless your are using this line for Internet connection to send and receive e-mail. The cost of monthly service for this line is reimbursable by FRWA with the proper receipt or bill each month as part of the \$100 reimbursement limit. Do not abuse Internet use on FRWA time.
- E. Secure and maintain a pager and/or cellular phone for contact by the office on an emergency basis. You should be able to get a pager for about \$20.00 a month. FRWA business calls are reimbursable on cellular phone bills, if separated from personal calls. FRWA will reimburse the percentage of service, taxes, and etc. related to business calls up to the \$100 limit, broken out. For example, if 50% of the calls made for the month (dollar amount) are FRWA calls then 50% of the taxes, etc. can be reimbursement by FRWA up to the \$100 limit once Internet, dedicated line, and pager charges are reimbursed. Again, all proper receipts or original bills must be submitted each month with a Communications Reimbursement Request cover sheet.

### **LEAVE**

(Full Time Only)

#### **A. Request for Time Off**

All non-emergency related requests for time off should be e-mailed or faxed to the FRWA office at least three working days prior to the requested time off. The request should include the dates requested, type of request (vacation, sick leave, Floating Holiday, funeral leave, comp time, leave without pay, etc.) and any other information the employee feels is

important to the request. Time off should not be taken without approval of an authorized FRWA employee or the Executive Director. This authorization will most likely, if time permits, be e-mailed or faxed back to the employee.

**B. Vacation**

1. The anniversary date of employment is the anniversary date for accruals.
2. Accrual rate of vacation is five-sixths of a working day for each month of continuous service for the first year of employment (two weeks per year). One week may be taken after six months of continuous service with the approval of the Executive Director. During the second year through the fifth year of employment, the employee will earn two weeks. After the fifth year, the following schedule contains the rates for accrual of annual leave by full time employees.

<i>Length of Employment</i>	<i>Vacation Per Year</i>
6 years	11 days
7 years	12 days
8 years	13 days
9 years	14 days
10 years or more	15 days

3. **Vacation leave** must be taken during the anniversary year earned. Employees will not be allowed to accumulate more than one year of earned annual leave.
4. **Granting of Vacations** Leaves may be granted by the Executive Director at any time during the calendar year, due consideration being given to seniority and minimum interference with the work schedule.
5. **Payment of Vacation on Termination of Employment** Vacation rights are vested according to the schedule outlined in Section 2 above, after satisfactory completion of the first six months of employment. Upon termination of employment, each employee will be compensated for vested and remaining vacation.

**C. Holidays**

The holidays recognized by FRWA are as follows: (1) New Year's Day, (2) Memorial Day, (3) Independence Day, (4) Labor Day, (5) Veteran's Day, (6) Thanksgiving Day, (7) Friday after Thanksgiving, (8) Christmas Eve Day, (9) Christmas Day.

When one of these holidays falls on a Sunday, the following Monday is observed as a holiday. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday is observed as a holiday.

In addition, each employee is entitled to one "floating" holiday in recognition of the fact that some employees are required, or desire, to take off for observance of religious or ethnic holidays (e.g. Hanukah, Martin Luther King's Birthday, etc.). This holiday may be taken after six months continuous service.

**D. Jury Duty**

An employee who is called to serve on a jury shall be granted all necessary leave with pay equaling the difference between the pay received while on jury duty and the employee's regular salary. An employee called for jury duty should immediately notify the Executive Director.

**E. Sick Leave**

All full-time employees are eligible for sick leave. Sick leave with pay is granted with the permission from the Executive Director or Supervisor.

1. **Amount of Sick Leave** Each employee earns sick leave at the rate of eight hours (one working day) per month. Sick leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 500 hours.
2. **Use of Sick Leave** An employee unable to report to work for any cause covered by sick leave shall notify the Executive Director immediately. No sick leave benefits will be paid for any period of absence for which an employee shall have failed to give prompt notice without good cause. FRWA employees with accrued sick and vacation leave may have sick leave used during a worker's compensation event to supplement worker's compensation coverage up to 100% salary. If sick leave accrual reaches zero, then vacation accrual will be used as a supplement until it reaches zero. At that time, the worker's compensation payment will be the only compensation received throughout the remaining worker's compensation event. If an employee doesn't want worker's compensation supplement, sick leave accrual or vacation accrual used, FRWA must be contacted in writing as to when to discontinue supplement.
3. **Maternity Leave:** The Florida Rural Water Association employees are allowed up to six (6) weeks of leave for a temporary disability (pregnancy related leave. During this time, such employees will be paid 100% of their accrued sick leave, and/or vacation pay to cover the leave period. The employee's insurance coverage will also be maintained with the employee portion deducted from sick leave or vacation accruals. If accrued leave is not available or enough to cover absence leave without pay can be requested and insurance can be maintained by providing full payment a month in advance. Additional time may be allowed under extraordinary circumstances with the approval of the Executive Director. The request for leave should be made as far in advance as possible to allow time for FRWA to accommodate the request and the employee's workload.

**F. Funeral Leave**

The Executive Director may grant three days leave with pay for the death of a member of the employee's immediate family. Normally leave will be granted for the day preceding, the day of, and the day following the funeral. Additional leave chargeable to vacation leave may be taken if necessary upon approval of the Executive Director.

**G. Leave Without Pay**

The Executive Director may grant a full time employee leave without pay not to exceed one month when it is to the advantage of the Association. In the event a replacement employee must be hired to fulfill contractual requirements of an FRWA employee on extended leave, worker's compensation, etc., after six months, the replacement employee will be made a regular FRWA employee. The employee shall be informed that they will be eligible for rehire if a position is open when cleared to work or if no positions are open that their resume will be kept on file to be considered at the time of the next Association job opening.

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND DISABILITIES**

It is the intent of FRWA to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, and to make reasonable accommodation to the work needs of applicants and employees who have a protected

disability or handicap.

If an employee contracts a disease or injury which limits his ability to successfully perform his/her job duties, which is communicable to others, or which threatens the health or safety of others at work, he will be placed on a sick leave based on the advice of a physician. Before being allowed to return to work, the employee must provide the Association with a written doctor's statement, indicating that he/she is able to perform all of his job duties satisfactorily and that he does not pose a threat to the health and safety of others at work.

FRWA is a tobacco free workplace.

## **BACKGROUND CHECK**

FRWA will require and perform a background check on newly hired employees. Documents will be provided to applicant before start of employment to start background check.

## **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY**

### **I.**

#### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

It is the intent of FRWA to promote a drug-free workplace in order to maximize the levels of productivity, maintains a healthy and productive workforce, maintains safe working conditions free from the effects of drugs, and to reach a high level of success without experiencing the costs, delays and tragedies associated with drug abuse by its employees. FRWA fully intends to discourage drug abuse by its employees through the requirements of this drug-free workplace policy.

### **II.**

#### **STATEMENT OF CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT**

It is a condition of employment for FRWA employees to refrain from reporting to work or working with the presence of drugs or alcohol in his or her body. Use, sale or possession of alcohol, narcotics, drugs or controlled substances while on the job or on FRWA property will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. An employee convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction for the sale of, *or* the trafficking in, illegal substances shall be subject to immediate discharge.

Any injured FRWA employee who refuses to submit to a test for drugs or alcohol forfeits eligibility for medical and indemnity benefits.



### **III.**

#### **GENERAL STATEMENT OF FRWA'S POLICY ON EMPLOYEE DRUG USE**

##### **A. TYPES OF DRUG TESTING TO WHICH FRWA EMPLOYEES AND JOB APPLICANTS MAY BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT**

FRWA job applicants will be required to submit to a drug test and FRWA may use a refusal to submit to a drug test or a positive confirmed drug test as a basis for refusing to hire a job applicant. A "job applicant" is a person who has applied for a position with FRWA and has been offered employment conditioned upon successfully passing a drug test, and may have begun work pending the results of a drug test. The term "job applicant" also includes all prospective rehires.

FRWA employees will be required to submit to reasonable-suspicion drug testing.

"Reasonable-suspicion drug testing" means drug testing based on FRWA's belief that an employee is using or has used drugs in violation of FRWA's policy drawn from specific objective and articulable facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts in light of experience. Among other things, FRWA may base such facts and inferences upon:

- (1) Observable phenomena while at work, such as direct observation of drug use or of the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug;
- (2) Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at work or a significant deterioration in work performance;
- (3) A report of drug use, provided by a reliable and credible source, which has been independently corroborated;
- (4) Evidence that an individual has tampered with a drug test during his employment with FRWA;
- (5) Information that an employee has caused, contributed to, or been involved in an accident while at work;
- (6) Evidence that an employee has used, possessed, sold, solicited, or transferred drugs while working or while on FRWA's premises or while operating FRWA's vehicle, machinery or equipment.

If the drug testing is conducted based on reasonable suspicion, FRWA will promptly detail in writing the circumstances which formed the basis of the determination that reasonable suspicion existed to warrant the testing. A copy of this documentation will be given to the employee upon

request and the original documentation will be kept confidential by FRWA and will be retained by FRWA for at least 1 year

FRWA employees will be required to submit to a drug test as part of any routinely scheduled employee fitness-for-duty medical examination that is part of a FRWA policy or that is scheduled routinely for all members of the employee's classification or group by FRWA.

FRWA employees will be required to submit to follow up drug testing. "Follow up drug testing" occurs when a FRWA employee, in the course of employment, enters an employee assistance program for drug-related problems, or a drug rehabilitation program. FRWA will require the employee to submit to a drug test as a follow up to such a program. Follow up drug testing will be conducted at least once a year for a 2-year period after completion of the program. Advance notice of follow up testing will not be given to the employee to be tested.

FRWA employees will be required to submit to testing after a period of absence and prior to returning to work. FRWA also reserves the right to require employees to submit to random drug testing. Employees will be required to submit to drug testing when selected by a random selection process. Random testing will be unannounced.

**B. ACTIONS THAT FRWA MAY TAKE AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OR JOB APPLICANT ON THE BASIS OF A POSITIVE CONFIRMED DRUG TEST RESULT OR REFUSAL TO SUBMIT TO A DRUG TEST**

FRWA may utilize a positive confirmed drug test result or a refusal to submit to a drug test as a basis for refusing to hire a job applicant or, if the job applicant has begun work pending the results of the drug test, may utilize a positive drug test result to terminate its employment of the job applicant.

FRWA may utilize a positive confirmed drug test or refusal to submit to a drug test to terminate an employee. Furthermore, an employee with a positive confirmed drug test result forfeits his or her eligibility for medical and indemnity benefits.

**IV.**

**STATEMENT CONCERNING CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information, interviews, reports, statements, memoranda, and drug test results, written or otherwise, received or produced as a result of FRWA's drug-testing program are strictly confidential and may not be used or received in evidence, obtained in discovery, or disclosed in any public or private proceedings except in accordance with § 440.102, *Florida Statutes*, or in determining condensability under Chapter 440, *Florida Statutes*.

FRWA will not release any information concerning drug test results obtained pursuant to its drug-free workplace program without a written consent form signed voluntarily by the person tested,

unless such release is compelled by a hearing officer or a court of competent jurisdiction or is deemed appropriate by a professional or occupational licensing board in a related disciplinary proceeding. The consent form will contain: (1) the name of the person who is authorized to obtain the information; (2) the purpose of the disclosure; (3) the precise information to be disclosed; (4) the duration of the consent; and (5) the signature of the person authorizing release of the information.

Information on drug test results will not be used in any criminal proceeding against the employee or job applicant.

FRWA considers all drug test results and related information to be strictly confidential. FRWA will protect the confidentiality of all drug test results and related information, interviews, reports, statements, and memoranda.

## V.

### **PROCEDURES FOR EMPLOYEES AND JOB APPLICANTS TO CONFIDENTIALLY REPORT THE USE OF PRESCRIPTION OR NONPRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS**

Before providing a specimen upon which a drug test will be conducted, every employee and job applicant will be provided a form upon which he or she may identify any currently or recently used prescription or nonprescription medication. The form will provide notice of the most common medications by brand name or common name, as applicable, as well as by chemical name, which may alter or affect a drug test. The employee or job applicant may then provide this form to the individual conducting the specimen collection who will then provide the form to FRWA's medical review officer. The individual conducting the specimen collection and FRWA's medical review officer will maintain the confidentiality of this information.

After an employee or job applicant has been tested, the employee or job applicant may confidentially notify FRWA's medical review officer in writing of the use of prescription or nonprescription medication or other relevant medical information. FRWA's medical review officer will maintain this information in strict confidence.

All employees and job applicants have the right to consult with FRWA's medical review officer for technical information regarding prescription or nonprescription medication at any time, either before or after testing. The identity of FRWA's medical review officer is available through the Association office.

## VI.

### **LIST OF COMMON MEDICATIONS WHICH MAY ALTER OR AFFECT A DRUG TEST**

A list of the most common medications, by brand name or common name, as applicable, as well as by chemical name, which may alter or affect a drug test, may be obtained from the Association office.

## **VII.**

### **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

A representative sampling of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of employee assistance programs and local drug rehabilitation programs may be obtained from the Association office.

## **VIII.**

### **DRUGS FOR WHICH FRWA WILL TEST**

FRWA may test its employees or job applicants for the following drugs:

- (1) Alcohol, including a distilled spirit, wine, a malt beverage, or an intoxicating liquor;
- (2) An amphetamine;
- (3) A cannabinoid;
- (4) Cocaine;
- (5) Phencyclidine (PCP);
- (6) A hallucinogen;
- (7) Methaqualone;
- (8) An opiate;
- (9) A barbiturate;
- (10) A benzodiazepine;
- (11) A synthetic narcotic;
- (12) A designer drug; or
- (13) A metabolite of any of the substances listed in (1) - (12) above.

## **IX.**

### **DRUG TESTING PROCEDURES**

All specimens will be collected with due regard for the privacy of the individual providing the specimen and in a manner reasonably calculated to prevent substitution or contamination of the

sample. Specimens for a drug test may be taken or collected by any of the following persons: a physician, a physician assistant, a registered professional nurse, a licensed practical nurse, or a nurse practitioner, or a certified paramedic who is present at the scene of an accident for the purpose of rendering emergency medical service or treatment. Specimens may also be collected by qualified individuals employed by a licensed and certified laboratory for such purpose.

An individual who collects or takes a specimen for a drug test will collect a sufficient amount for two drug tests as determined by the Agency for Health Care Administration.

Specimen collection will be documented. The documentation procedures shall include labeling of specimen containers so as to reasonably preclude the likelihood of erroneous identification of test results. The documentation procedures will also include a form for the employee or job applicant to provide any information he or she considers relevant to the test, including the identification of currently or recently used prescription or nonprescription medication or other relevant medical information. Specimen collection, storage and transportation to the laboratory testing site will be performed in a manner reasonably calculated to preclude contamination or adulteration of specimens. FRWA will use chain-of-custody procedures to ensure proper record keeping, handling, labeling and identification of all specimens tested.

Each drug test performed pursuant to FRWA's drug-free workplace policy will be conducted by a licensed or certified laboratory. Each laboratory to analyze specimens collected pursuant to FRWA's drug-free workplace policy will be licensed, approved, or certified by the Agency for Health Care Administration or the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Each laboratory will have written procedures to ensure the chain of custody of specimens and will follow quality control procedures.

The laboratory shall disclose to FRWA's medical review officer a written positive confirmed test report within seven working days after receipt of the specimen. The laboratory report will state, at a minimum: (1) the name and address of the laboratory that performed the test and the positive identification of the person tested; (2) positive results or negative results, as applicable; (3) a list of the drugs for which the drug analyses were conducted; (4) the type of tests conducted for both initial tests and confirmation tests and the minimum cutoff levels of the tests; and (5) any correlation between medication reported by the employee or job applicant and a positive confirmed drug test result.

Every specimen that produces a positive, confirmed test result will be preserved by the laboratory that conducted the test for a period of at least 210 days after the result of the test was mailed or otherwise delivered to FRWA's medical review officer. However, if an employee or job applicant undertakes an administrative legal challenge to the test result, the employee or job applicant must notify the laboratory and the sample shall be retained by the laboratory until the case or administrative appeal is settled.

An employee or job applicant who receives a positive confirmed test result may contest or explain the result to FRWA's medical review officer within five (5) working days after receiving written notification of the test result. All employees and job applicants have the right to consult with FRWA's medical review officer at any time, either before or after testing.

If the employee's or job applicant's explanation or challenge is unsatisfactory to FRWA's medical review officer, he or she will report a positive test result back to FRWA.

Within 5 working days after receipt of a positive confirmed test result from FRWA's medical review officer, FRWA shall inform the employee or job applicant in writing of such positive test result, the consequences of such results, and the options available to the employee or job applicant. FRWA will provide to the employee or job applicant, upon request, a copy of the test results.

Within 5 working days after receiving notice of a positive confirmed test result, an employee or job applicant may submit information to FRWA explaining or contesting the test result, and explaining why the result does not constitute a violation of FRWA's policy.

If the employee's or job applicant's explanation or challenge of the positive test result is unsatisfactory to FRWA, a written explanation as to why the employee's or job applicant's explanation is unsatisfactory, along with the report of positive result, will be provided by FRWA to the employee or job applicant. All such documentation will be kept confidential by FRWA and will be retained by FRWA for at least 1 year.

During the 180-day period after written notification of a positive test result, the employee or job applicant who has provided the specimen will be permitted by FRWA to have a portion of the specimen retested, at the employee's or job applicant's expense, at another laboratory, licensed and approved by the Agency for Health Care Administration, chosen by the employee or job applicant. This second laboratory must test at equal or greater sensitivity for the drug in question as the first laboratory. The first laboratory that performed the test for FRWA will be responsible for the transfer of the portion to be retested and for the integrity of the chain of custody during such transfer.

Any employee or job applicant may contest the drug test result pursuant to rules adopted by the Department of Labor and Employment Security.

If an initial drug test is negative, FRWA may, in its sole discretion, seek a confirmation test conducted by licensed or certified laboratory. If an initial drug test of an employee or job applicant is confirmed as positive, FRWA's medical review officer will provide technical assistance to FRWA and to the employee or job applicant for the purpose of interpreting the test result to determine whether the result could have been caused by prescription or nonprescription medication taken by the employee or job applicant.

## **X.**

### **EMPLOYEE AND JOB APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY**

FRWA will pay the cost of all drug tests that FRWA requires of its employees or job applicants. However, an employee or job applicant is responsible for the cost of additional drug tests

not required by FRWA.

## **XI.**

### **STATEMENT OF THE EXISTENCE OF § 440.102, FLORIDA STATUTES**

It is the employee's or job applicant's responsibility to notify the laboratory of any administrative or civil action brought pursuant to § 440.102, *Florida Statutes*.

#### **HEPATITIS B VACCINATION**

Any FRWA employee working with WASTEWATER systems should keep their Hepatitis B vaccinations current annually. The cost of this vaccination is a reimbursable expense through submittal of proof of the expense incurred. This expense should be submitted separate of monthly travel expenses.

#### **REMOVAL OF DOCUMENTS**

Removal of official documents or equipment of FRWA without expressed consent of your supervisor is prohibited.

#### **OWNERSHIP OF WORK PRODUCTS AND DESTRUCTION OF ASSOCIATION RECORDS**

Any work product generated by an Association employee on Association equipment, time and/or from information contained in Association files, records, etc. is the sole property of the Association absent any written agreement to the contrary. The association retains the right of ownership to such work product and is not required to compensate an employee for such product beyond the base salary. An employee may not use such work product for any commercial or personal use during or after their employment with the Association without prior written consent from the Executive Director.

Any unauthorized use of, deliberate destruction, or removal of any file, document ,report, presentation, electronic data, or other work products belonging to the Association by an employee, or former employee without written approval from the Executive Director may result in immediate dismissal, civil and criminal charges being filed.

FRWA computers, equipment and storage devices shall be returned to FRWA in working condition. All documents, files, records, presentations, manuals, electronic data and other work products shall be left on the computer for FRWA and other FRWA employee use.

All final payments of salary, travel reimbursement, unused and accrued vacation will be withheld and not paid until confirmation and affirmation of all work products and or equipment is received.

Further, additional definitions and intellectual property considerations:

“Work Product” shall mean all documentation, software, creative works, know-how and information created in whole, or part, by employee during their employment by FRWA, whether or not copyrightable or otherwise protectable, excluding inventions.

“Inventions” shall mean: (a) all inventions, improvements, modifications, and enhancements, whether or not patentable, made by employee during employee’s employment with FRWA, and (b) all inventions, improvements, modifications and termination of employee’s employment by FRWA, which relate, directly or indirectly, to past, present or future business of FRWA.

“Trade Secrets” shall mean all documentation, software, know-how and information relating to the past, present or future business of FRWA. Trade secrets shall additionally mean and include business or technical information, including but not limited to a formula, pattern, program, device, compilation of information, method, technique, or process that; (a) derives independent development or reverses engineering by persons who can obtain economic value from it disclosure or use; and (b) is subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

### **Trade Secrets, Inventions and Work Products**

The employee acknowledges that FRWA shall or may in reliance of this agreement provide employee access to trade secrets, customer, member, affiliates and other confidential data and good will. Employee agrees to retain said information on his or her behalf or disclose it to any third party.

The employee hereby assigns to FRWA, without additional considerations to the employee, the entire right, title and interest in and to the inventions and work product and to all proprietary right therein or based thereon. The employee agrees that the work product shall be deemed to be a “work made for hire”. The employee shall execute all such assignments, oaths, declarations and other documents as may be prepared by FRWA to effect the forgoing.

The employee shall provide FRWA with all information, documentation and assistance that FRWA may request to perfect, enforce and defend the proprietary rights in or based on the inventions, work product or trade secret.

### **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

Clothes are important and help create the first impression you make on our members. Although first impressions may be wrong, they are likely to be lasting.

For office employees, appropriate business clothes in conservative tastes are in order. Neat, orderly dress creates a feeling of confidence in the wearer as well as the member.

Each employee is expected to report to work wearing clothing that is clean. A neat, groomed appearance is important to you, your fellow workers and to our members.



## **POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT**

FRWA is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, we prohibit any unlawful harassment, including racial, sexual, ethnic or religious harassment. These policies prohibit harassment in any form, such as verbal, physical, and visual harassment.

Any employee who believes he or she has been harassed by a coworker, supervisor, or agent of the FRWA would promptly report the facts of the incident or incidents and the names of the individuals involved to his or her supervisor. Supervisors should immediately report any incidents of harassment to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will investigate all such claims and take appropriate corrective action. All positions and pay rates will be safeguarded by FRWA pending the results of any investigation. Results of any investigation will be delivered within 30 days of determination.

If you have any questions concerning this policy, please feel free to contact your Supervisor or the Executive Director at your convenience.

## **RUMORS--THE ASSOCIATION GRAPEVINE**

Rumors have a habit of flying around from time to time and some people seem to delight in passing them on as the gospel truth. When you hear a rumor, please ask your supervisor if there is any truth to it. If they don't know, they can find out for you. We want to keep the lines of communication clear and uncluttered.

## **HOW TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS**

Listed below are the steps to take to get your problem solved:

- Step One            Your first step is your supervisor. Talk your problem over with him/her immediately. Tell your supervisor exactly how you feel about the problem. He/she will treat every complaint with interest and respect and will seek to resolve your problem within the bounds of their authority.
- Step Two            If you are not satisfied with your supervisor's response or your problem is beyond his/her authority, then you may talk to or write to the Executive Director or a designated representative. The response at this level by the Association is final.

The purpose of this complaint procedure is to give you and the Association an opportunity to resolve problems or complaints of any kind.

## **CONTROLLING COSTS**

Waste of time, materials, equipment, and resources is costly to the Association and to you. Every employee is requested to make FRWA and your individual job more successful by monitoring the amount and quality of the work you produce. Each employee should eliminate waste of time as well

as materials, wherever possible. In the long run, we will all benefit by reducing operating costs. Wasting time while on duty is just as inefficient as excessive absenteeism or tardiness. All employees are expected to help FRWA control costs.

### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

In addition to existing personnel policies, the Affirmative Action Guidelines shall be followed in the course of recruiting and upgrading FRWA staff personnel.

A. **General Purpose**

It is the policy and intent of the FRWA to provide equality of opportunity in employment in FRWA for all persons; to prohibit discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, physical handicaps, age, or marital status in all aspects of its personnel policies, programs, practices and operations; and to promote the full realization of equal opportunity in employment through continuing programs of affirmative action throughout the organization.

Finally, the concept of the affirmative action program is both consistent with and fundamental to the maintenance of an effective merit system. Consequently, it shall be implemented as an integral part of the personnel system.

B. **Definition of Affirmative Action**

Affirmative Action signifies a positive, continuing, result-oriented program developed by an employer to assure meaningful employment opportunities to all segments of the community, and most specifically, to minority members and women. It contrasts with simple non-discrimination, which implies a more passive observance of equal opportunity. Affirmative Action requires the identification and elimination of those barriers to hiring and promotion which have had the effect, although unintentional, of denying equal employment opportunities to minority groups and women.

C. **Affirmative Action Committee (AAC)**The FRWA Board of Directors will establish an Affirmative Action Committee to review the personnel procedures of the Executive Director to assure that Affirmative Action is followed. Once FRWA employees number over five, then an employee's affirmative action committee will also be established. Employees should file all charges of discrimination in hiring management practice of the Executive Director with the Affirmative Action Committee.

Two general guidelines will be followed:

1. A combination of education, past work experience, and experience gained at FRWA shall be considered in assessing the qualification of an applicant.
2. The promotion of minority and female employees who have increased their skills and job potential should be encouraged.

### **EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

FRWA operates under the employment-at-will doctrine. This doctrine is based on the premise that since an employee can leave a job at any time an employer also can terminate the employee at any time.

Neither the Association nor any of its Directors, supervisors, or other employees guarantee any specific duration of employment. Employees may leave employment at any time with or without

reason. The Association reserves the same right to terminate any employee at any time. The Association reserves the same right to terminate any employee at any time within the provisions of law.

Former FRWA employees must wait two years before becoming eligible to become FRWA Board Members. Former FRWA Board Members must wait one year before becoming a FRWA employee. FRWA employees are not eligible to become voting delegates at Association Annual Meeting.

## **SEPARATION**

Employees may be separated voluntarily or involuntarily by retirement, voluntary resignation, lack of work, or discharge. Usually before an employee is terminated, he/she will be told the reason(s) and will be counseled by his/her supervisor and/or the Executive Director. However, if the misconduct warranting discipline is severe enough, the Executive Director may discharge the employee immediately.

## **TERMINATION PROCEDURE**

Employment with FRWA may be terminated or suspended according to the following procedures:

**A. Resignation**

Employees may resign their position upon presenting the Executive Director with a written notification outlining reason for such action. The Executive Director would receive written notification at least two weeks prior to effective date of resignation.

**B. Probationary Period**

For a period of three months commencing with an employee's anniversary date, the Executive Director may dismiss an employee upon notification. Such notification shall outline the reasons for dismissal and an evaluation of an employee's work to date. The probationary period is to determine an employee's ability and fitness for work.

**C. Dismissal**

After three months of continuous service, employees may be dismissed by the Executive Director for just cause as, for example, by negligence, inefficiency, inability, insubordination, and abandonment of duties, unprofessional conduct, or substance abuse or other listed or unlisted in Work Rules. Executive Director has the right to discipline, layoff, demote, or discharge for just cause. Executive Director shall in writing state the reasoning for discipline or discharge. The Executive Director's failure to invoke the strictest discipline for an infraction of rule on one occasion shall not affect the right of Florida Rural Water Association to invoke a different or stricter discipline for a later or different infraction of the rules.

**D. Reduction in Force**

If it becomes necessary to reduce the number of Association employees due to a loss of a state or federal contract or for other budgetary reasons, the Executive Director shall determine the order in which employees will be separated. The Executive Director shall consider each employee's total compensation, seniority, job performance, attendance record, license requirements, essential job functions and overall needs of the Association as the basis for determining the order of separation.

## **CONTRACT AUTHORITY**

The Executive Director shall have the full power and authority to sign Florida Rural Water Association contracts on behalf of the Florida Rural Water Association and its Board of Directors. These contracts shall be reviewed and approved by the Florida Rural Water Association Board of Directors at a regular meeting. Otherwise, the FRWA Executive Committee or FRWA President (in absence of Executive Committee quorum) could review and approve the contracts needing immediate execution.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EQUIPMENT**

### **CARE OF EQUIPMENT**

FRWA has invested many dollars in equipment, which is designed to enable you to do your work more efficiently. Your cooperation in the care and use of this equipment is necessary to maintain it in good condition. If any of our equipment is working improperly, please notify your supervisor immediately. A few timely repairs may prevent complete breakdown of the equipment.

Deliberate and/or continued abuse of Association equipment may result in disciplinary action or even dismissal.

- A. All FRWA field employees will submit an equipment inventory record each month showing equipment in their possession or system possession in their work coverage area. This should be e-mailed or faxed at the end of the month with other required paperwork.
- B. FRWA will capitalize and depreciate equipment items over \$5000. Items under \$5000 will be classified as supplies, support materials, or tools and will be expensed.

### **SAFETY PROGRAM**

FRWA promotes safe work conditions and a safe workplace.

### **ASSOCIATION COMMITMENT AND INVOLVEMENT POLICY STATEMENT**

FRWA is committed to providing employees with a safe and healthful workplace. It is the policy of this Association that employees report unsafe conditions and do not perform work tasks if the work is considered unsafe. Employees must report all accidents, injuries, and unsafe conditions. No such report will result in retaliation, penalty, or other disincentive.

Employee recommendations to improve safety and health conditions will be given thorough consideration by the Association. The Association will give top priority to and provide the financial resources for the correction of unsafe conditions. Similarly, the Association will take disciplinary action against an employee who willfully or repeatedly violates workplace safety rules. This action may include verbal or written reprimands and may ultimately result in termination of employment.

The primary responsibility for the coordination, implementation, and maintenance of our workplace

safety program has been assigned to :

Name : Gary Williams  
Title : Executive Director  
Phone : Office : (800) 872-8207  
Home : (850) 668-0854

The Executive Director will be actively involved with employees in establishing and maintaining an effective safety program.

***Promoting safety committee participation, providing safety and health education and training, and reviewing and updating workplace safety rules.***

This policy statement serves to express the Association's commitment to and involvement in providing our employees a safe and healthful workplace. This workplace safety program will be incorporated, as the standard of practice for this Association Compliance with the safety rules will be required of all employees as a condition of employment.

## **SAFETY RULES**

### **POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR SPECIFIC OPERATIONS**

#### **GENERAL SAFETY RULES**

1. Obey all posted warning/safety signs, such as, "NO SMOKING", "KEEP OUT", etc. in addition to other safety instructions, procedures, and rules as written, posted or otherwise communicated.
2. Immediately report all accidents to your supervisor.
3. Whenever you find a condition, situation, procedure or act that you consider unsafe, report it to you supervisor immediately.
4. Running, horseplay, arguments, fights, or other such forms of misconduct are not permitted.
5. Do not work if under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Report all prescription drug use to your supervisor before working.
6. Do not block or obstruct stairwells, exits, or access to safety and emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers, fire alarms, etc.

#### **ALL EMPLOYEES GENERAL**

##### **LIFTING**

Injuries caused by improper lifting techniques and excessive weights.

1. Test the load before lifting by pushing it along the resting surface.
2. When moving objects into position for lifting, always push, do not pull.
3. Use lifting aids if available.
4. If load is too heavy or bulky, ask for assistance.
5. Position you feet 6"-12" apart.

6. Bend at the knees, not at the back.
7. Keep you back straight.
8. Obtain a secure grip of the object with your hands and fingers.
9. Keep object as close to your body as possible.
10. Set down objects in the same manner as you picked them up, but in reverse.
11. Do not twist at the waist while lifting.
12. Perform movements smoothly and gradually.
13. Never lift with greasy or wet hands.
14. Use back supports as provided.

### **SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS**

Injuries caused by slipping surfaces due to spills, water, oil, ice, soap, and grease; tripping or falling over physical obstructions in the pathways; slopes, and congested areas; climbing on improper items to reach high places; etc.

1. No horseplay is permitted.
2. Wear closed toed, non-slip soled shoes.
3. Double knot shoe laces so that laces are secure and off the floor.
4. Take short steps when slippery conditions exist.
5. Do not move faster than conditions allow on slippery surfaces or in congested areas.
6. Use caution signs/cones to barricade slippery areas.
7. Watch for holes, rocks, roots, and other hidden hazards in the terrain.
8. Carry objects so that you are able to see around them.
9. Immediately clean up spills, water, oil, and other liquids.

### **ELECTRICAL EXPOSURES**

Injuries caused by electrocution, faulty equipment, and cords, improper usage of equipment, electrical storms, etc.

1. Properly use employer prescribed Personal Protective Equipment.
2. Do not use power equipment or tools on which you have not been trained.
3. Inspect extension cords for three-wires and the ground pin intact.
4. Inspect that the power cord is not frayed, that no wires are exposed, and that the cord has not been spliced.
5. Report all damaged cords and do not use.
6. Keep cords away from path of drills, saws, grinders, or other equipment.
7. Do not fasten extension cords in a manner that would create tension on connection joints.
8. Turn off the equipment or tool before plugging or unplugging it.
9. Only use equipment or tools for their intended purposes. Do not force an item to do a task it was not designed to do.
10. Do not carry plugged in equipment or tools with your finger on the switch.
11. Do not carry equipment or tools by the cord.
12. Turn equipment off and pull plug after use.
13. Do not pull on the cord to unplug, pull the plug.
14. Put tools away when not in use.
15. Never leave running equipment or tools unattended.
16. Do not handle electrical tools with wet hands.

17. Do not handle or operate electrical equipment when standing in wet places.
18. Do not operate electrical equipment while working on an aluminum ladder.
19. Do not operate equipment or tools near a flammable liquid.
20. Turn off electrical equipment and disconnect the power source before attempting repairs or service work.
21. Designate (Tag or lock) the equipment out of service to prevent accidental start up.
22. Do not work outdoors in an electrical storm.
23. Do not stand under trees during electrical storms.
24. Do not use electrical cords for hoisting or lowering tools.

### **FUEL STORAGE**

1. Store fuel in approved safety containers.
2. Safety containers must be properly labeled with the contents and be properly color coded.
3. Prevent open flames, sparks, or electrical arcs in the fuel storage area.

### **HEAT EXHAUSTION**

1. Drink plenty of fluids throughout the work shift.
2. Avoid dairy and alcohol products.
3. When feasible, work in shaded areas.
4. When working in direct sunlight, wear appropriate clothing (long sleeve shirts, caps, long pants), sunscreen, or sunblock.

### **STRUCK BY/CAUGHT AGAINST**

1. Stay clear of all heavy equipment.
2. Do not approach any heavy equipment until the operator has seen you and has given you a signal to do so.

### **LADDERS AND STEP LADDERS**

Injuries caused by improper use and practices, and poorly maintained ladders.

1. Inspect the ladder for loose rungs, cracked or split side rails, or other damage before using it. Report all damaged ladders and do not use.
2. Clean the ladder rungs free of dirt, grease, mud, or other foreign matter.
3. Do not use a metal ladder near electrical equipment.
4. Extension ladders must be secured in place or held by another employee.
5. Only one person is to be on the ladder at a time.
6. Face ladder when climbing up or down.
7. Maintain a three-point contact (two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand) with the ladder when climbing up or down.
8. Do not carry items while climbing up or down a ladder.
9. Use a bucket and/or rope to hoist items or set them on a lower shelf.
10. Do not stand backwards or lean sideways when using ladders.
11. Do not stand on the top two steps of the step ladder.
12. Do not try to walk a ladder by rocking it. Climb down the ladder and move it.
13. Secure all feet of the step ladder on a stable, level surface and fully spread and lock the ladder.

14. Tie, block, or otherwise secure portable ladders to prevent their displacement.

### **POWERED/HAND-HELD TOOLS**

1. Do not use any hand tool with split, cracked handles or mushroomed heads.
2. Visually inspect all equipment such as bench grinders, saws, drills for defects, and report them.
3. Keep hands, tools, clothes, jewelry, and rags away from moving or rotating machine parts.
4. Never try to stop a moving or rotating tool with your hand or any part of your body.
5. Do not use chain, belt, or power driven equipment unless all machine guards are in place.
6. Maintain a firm grip on all tools.
7. Tools must not be left unattended while running.
8. Use the correct tool for the specified job such as using a hammer to nail, instead of a wrench.
9. Do not operate hand-held power saws or drills unless equipped with a constant pressure switch or control that will shut off the power when the pressure is released.
10. Hand-held drills and saws may have lock-on controls provided where a single motion of the same finger that turned it on can accomplish the turn-off.
11. When using any hand-held or power tools always wear the personal protective equipment to protect from flying chips, dust, vapors, or mist.

### **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

1. Each employee is required to maintain all assigned personal protective equipment. Scratched lenses, tears, rips, or other visibly damaged equipment must be replaced immediately.
2. Hard hats must be worn when working in areas where there is a danger of head injuries from falling/flying objects, electrical shocks and burns when working inside pipes or inside a water or wastewater treatment plant.
3. Eye and face protection equipment must be worn when working with machines or plant or operations that present potential eye or face injury from dust, sparks, flying chips, or from splashing from wastewater, sludge, or other hazardous material.
4. Ear plugs or muffs will be worn when working in areas such as diesel engine rooms, loud generator rooms, or when working with equipment like jackhammers.
5. Familiarize yourself with the use and locations of respirator, eyewashes or gas masks when working in or around collection systems, treatment plants, or other contaminated atmospheres.
6. Rubber gloves and boots with non-slip soles must be worn when walking in or through an area with raw wastewater or in treatment and collection systems.

### **LIFELINES, SAFETY BELTS, AND SAFETY HARNESS WILL BE:**

1. Worn when working in manholes, sewers, cleaning tanks, wells, clarifiers, or when using extension ladders above 10 feet.
2. Visibly inspected for rips, cracks, or other defects and replaced if necessary.
3. Worn whenever there is a possibility of falling into or from a tank, well or any elevated places.
4. Only used for personal safety.



## **CONFINED SPACES**

Every confined space is unique, therefore, each confined space must be carefully evaluated, and hazards must be eliminated or controlled before entry is permitted.

Millions of employees who enter confined spaces each year face a significant risk of injury or death. Many of these same employees do not realize that they are working in a confined space and that they may be facing serious unforeseen hazards. The entrant (person who enters into the space) is considered to have entered a confined space as soon as any part of the entrant's body breaks the plane of an opening into the space.

No employee shall enter a trench or confined space unless he/she is properly trained.

## **EXCAVATIONS**

Excavating is one of the most dangerous of all construction operations. More workers are killed or seriously injured in and around excavations than in most other phases of construction work. Employees must be protected at all times.

1. Employees working in excavation or trenched must always stay within the protective system (trench shield, shoring, sloping).
2. Always check to see that the adjacent structures are properly shored.
3. Use proper shoring and sheathing for soil type and depth.
4. Store material at least two feet away from excavations.
5. Make sure that the excavations are barricaded.
6. Have ladders within 25 feet of employees when needed.
7. Competent person must be trained.

## **WATER/SEWER MAINTENANCE**

1. Always wear your rubber gloves when handling raw sewage.
2. Always disinfect your hands and arms immediately after handling raw sewage and before leaving the plant.
3. Do not use ladders with visible defects such as cracks, split side rails, or broken rungs.
4. Maintain clean passageways, catwalks, ladders, and floor grates; immediately clean up all spills.
5. Wear your ear protectors when the noise level is so high that you have to shout to be heard by someone standing at least 6 ft. away.
6. Never smoke inside buildings, especially in motor control rooms.
7. Follow all additional safety instructions, warnings, signs, procedures, and rules as written, posted, or otherwise communicated.
8. Before beginning repairs, shut off the main power source to the equipment that is to be repaired and apply locks and tags to the equipment breaker switches.
9. Do not wear loose fitting clothes or dangling jewelry when working on the equipment.
10. Comply with confined space safety procedures (ventilating, air monitoring, using the buddy system, safety harnesses, etc.) before entering any area such as manholes, and wet/dry wells.
11. Do not remove or alter any safety guards on conveyors, shafting, gears, coupling, pulleys, or any other moving machinery.
12. Maintain constant awareness of the ease with which germs can be transmitted. Do not touch

- body parts while working; especially your face, eyes, nose, or mouth.
13. Never try to stop a moving pump shaft with your hand or any other part of your body.
  14. Aeration Operation: Use the anti-foaming agent to inhibit foaming of the sludge onto the deck.
  15. To prevent slips, clean up all oil or grease spills immediately.
  16. If you must cross a slippery surface, walk slowly, taking short steps, while holding onto the handrail.
  17. All FRWA personnel working around wastewater will keep Hepatitis B vaccinations current on a yearly basis.
  18. When working with a particular chemical, wear the type of personal protective equipment (goggles, gloves, respirators, face shields, aprons, etc.) that is specified in the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for that chemical.
  19. Become familiar with the hazardous properties of all chemicals in the work place. Consult the MSDS before using any unfamiliar chemical.
  20. Never smoke, eat, or drink in the lab area of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
  21. Always wash you hands with soap and water after working with chemicals and before leaving the lab.
  22. Always use shoring when open trench exceeds four (4) feet in depth and never work alone.

## **CHEMICALS**

1. Be aware of the hazardous properties of all chemicals in the work place. Consult the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) before using any unfamiliar chemical.
2. If in doubt about any chemical substance, even after consulting the MSDS, check with your supervisor before using it.
3. When working with chemicals, wear the type of clothing and personal protective equipment (goggles, gloves, respirators, face shields, aprons, etc.) that is specified in the MSDS and provided by your supervisor.
4. Before using any chemical, read the label on the container for the recommended directions for use.
5. Do not use any chemical or substance in an unlabelled container, report it to your supervisor.
6. Never smoke, eat, or drink when you are around any chemical material.
7. Clean up and dispose of chemicals according to your supervisor's instructions or the label's instructions.
8. Never wear clothing that has been contaminated with chemicals.
9. Always wash with soap and water after working with chemicals.
10. Use chemicals, such as cleaning agents, only for their labeled purpose.
11. Do not mix cleaning agents such as ammonia and bleach.
12. All chemicals must be stored in labeled containers with their caps or lids tightly closed.
13. Keep storage locations for hazardous material locked.
14. Report any unlabelled and/or damaged or leaking containers to you supervisor.
15. Be aware of the following symptoms when working with or near chemicals:
  - a. dizziness
  - b. skin rashes
  - c. shortness of breath
  - d. light headedness

- e. sick stomach feeling (nausea)
- f. irritated eyes, nose, or throat
- g. feeling sluggish, nervous, or agitated

If you experience any of the above symptoms, stop working, remove yourself from the area.

### **MANHOLES/SEWERS**

1. Manhole covers must be opened with lifting hook.
2. Visually inspect all lifting hooks for rusting or other structural defects.
3. Inspect manhole covers for accumulation of dirt or other material between manhole ring and cover. You should loosen by scraping the material or with a sharp blow to cover with a hammer.
4. When entering a sewer, manhole, or wet well with flowing water, gas detecting monitor must be used prior to entering.
5. Metal manhole ladders must be inspected for rust or other structural damage.
6. When a manhole cover has been removed, always place warning devices, such as barricades, signs, or cones to alert public to work being done.
7. Only use explosion-proof equipment while working inside a manholes.
8. Do not smoke in or around the immediate opening of a manhole or sewer.
9. Do not leave tools or material near the opening or throw items in or out of manholes or sewer openings.

### **PUMP/LIFT STATIONS**

1. Make sure the guards over couplings and pump shafts are in place at all times.
2. Never grab or try to stop a moving pump shaft with your hand or any part of your body.
3. When working with a rotating or moving part, (block) make sure the element can not be set in motion by gravity, wind, or water flow.
4. Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry around the pump shaft or other rotating machinery or equipment.
5. Do not smoke in a pump or lift station.
6. When working with valves and piping, empty steam lines before working on the lines.

### **WELLS, PITS, AND TANKS**

1. Do not work in or around pits, wells, and floor openings without guard rails and safety chains.
2. Make sure guards are in place when working around rotation shafts, couplings, universal joints on pumps, or rotation gears on screening mechanisms.
3. Do not use flammable or combustible liquids in a wet well.
4. Do not work in a dry well unless a sump is available to remove accumulated water from leaks around pump seals.
5. Before entering an underground or unmanned pump station the lid must be locked in the open position to avoid entrapment of gases.

### **SEWER CLEANING**

1. Only trained personnel will operate power driven pipe cleaning equipment.
2. When performing sewer cleaning operations, wear the Personal Protective Equipment (face

- shields, gloves, boots, aprons, etc.)
3. Use a hoist or other powered lifting equipment to remove heavy cast iron sewer plates.

### **JOB SITE AND TRAFFIC CONTROL**

1. Barricades, cones, or other warning devices will be placed to isolate any underground structure or work area.
2. Do not remove the warning devices until the work has been completed or the manhole covers have been replaced.
3. All utility trucks, tool carts, and other equipment should be placed where it will cause minimum obstruction to oncoming traffic and barricaded.
4. Flagmen with reflective vests and hard hats must be used when working in heavy traffic areas or at night.
5. Display warning signs when there is a need to warn the public of the work being done.
6. Do not work beyond the barricaded or work area.
7. High visibility safety vest should be worn at all times.

### **EQUIPMENT USE POLICIES**

- A. **FRWA Employees Demonstrate & Leave the Equipment at System** The following equipment is available for Active Member's use after FRWA employees demonstrate and train the system's personnel. FRWA personnel are to notify the FRWA office of the location of borrowed FRWA equipment.
  - a. The FRWA **Wastewater Camera Inspection Trailer**, containing camera, VCR, generator, safety equipment, etc. may be left with a medium system (greater than 1,000 connections) if the system personnel are trained by FRWA, and the system agrees to contractual agreements. This is a FRWA *Wastewater System Member benefit only*. There is a charge for this service. The camera is available to Member Systems only after the completion of previous steps listed in FRWA Inflow and Infiltration Program Procedures.
  - b. The FRWA **Smoke Blowers** may be left with Member Systems who have completed required steps in Wastewater Inflow and Infiltration Program Procedures and are a FRWA Wastewater Member. The system will be provided with the proper training by FRWA, adequate personnel, and safety equipment prior to smoke blowing on its own. (FRWA has door hangers for use within the required public notice of smoke blowing for a nominal cost.) All maintenance, including oil changes and fuel replacement, is to be performed by the system.
  - c. The FRWA **Pressure Recorders** are available to Member Systems for use without training. Normally, the units can be shipped to a system and returned to FRWA when analysis is completed, via shipping. A few charts will also be supplied.
  - d. The FRWA **Activity Recorders** are available to members, yet may require FRWA personnel to properly install on the system's pump so as not to electrically damage the unit. The activity recorders may also be shipped to Member Systems, if the system agrees to replace the unit if it is destroyed due to incorrect installation.
  - e. The FRWA **Small Meter Tester** can be demonstrated by FRWA personnel and then left with Member Systems for a week or so to complete residential meter testing. The meter to be tested must be flushed prior to installation of small meter tester to

- ensure solids do not plug and destroy the meter tester. The meter tester can be shipped back to FRWA or picked up by FRWA staff.
- f. The FRWA **Hydrant Flow and Testing Kits** can be used by Member Systems. FRWA can provide personnel to train system personnel, if needed. Please flush the hydrant prior to installation of pitot gauge to ensure that the pitot tube/orifice is not plugged with sediments. Any gauges or pitot tubes that are destroyed are to be replaced prior to the return of the kit to FRWA by shipping or employee pick-up.
  - g. All FRWA **Water Labs and Water Test Kits** are available to Member Systems for diagnostic assistance within water systems. The kits include non-expired reagents. These can be shipped as needed. FRWA has numerous kits, please call for a kit to do needed testing.
  - h. FRWA **Backflow Testers** are available to Member Water Systems for use by certified backflow testers. This unit can be shipped to and from the FRWA office.
  - i. FRWA **Sludge Judges** are available to Member Wastewater Systems for sampling and core sampling. These units are very awkward to ship, but can be dropped off by FRWA personnel.
  - j. FRWA has various **Weirs** for use by Member Wastewater Systems. Please call FRWA for sizes and applications.
  - k. FRWA **Sonic Leak Detectors** are available for use by Member Water Systems. These units can be shipped, if the system personnel have prior experience in the use of sonic leak detectors. FRWA personnel can also demonstrate and train system personnel in the proper use of the equipment, prior to leaving the unit with the system. The unit can be shipped back to FRWA.
  - l. FRWA **Line Tracers** are available for Member System use. These units can be shipped to the systems with prior operating experience or FRWA personnel can demonstrate and train system personnel in the proper use, prior to leaving the unit with the system. The unit can be shipped back to FRWA.
  - m. FRWA **Valve and Metal Locators** are available for Member System use. These units can be shipped to systems with prior operating experience or FRWA personnel can demonstrate and train system personnel in the proper use prior to leaving the unit with the system. Units can be shipped back to FRWA.
  - n. **FRWA Employees Use at System (But we do not leave equipment with systems).**
  - o. A copy of all reports and results of system Technical Assistance should be submitted to the office to be kept on file for system's future use.
  - p. The **Wastewater Camera Inspection Trailer** containing other equipment as listed in the attached contract is a *wastewater member only* benefit which requires completion of FRWA I&I program procedures (see attached). The equipment is *not* left with small systems (less than 1,000 connections), but used with FRWA Wastewater Field Staff. A smoke blower should remain in the trailer along with a valve locator, a complete list of equipment supplied with trailer is listed in contract. There is a charge for this service. Use is scheduled based on priority system.
  - q. The FRWA **Ground Penetrating Radar Unit** is only used by FRWA staff at member systems. There is no-charge for this service. Use of the equipment is scheduled based on request, date of request and number of years as a member, if priority use system is needed. Any mapping should produce a copy for the office.
  - r. All FRWA **Flowmeters/Large Meter Testers** whether they are Ultrasonic or

- Doppler can be used at member or non-member systems. Priority for use goes to members. If used at a non-member system, it should be used as a demonstration of FRWA services and promotion of membership. A report of usage should be left only for the system owner or mailed to the system owner and a copy submitted to the office for filing in system records. The office has a generic cover letter to be submitted to the system owner with the required report. A copy should *not* be left with the contract operator for submittal to the system owner; find enclosed the required meter forms (DEP Wastewater, WMD Water, FRWA Meter Calibration).
- s. The **FRWA Leak Correlators** are to be available for leak pin pointing to both members and non-members, with members getting priority and non-members encouraged to join through demonstration of service. Additional priority is given to systems in South Florida. These should only be used after leak or leaks have been isolated by FRWA sonic leak detectors.
  - t. **FRWA Computers** can be used at systems to run diagnostic programs and leave reports. A copy of the report should be submitted to the office for filing. Non-members will be encouraged by submittal of the report to join the Association.
  - u. **FRWA Audio-Visual** equipment will be used mainly in FRWA training sessions available to members and non-members. We should not leave it with the system for their use.
  - v. **FRWA Wastewater Lab Equipment** including smart colorimeters, microscopes, ph-meters, DO meters, centrifuges, and thermometers, should be used at systems to troubleshoot treatment problems and propose treatment changes. Results, reports, and recommendations should be submitted to the system owner, and operator and the FRWA office for filing. This benefit should be prioritized for members and used to encourage non-members to join the Association.
  - w. **FRWA Water Level Indicators** should be used to check well statistics and pumping levels to determine drawdowns for the systems. Members should receive priority and non-member use should be for promotion of membership. Results and reports should be submitted to the system and the office for filing.
  - x. **FRWA Global Positioning Service Unit** should be used to get accurate well head locations for compliance reasons at member and non-member systems. Information left with the system or submitted to DEP or WMD, as required or requested by the system.

## **OTHER BOOKLETS AND LETTERS**

In addition to this employee handbook, you may receive other information relative to your employment from FRWA. You should keep this information. There is no regular schedule for distribution of this information, the function of each letter or publication is to provide you and your family with interesting news and helpful information, which will keep you up to date.

## **SUMMARY**

This booklet is a summary of the principles for which we stand, the benefits, which you receive, and the obligations that you assume as an employee. We hope that you have read your handbook carefully and will keep it for future reference. If you have any questions concerning the subject matter or benefits outlined in this handbook, please ask your supervisor about them.

We may occasionally revise some of the subject matter that is outlined in this handbook, or add new items and new benefits that we feel will make FRWA a better place to work. The dynamic nature of our business, our steady growth, and ever changing business conditions will undoubtedly require changes. Be sure to keep any notification of change that comes to you.

You are now a part of a great team of employees and we hope your association with us will be happy and rewarding. With all of us working together in a spirit of cooperation and teamwork, our Association will be unsurpassed for its quality, integrity, and services.

These policy and procedures were revised and adopted by the Florida Rural Water Association Board of Directors on December 10, 2008.

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President