

MEMORANDUM

TO: Personnel, Legislative and Public Affairs Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Amendments to the Papio NRD's 2025 Employee Handbook

DATE: December 2, 2024

FROM: Jean Tait, Administrative Coordinator



Attached for your review and consideration is a redlined/inline version of the proposed amendments to the Papio NRD's 2025 Employee Handbook. The changes include:

- Personnel Records – Removes the requirement for employees' physician information.
- Bad Weather Closing – Combined the field office and rural water offices for the procedures used for inclement weather closing. The GM will declare the office(s) closed in a group text message.
- Health Flexible Spending Account: Removes the minimum contribution amount.
- Travel and Expense Accounts: Removes the travel advance option, as project managers are issued District credit cards.
- Tuition Reimbursement: Requires approval from both the Supervisor and GM prior to enrollment for each class to be eligible for this program. Clarifies that course reimbursement is based on school year.
- Other: Updates the calendar year on the cover page and acknowledgement and consent forms.

Management recommends that the Subcommittee recommend to the Board of Directors that the proposed amendments to the Papio NRD's 2025 Employee Handbook be approved and incorporated into the District's Policy Manual.



PAPIO
MISSOURI RIVER

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

20252024

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

PROMOTIONS:

A promotion is based on each individual's performance record and involves an increase in the amount of responsibility undertaken. The District's policy is to promote from within whenever possible and to select on a merit basis the employee best qualified and most deserving to fill each job vacancy or new position. Employees seeking promotion will be considered on the strength of many factors including: qualifications, job knowledge, capacity for further responsibility, ability, leadership potential, working relationships, length of service, past performance and employment record.

PERSONNEL RECORDS:

It is important for the District to have accurate records for every employee. You must advise your supervisor and the Omaha office of any changes in the following types of information:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Address | <input type="checkbox"/> Next of Kin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Name | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Beneficiary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Number | <input type="checkbox"/> Person to Notify in an Emergency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marital Status | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of Dependents |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physician's Name & Phone Number | |

Employee health or medical-related records will be maintained separate from the personnel records and will be subject to more strict confidentiality rules. Except as otherwise required by law, employee health records will not be available to District personnel other than the General Manager, persons responsible for creating and/or maintaining employee health records, and supervisors/department heads if they have a need to be apprised of restrictions on an employee's work duties, accommodations for an employee's disability, or possible emergency conditions involving the employee's health condition.

PERSONNEL FILE UPDATE:

Employees are requested to keep the District informed of any additional training, educational courses completed, civic activities, etc. This information will be placed in the employee's personnel file for reference when considerations for promotion are made.

PAY ADJUSTMENTS:

Pay adjustments are based on an employee's job performance and the current Pay Program Administration Manual. Any questions you may have concerning your wage and pay adjustments should be addressed to your supervisor.

COMPENSATION FOR TEMPORARY DUTY:

If an employee temporarily serves in the capacity of a either a higher or lower grade position for an extended period of time (minimum of three months or 60 working days, consecutively), the General Manager shall have the authority to provide additional compensation to that employee for that period according to the general guideline of one-half the difference between the midpoints for the salary grade of the higher-grade position and the employee's position. When compensating an employee for additional work performed for a lower grade

advise the employee of the findings of the investigation and his or her decision usually within seven (7) calendar days after hearing the employee's grievance.

If the grievance is not resolved by action of the immediate supervisor, the employee may submit the grievance in writing to the Department Head, on a form furnished by the immediate supervisor and within seven (7) calendar days after being advised of the supervisor's decision. The Department Head shall make a separate investigation and inform the employee in writing of his or her decision and the reasons for it usually within seven (7) calendar days after receipt of the employee's grievance form.

If the grievance is not resolved by action of the Department Head, the employee may obtain a review by the General Manager by submitting a written request for review to the General Manager within seven (7) calendar days following receipt of the written decision of the Department Head. The General Manager shall make such investigation as appropriate, and within approximately fifteen (15) calendar days after the receipt of the employee's request for review, shall inform the employee in writing of his or her findings and decision. Routine Grievances shall be concluded with the determination of the General Manager.

When an employee believes that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved by the General Manager's decision, the employee may request a review by the Personnel, Legislative and Public Affairs Subcommittee by submitting a written request for review, stating the complaint, and the decision received from the General Manager. The concerns of the employee will be considered by the Personnel, Legislative and Public Affairs Subcommittee in deciding whether to submit the matter to the Board of Directors for review and guidance.

Within the foregoing procedure the burden of proof shall be on the aggrieved employee.

Please note that the Grievance Procedure is not intended to cover complaints or reports of workplace discrimination or harassment. Instead, please immediately report any such discrimination or harassment pursuant to the District's "Harassment and Discrimination" policy.

BAD WEATHER CLOSING:

There are occasions where storms during non-duty hours render roads hazardous to traffic so that it is deemed that employees, except those engaged in services which cannot be suspended or interrupted, will not report for work.

For employees located at the Chalco Hills Natural Resources Center: Employees will be notified by group text as to delayed reporting time and procedures based on inclement weather conditions. The General Manager will decide office closure by 9:00 a.m., if necessary. Hazardous weather that develops during the workday requiring early office closing will be addressed by the General Manager.

For employees located at field and rural water offices: The ~~General Manager Natural Resources Conservation Service Resource Conservationist at the respective field office~~ may declare the office(s) closed for all or a portion of the day if weather conditions require. ~~Employees will be notified by group text as to delayed reporting time and procedures based on inclement weather conditions. should monitor radio announcements or contact their supervisor for closing information.~~

~~**For employees located at the Dakota County Rural Water Office:** The Water Supply Superintendent may declare the office closed for all or a portion of the day if weather conditions require. Employees should monitor radio announcements or contact their supervisor for closing information.~~

If hazardous conditions exist before regular working hours and the office is declared closed, employees will be on administrative leave for that work day. Employees who have scheduled leave are to remain on scheduled leave, not administrative leave.

In the case of late start, i.e., if the office is declared open at 10:00 a.m., employees will be on administrative leave until the time the office opens. Employees who have scheduled leave are to remain on scheduled leave, not administrative leave. Examples of how to charge administrative leave based on established working hours are described in the following scenarios:

If established hours are 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and the office opens at 10:00 a.m., the employee is approved for 2-1/2 hours of administrative leave.

If the established hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., the employee will be approved for 2 hours of administrative leave.

In the event hazardous weather conditions occur during office hours, employees on duty are to receive administrative leave based on established working hours. Employees who have scheduled leave are to remain on scheduled leave, not administrative leave. Examples of how to charge administrative leave based on established working hours are described in the following scenarios:

If established working hours are 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., and the office is closed at 3:00 p.m. due to weather conditions, the employee is approved for 1 hour of administrative leave.

If established working hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., and the office is closed at 3:00 p.m. due to weather conditions, the employee is approved for 1-1/2 hours of administrative leave.

Administrative Leave will be recorded in the timesheets program as such.

VEHICLE USE POLICY:

Some employees, at the discretion of the General Manager, shall be assigned a District vehicle to drive to and from work. Personal use of the District vehicles, other than driving to and from work, is not allowed.

1. Employees who utilize a vehicle for commuting purposes have the option to utilize a personal vehicle for commuting purposes or can continue to utilize a District vehicle for commuting only after agreeing to reimburse the District an amount not less than the IRS mandated minimum taxable value under the commuting rule. The employee would sign an agreement with the District to have funds withheld from their bi-weekly pay checks.
2. All employees utilize a District vehicle, when available, for attending District related functions and or conducting work related duties. Personal vehicle use should be discouraged for conducting District business unless no other transportation is available to the employee.

Vehicles should be eliminated through attrition whenever feasible.

prescription drug co-pays, dental co-pays, etc., with pre-tax dollars. Maximum contributions are set by federal law. ~~The minimum contribution is \$40/month to offset administrative costs.~~

3. Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account - This option would allow participants to pay for dependent care with pre-tax dollars. In most cases employee contributions may not exceed \$5,000 during the plan year.

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE ACCOUNTS:

It is the District's policy to pay actual and necessary travel expenses to those employees required to travel away from the office on business.

Employees will not be paid for ordinary home to work travel. If an employee has gone home after completing the workday and is called out to travel a substantial distance to a remote location to perform emergency work, then all time spent on such travel will be paid. If an employee is given a special 1-day work assignment in another city then travel time will be paid, less the amount of time the employee would normally spend on home to work travel. Time an employee spends as part of his or her principal activity, such as travel during the workday, will be paid. Travel that keeps an employee away from home overnight will be paid if it cuts across the employee's normal working hours, even during the corresponding hours on nonworking days, but time spent in such travel outside of regular working hours as a passenger on an airplane, train, or automobile will not be paid. Hourly employees will be paid for all hours actually worked or for attending meetings, classes, etc.

Expenses of the District employees will be reimbursed only upon the completion of an Expense Claim, Form 14.3.B. Manual of Standard Forms (Appendix E) and as necessary for the District to remain compliant with Internal Revenue Service requirements for an accountable plan. An expense claim shall be submitted within sixty (60) days after the occurrence of the claimed expense. The expense claim shall itemize and describe the nature of the expense. Receipts for expenses shall be attached to the claim. The following rules apply to Expense Claim, Form 14.3.B.

Description - Record the purpose of the visit. If any amounts are included for guest meals, you should record the name and title of the guests, business purpose and nature of expenditure(s), i.e., meals, etc.

Lodging - Receipts are required for all lodging expenditures, and show single rate, if applicable.

Transportation - Air, limo, taxi, etc. Receipts are required for all air expenditures; however, receipts are not required for normal local transportation such as taxi, subway, limousine, etc. Automobile expenses (not to be used if you use District vehicle) — for use of personal automobile. Record number of miles driven by attaching driving directions from Google maps or similar for documentation of mileage claimed and the amount of reimbursement. For rental cars, insert appropriate amount and attach copy of receipt.

Tolls/Parking - Receipts should be attached if available for parking or tolls incurred while using a District or personal vehicle for District business.

Meals - This should reflect the amount spent on meals. Itemized receipts are required for all meals if daily total exceeds \$39.00 and/or individual meal exceeds \$20.00. An employee will only be reimbursed for meals if in conjunction with overnight travel away from his or her regular place of business or if there is a valid business purpose to the meal.

Telephone - Charges should be accompanied by a telephone bill which indicates the business called and purpose.

Other Expenses - Other expenses such as meeting/conference registration fees, internet connection expenses, miscellaneous supplies, etc. Receipts should be attached if available.

Daily Total - The total amount of expenses expended for each day should be accumulated and entered here.

~~**Travel Advance** - If you have drawn a travel advance for a trip, insert the amount and calculate the balance owed to you, or if the advance exceeds the expenses, return the amount due to the District.~~

Credit Card Use - A credit card receipt, except for fuel purchases, must be accompanied by an itemized receipt.

Signature - Sign and date and return to the NRC office.

If the spaces provided for explanations are not adequate, please use the space provided on the back of the form or attach additional pages as required.

Be sure the report is completely and correctly identified, and columns totaled.

Staff expense claims will be furnished to the Accounting Department by the first work day of each month. Staff expense claims shall have the written approval of the staff member's supervisor prior to being processed for payment.

District employees are eligible for a travel advance against the otherwise reimbursable expenses of any authorized out-of-District travel. The maximum amount for a travel advance shall be \$500.00. A written request for a travel advance must be submitted to the Accounting Department at least five (5) days but not more than thirty (30) days prior to the date of travel. Any excess reimbursement or excess travel advance shall be returned within one hundred twenty (120) days after the expense was incurred.

It shall be the policy of the District to pay the standard mileage rate allowed by the State of Nebraska Administrative Services Department, pursuant to Section 81-1176, R.R.S., 1943, for those employees required to provide their own vehicles. This mileage shall start from his/her office and end at his/her office except for the case of meetings at the District office during other than regular office hours, at which time a round-trip mileage would be applicable.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM:

The District will reimburse 75% of the tuition cost of full-time employees who enroll in approved courses related to job requirements. The written approval from your supervisor ~~Approval of the~~ and the General Manager is required prior to enrollment of each class and grades of "C" or higher must be achieved in the course.

Reimbursement will be made after the school notifies the District of satisfactory course completion. A maximum of five (5) courses per school year is allowed with a maximum of two (2) courses per semester or quarter. Approval for enrollment will be granted only to employees who have completed at least six months of employment with the District prior to requesting such approval.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP:

The District encourages participation by employees in professional organizations and societies. The District will pay the annual membership fee for one professional organization/society membership for each employee if the employee requests. The organization selected must be approved by the General Manager and related to the employee's job responsibilities.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM:

Each full or part-time District employee with 5 years of continuous employment will receive a certificate of appreciation and a \$50.00 check recognizing their service to the District. Following 10 years of continuous employment a \$100.00 check will be awarded; after 15 years a \$150.00 check will be awarded; after 20 years a \$200.00 check will be awarded; after 25 years a \$200.00 check and 1 day of vacation leave (vacation leave to be taken the following calendar year) will be awarded; after 30 years a \$200.00 check and 2 days of vacation leave (vacation leave to be taken the following calendar year) will be awarded; after 35 years a \$200.00 check and 3 days of vacation leave (vacation leave to be taken the following calendar year) will be awarded; and, after 40 years a \$200.00 check and 4 days of vacation leave (vacation leave to be taken the following calendar year) will be awarded.

In addition to the certificate and the monetary award, the names of employees recognized for five, ten, fifteen, twenty, etc., years of service will be noted on a plaque to be displayed in the headquarters office of the District.

Temporary employees are not eligible to participate in this program.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM:

The District encourages employees to practice healthy lifestyles and sponsors a wellness program. A wellness committee, designated by the General Manager, will develop and distribute information materials and will organize activities and workshops with speakers on various topics, such as nutrition, exercise, etc., which normally will be held in conjunction with District All Employee Meetings.

EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I have received and reviewed a copy of the District's ~~2025~~2024 Employee Handbook, which includes the District's Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy (Attachment 1). I further acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the Papio-Missouri River NRD Safety Manual (Appendix J to the District's Policy Manual), and the Papio-Missouri River NRD Family and Medical Leave and Family Military Leave Policy (Appendix V to the District's Policy Manual).

I understand all of its rules, policies, terms and conditions, and agree to abide by them, realizing that failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. I understand that I should consult the Administrative Coordinator regarding any questions not answered in this Handbook. I also understand that this Handbook supersedes all previous inconsistent written and unwritten policies, and any previous handbooks.

I understand and agree that my employment is terminable-at-will, so that both the District and I remain free to choose to end our work relationship for any lawful reason or no reason, at any time. I understand and agree that nothing in this Handbook in any way creates an expressed or implied contract of employment between the District and me, but rather is intended to foster a better working atmosphere while the employee/employer's relationship exists. I understand that no District representative has the authority to make any promise or agreement which is inconsistent with this Employee Handbook or any of the District's policies, rules, or procedures without the express, written approval of the General Manager. I also understand that no manager, supervisor, or other representative of the District has the authority to enter into any agreement contrary to this Handbook or for employment for any specified time, and any such agreement or terms are unenforceable unless they are in a writing signed by the Employee, the General Manager, and the Administrative Coordinator.

I understand that the District will monitor my computer files, Internet activity, e-mail messages and voice mail messages for various reasons. The District will disclose such activity and messages to a third party without my consent when it deems such action necessary. I consent to the District's monitoring of my computer files, e-mail transmissions, voice mail messages and Internet activity.

I understand that the District may revise, supplement, modify, interpret, or rescind any policies or portions of this Handbook, as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion, with or without prior notice.

Employee Signature

Date

(Sign and return this form to your supervisor within seven (7) days of receipt.)

**PAPIO-MISSOURI RIVER NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
DRUG-FREE AND ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY
ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND CONSENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Papio-Missouri NRD Drug-Free & Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy effective January 1, ~~2025~~2024.

I agree to comply with the policy and cooperate fully in any requested testing, and I consent to blood, breath and/or urine testing pursuant to the policy. I further consent to the release of test results to the District or others for use pursuant to the policy.

I understand that consent and cooperation in these procedures is a condition of employment and that refusal to consent will result in my discharge from employment.

I understand that a violation of this policy may result in corrective action by the District, up to and including termination of employment.

I authorize the release of any test results to the State Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Transportation, or any other government agency upon valid request or as otherwise required by law.

Name (Please Print)

Employee Signature

Date