



Probationary Period

Administrative Regulation | Employment & Performance | #3.08

Effective Date: September 25, 2020
Revised Date: August 25, 2025
Supersedes: February 6, 2024

Note: Terms that are ***bolded and italicized*** the first time they appear in this regulation are defined below. After the first occurrence, defined terms appear in *italics only*.

Purpose

The ***probationary period*** serves as an opportunity for department leadership to support new employees in their transition ensuring they integrate successfully into their roles while demonstrating the necessary competencies, work habits, and collaboration skills.

Scope

This regulation applies to all new hires, ***transfers, promotions***, and demotions. Represented employees should refer to their respective collective bargaining agreements for additional terms.

Policy

All appointments are subject to a ***probationary period***. This period helps employees adjust to their roles and ensures they meet work standards. The ***probationary period*** is a supportive process designed to help employees:

- Learn about the City, their department, and their role.
- Understand performance expectations and successfully meet them.
- Receive guidance and feedback to help them succeed.

The ***probationary period*** allows both employee and department leadership to determine if the role is a good fit.

Procedure

1. ***Probationary Period Requirements***

- a. New hires, rehires, department transfers, and ***promotions*** serve a ***probationary period***.
- b. Employees must meet all performance and conduct expectations by the end of probation.
- c. Employees transferring within the same department may serve a ***probationary period*** if required by the department director, the Human Resources Director, and the City Manager.

(1) This requirement must be communicated at the time of job offer.

- (2) Employees who are reclassified do not serve a *probationary period*.
- d. Employees who are demoted may serve a *probationary period* if required by the department director, the Human Resources Director, and the City Manager.
 - (1) This requirement must be communicated at time of appointment.

2. Length of Probationary Period

- a. New Hires & Rehires: 12 months
- b. *Promotion* & Transfers: 6 months
- c. Any service interruptions during probation will not count towards total probation period.

3. Evaluations

- a. Department leaders should meet with the new employee during their first week to set goals and expectations.
- b. Ongoing feedback should be clear, specific, and focused on strengths and areas for improvement.
- c. Formal reviews should occur:
 - (1) At the midpoint of the probation period.
 - (2) At the end of probation.
 - (3) Both reviews should provide ***constructive feedback***.

4. Addressing Performance Issues

- a. If an employee does not meet expectations the department leader should:
 - (1) Consult with Human Resources for guidance.
 - (2) Determine if an extension of the *probationary period* is appropriate. Probation periods will generally not extend beyond an additional six (6) months. Extension must be documented in writing.

5. Termination During the Probation

A. New Hires & Rehires:

- a. May be dismissed at any time if continued employment is not in the best interest of the City.

B. Current Employees:

- a. If they fail probation following a *promotion* or transfer, they may be dismissed for cause.

6. Return to Previous Position:

- a. If a promoted or transferred employee does not pass probation, they may return to their previous job provided the position is still available and operationally feasible.

7. Grievance Rights

- (1) Employees serving an initial probation period, including extensions, may not grievance disciplinary actions, layoffs, or termination decisions.

Definitions

Term:	Definition
<i>Constructive Feedback:</i>	Refers to clear and supportive guidance to help employees improve.
<i>Probationary Period:</i>	A working test period where the employee must demonstrate their ability to meet job expectations.
<i>Promotion:</i>	A change of employee from one position to another within the same or a different classification, provided the positions share the same salary range.

Related Resources

Administrative Regulations:

- [Disability Accommodations](#)
- [Equal Employment Opportunity](#)
- [Open Door Policy](#)
- [Performance Reviews](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection](#)