Purpose

In order to maintain the safety and functionality of the City of Athens infrastructure and right-of ways, it will be necessary periodically for public works employees to be called in for duties after regular working hours during emergency or otherwise adverse situations.

This policy will formalize the City of Athens Public Works Department’s approach to addressing situations requiring immediate attention after ordinary working hours.

General

Situations including, but not limited to, snowfall, thunderstorms, wind, or other acts of nature, accidents, vandalism, and equipment failure often create problems on city streets and right-of-ways that may warrant immediate attention after normal working hours.

Utility problems, snow accumulations on City streets; downed trees and/or branches; damage or failures to traffic control devices; debris or liquid residues in the streets; and animal control situations; are examples of situations that may require immediate attention to restore service or maintain safety.

Requirements

The City of Athens reserves the right to establish an emergency call in list or designate relief personnel who will be expected to be available. Employees who are called in for emergencies or relief duties shall be compensated in accordance with established procedures.

Potential emergency and/or relief duty shall be considered a condition of employment where applicable and refusal of an employee to report for any work under such adverse conditions as described above can and will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination from City employment.

All employees of the Public Works Department will be expected to report to work in the event of an emergency or adverse situation as deemed necessary by the Public Works Director, his designee, or the City Manager.
Extension of Normal Work Schedule

In order to insure that necessary manpower is available to complete necessary functions in a safe and effective manner, it will periodically be necessary to extend work hours.

Employees of the Public Works Department are subject to having their regular 8-hour work day extended in the event of an unfinished job that requires completion or extended attention on that day. This situation would typically involve an emergency or particularly adverse situation.

The supervisor may require that employees continue to work at a designated work site beyond their regular work schedule, until the job is completed or brought to an acceptable level for safety and serviceability.

Except for emergencies or reasons previously approved by supervision, any employee asked to continue working past regular hours is expected to do so. Such time will be compensated in accordance with established procedures.

On Call Status

In order to insure that the department is responsive after normal working hours to address emergency or otherwise adverse situations, it will be necessary to establish a rotating duty roster for on call status.

- Except in predictable situations such as forecast weather events, one (1) employee will be “on call” at a given time.
- An electronic pager or other device will be made available for notification purposes to the individual on call employee.
- If the employee has a legitimate reason why he/she cannot be available for such duties when identified, they should bring such reason to the attention of their supervisor or the Director of Public Works.
- The Public Works Director, his designee, or the City Manager will be responsible for identifying the need, establishing the method of addressing the situation, and notifying the employee(s) necessary to address the particular situation.

Scheduling of On Call Duty -- Streets & Traffic Personnel

- A calendar/roster identifying the employee that is on call will be maintained at all times by the Public Works Director or Street Superintendent.
- The Communications Center will be informed weekly of the name of the employee that is on call and the pager number for notification purposes.
- The employee will be on call for a period of one (1) week, Monday at 7:00 a.m. until the following Monday at 7:00 a.m.
- On a rotating basis, each non-exempt, regular status employee in the following divisions will be required to serve in this capacity: Street Maintenance, Street Construction, Street Cleaning, and Traffic Control. Personnel from the other divisions will be called in when necessary.
- At the present time sixteen (16) positions have been identified to rotate these duties. This would require an employee to be on call once every sixteen weeks or a total of approximately 3 weeks per year.
• Each employee will be required to serve in this capacity when it is his or her designated week. **Any exceptions must be pre-approved by the Public Works Director, his designee, or the City Manager** so that an alternate can be identified prior to the change on Monday.

• When the on call employee is off on sick leave, it will be their responsibility to notify the Street Superintendent or the Public Works Director immediately if they will be unable to fulfill this responsibility. The Street Superintendent will then identify an alternate employee.

**On Call Status for Other Personnel**

Major weather events or other emergencies may require additional personnel to be placed on call status.

• During predictable events, the Public Works Director, his designee, or the City Manager, will identify and notify the employees that are expected to be called in.

• These employees will be given as much advance notice as possible. Once they are identified and notified, they will be asked if they will be available if it becomes necessary to call out additional manpower.

• If the employee has a legitimate reason why he/she cannot be available for such duties when identified, they should immediately bring such reason to the attention of their supervisor or the Director of Public Works.

**Compensation for On Call Employees**

Employees will be required to carry a pager, mobile phone, or leave a telephone number where he/she can be reached when on call. This on call time will not be compensable if the employee can use the time freely and is not restricted to the workplace premises.

**Emergency Call Back Pay**

When a non-exempt employee has left the premises after completing a regular shift and is called back due to an emergency as defined above, the hours actually worked will be added to the regular total of hours worked for that week. Hours worked over 40 will be compensated at the time and one-half rate.

**Response to Notification of Emergency/Adverse Situations**

The Communications Center or the Public Works Director will normally notify the on-call employee of emergency or adverse situations that require public works’ attention. The on-call employee will normally be contacted by either telephone or pager as to the location and nature of the situation.

Once notified, the employee is expected to confirm the notification with the Communication Center and respond to the situation as soon as safely possible. If the on-call employee cannot respond within a reasonable amount of time, the Communications Center should be notified immediately and the supervisor or Public Works Director should also be contacted.
When designated for on-call duties, failure to respond within 30 minutes when contacted may be cause for disciplinary action.

**Additional Pagers Assigned to Public Works Staff**

The Athens Public Works Department is providing certain members of the Public Works staff in supervisory or other key positions with pagers to increase our capability of notification for emergency situations. These employees are expected to carry these pagers at all times except such time that they are on vacation or sick leave.

These positions will include, but are not limited to the following:
- Public Works Director
- Street Superintendent
- Traffic Control/Street Cleaning Foreman
- Street Construction Foreman
- Street Maintenance Foreman
- Animal Control Officer

Response to pager notification is a duty responsibility for the above positions as well as the designated On Call employee. If notified by pager, the employee is to contact the Communications Center, his/her supervisor, or the Public Works Director within 30 minutes.

If unable to report to work in the event of such notification, the employees listed above should inform the Communications Center, his/her supervisor, or the Public Works Director that they are unable to report and when they will be available.

**Responsibility for Pager Equipment**

It will be the responsibility of the employee to see that the pager is in good working order at all times. All pagers should be tested by telephone at least weekly preferably on each Friday afternoon. Batteries will be available from the Street Superintendent.

Unless problems with the pager equipment are reported immediately to the supervisor, Public Works Director, or the Communications Center, it will be understood that the pagers are in proper working order and notifications will be received and the employee will respond promptly.

**Adoption as a Departmental Policy**

This is a policy written and adopted for the entire Public Works Department. All employees are to receive a copy of this policy and acknowledge their receipt by signing below.

The policy may be revised or updated periodically to meet the needs of the department and the City of Athens.
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