



HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY/PROCEDURE	
OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Human Resources	EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/22/2026 Revision Date: Replaces: Employment Categories, Introductory Period (HR-006), Hiring (HR-004), Promotions (HR-007), Termination of Employment (HR-008), Relocation (HR-028)
SUBJECT: Employment Policy	
Approved By  _____ Tiffany Homler Hawkins Chief Executive Officer, LYNX	

SCOPE:

This Policy is implemented in accordance with the Authority’s Administrative Rule 3 which governs Human Resources. With respect to Authority employees who hold positions represented by the Amalgamated Transit Union (Local 1749 and Local 1596), to the extent there is a discrepancy between a policy or practice in this Policy, or a separate governing Administrative Rule, and a provision within the operative collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”), the CBA shall prevail only with respect to specific provisions relating to an employee represented through such an agreement.

POLICY:

To fulfill its mission, the Authority must ensure the recruitment, selection and promotion of a workforce which is capable of continually providing the highest quality service.

The Authority’s recruitment, selection and promotion processes include effective use of proactive, legally compliant strategies to attract qualified candidates, and to select, develop, retain and promote the most talented and best qualified individuals. Additionally, it is the Authority’s policy to employ recruitment methods that result in a sufficient pool of qualified candidates resulting in the selection of the best qualified persons.

It is the Authority’s policy that all employment will be based on individual merit, qualifications, and competence of the applicant. The Authority will ensure that all vacancies are filled based upon objective criteria, taking into consideration the job responsibilities, specific duties, education, and prior experience required to perform satisfactorily. The Authority will also consider potential conflicts of interest that may exist or result from the hiring, transfer or promotion, including those related to “close personal relationships” as that term is defined in the Authority’s policy on Prohibited Close Personal Relationships (Nepotism/Fraternization). Open positions will be filled by the applicant who the Authority deems as the best qualified individual available.



1. Pre-Employment:

1.1 Background Check/Investigation

It is the Authority's policy to conduct appropriate background investigations (which may include criminal, credit, drivers' license, prior employment, etc.), consistent with applicable law, on all prospective employees, temporary employees and contractors and on current employees who are reclassified, transferred, promoted or demoted to certain positions. Applicants and employees will be provided with applicable notices, disclosures and consents to allow the Authority, or its agent, to conduct such background checks.

Pursuant to state and federal privacy laws, the Authority prohibits employees and others from seeking, using, or disclosing personal information obtained pursuant to a background investigation conducted by the Authority or any third-party vendor on its behalf, except within the scope of their required duties and as required by law. Any employee who improperly obtains or discloses such information will be subject to discipline up to and including termination from employment.

1.2 Drug Testing

As an organization that operates, maintains and manages a public transportation system in the areas of Seminole, Orange, Osceola Counties, the Authority adopts such policies as may be necessary to govern the operating of a public transportation system and public transportation facilities and ensure the safety and welfare of its employees, customers and other members of the public. Accordingly, the Authority has adopted Substance Abuse Program Policies that apply to prospective and current employees in both safety-sensitive positions as well as those not designated as safety-sensitive. The Authority's policies incorporate applicable federal drug free workplace requirements and testing procedures as required by law and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT). For additional information regarding the Authority's Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policies, please refer to the individual policies.

1.3 Pre-Employment Medical Screening

If a position requires a Department of Transportation (DOT) physical, all position applicants and transferees will be required to successfully complete a physical examination as prescribed by the DOT. Medical examination results are confidential and will not be included in an employee's personnel file.

1.4 Immigration Law Compliance & I-9 Verification

The Authority complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA). IRCA prohibits employers from hiring and employing an individual for employment in the U.S. knowing that the individual is not authorized with respect to such employment. The Authority requires timely submission of employment eligibility verification documentation in accordance with applicable law. In compliance with Florida law, the Authority uses E-Verify to verify the work authorization of its employees.

1.5 Close Personal Relationships Employment Restriction

In order to avoid misunderstandings, complaints of favoritism, other supervision, security, and morale issues, and possible claims of sexual harassment and/or gender-based discrimination, all employees are instructed to avoid situations which give rise to a conflict, or an appearance of a conflict caused

by close personal relationships. For purposes of this policy a “close personal relationship” is defined as a familial relationship (including a spouse, father, step-father, father-in-law, mother, step-mother, mother-in-law, children, step-children, sister, step-sister, sister-in-law, brother, step-brother, brother-in-law, grandmother and grandfather), romantic relationship/dating, domestic partnerships, or employees living together.

No Actual or Appearance of Conflict Permitted. All Employees must avoid the appearance of a conflict between their professional responsibilities and any involvement they may have in a close personal relationship with another Authority employee.

Prohibited Relationships: Close personal relationships within a chain of supervision, within a department, or otherwise are prohibited. For instance, a department director may not employ someone they have a close personal relationship within their department. In addition, to the extent that a close personal relationship causes operational or security concerns for the Authority, even if the relationship is not between a supervisor and subordinate, it is prohibited.

Immediate Disclosure Mandatory: Any prohibited close personal relationship must be disclosed by both employees, in accordance with this policy, to each employee’s immediate supervisor and the head of Human Resources, so that the Authority may take immediate steps to resolve any conflict created by the close personal relationship.

Prohibited Employment Decisions: No employee shall select, influence, recommend or otherwise advocate for the promotion, hiring, or advancement of another employee with whom they have a close personal relationship.

Use of Authority Resources Prohibited: Any and all use of Authority time, property, or position to engage in close personal relationships, whether within the same department or chain of supervision or not, is prohibited.

Consequences. At the Authority’s discretion, employees engaging in a prohibited close personal relationship may be transferred to an alternate position (assuming a position for which the employee is qualified is available) or terminated from employment. To the extent that transfer or termination is determined necessary by the Authority, the employees engaged in the close personal relationship will be given the opportunity to determine which of the employees will be transferred or terminated. In the event that the employees are unable to agree on the individual to be transferred or terminated, the Authority shall make the determination based on its business needs.

Any employee engaged in a prohibited close personal relationship, whether within the same department or chain of supervision or not, and who fails to disclose the relationship in accordance with this policy, or otherwise violates this policy, may also be transferred to an alternate position (if available) or otherwise disciplined up to and including termination of employment.

1.6 Relocation

It is the policy of the Authority to reimburse eligible employees for the reasonable costs of their relocation to Orlando from locations more than 100 miles away from Orlando. The Human Resources Department will assist relocating eligible employees with their move. This assistance will include an explanation of the Authority's relocation policy and the outside services that will be available to the employee, if any.



Employees eligible for a relocation reimbursement include new hires above and including the title of Manager.

New hires who are relocating to join the Authority may be considered for assistance and reimbursement. The amount of relocation assistance will be determined based on the circumstances of the situation and must be approved by the CEO.

Employees who leave employment prior to one year of service are required to repay the relocation reimbursement. In some special circumstances, a relocating employee may be eligible for other reimbursement help or other cost differentials arising from the relocation. In these instances, a determination will be made by the CEO with input from the Human Resources Department. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the CEO.

2. Employment Categories:

2.1 Bargaining Unit Employees

Authority employees hired into positions represented by a collective bargaining agent are considered part of the bargaining unit. Bargaining unit employees are covered by the terms as set forth in their respective Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). To the extent there is a discrepancy between a policy, practice, or a separate governing Administrative Rule, and a provision within the operative CBA, the CBA shall prevail only with respect to specific provisions relating to an employee represented through such an agreement.

2.2 At-Will Employees

Authority employees are employees-at-will unless otherwise stipulated by the provisions of a written employment agreement or collective bargaining agreement. At-will employees can quit at any time, for any reason, or for no reason; and may also be terminated by the Authority at any time.

No Authority representative may enter into any agreement for employment for a specified period of time or make any agreement contrary to this at-will employment policy. Any such agreement will not be enforceable.

The Authority reserves the right to modify or eliminate at-will employee positions, in its sole discretion, with or without cause or notice, as the Authority may determine to be necessary for the safe, efficient, and economic operation of the Authority's business.

2.3 Introductory Period Employee

A new employee's first 120 calendar days of employment, or an existing employee's initial 120 calendar days in a lateral transfer or promotion, is considered an Introductory Period. Individuals rehired into a regular position following a break in service must serve a new initial 120-day introductory period. In the case of a demotion, the Introductory Period is 180 calendar days.

A Department Director, with approval of the Human Resources Department, may extend an Employee's Introductory Period as deemed necessary to appropriately evaluate and determine how the employee's personal and technical skills sets and capabilities, interests, and personality fit with the Authority's needs and whether the employee is the appropriate individual for the position for which they were hired or to which they were promoted or transferred.

Employees who successfully complete the Introductory Period shall be placed on regular employment status. Completion of the Introductory Period does not alter an employee's at-will status.

2.4 Regular Employees

Regular Employees may be either full-time or part-time and will be classified as either Exempt or Non-Exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws. Regular employees who work full-time are generally eligible for benefits such as holiday pay, medical coverage, leaves of absence, paid leave, and other benefits subject to specific plan requirements.

- **Full-time:** Regular employees who are routinely scheduled to work a minimum of 40 hours per work week.
- **Part-time:** Regular employees who are regularly scheduled to work fewer than 40 hours per work week. Part-time employees who work at least 20 hours per work week are eligible for Authority benefits on a pro-rata basis so long as they are eligible pursuant to the applicable plan documents. Part-time employees who work fewer than 20 hours per work week are not eligible for Authority benefits.
- **Exempt/Non-exempt:** All Authority positions are designated as either exempt or non-exempt for payroll purposes. Non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay under applicable federal and state law. Exempt employees are excluded from overtime and minimum wage requirements under federal and state law. At the time of your employment, you will be advised whether your position is classified as exempt or non-exempt.

2.5 Senior Officer Positions

Senior Officers, as defined in Administrative Rule 1.2.67, are nominated by the CEO and approved by the Board. Employees in these positions serve at the pleasure of the CEO and are expected to communicate the organization's philosophy to employees in other classifications. These positions are not subject to employment agreements.

In the event of a change in Authority administration (i.e. the appointment of a new CEO), Senior Officers who are terminated without cause, may be given severance pay equal to the amount that would have been earned in a ninety (90) calendar day period upon signing the Authority's Separation Agreement and General Release. The ninety (90) calendar days would begin upon written notification to the employee. Senior Officers are subject to termination at any time, with or without cause, at the discretion of the CEO.

Senior Officers are expected to give the Authority no less than thirty (30) days written notice before resignation. Senior Officers are covered by all standards of employment as set forth by the Authority's rules and policies, but are exempt from the Introductory Period and the Grievance Process (other than EEO/discrimination claims).

2.6 Temporary/Casual Positions

These are employees who are scheduled to work on a temporary/casual basis, usually for no more than three (3) months. The hours will vary depending on the position. Temporary positions may be classified as full-time exempt or non-exempt for overtime purposes. Temporary/casual positions must be approved by the CEO. Temporary/casual employees are not eligible for benefits.

- **Contract Labor:** A worker classified as an independent contractor works under a specified Independent Contractor Agreement subject to approval by the CEO. An independent contractor is generally an individual or company that performs work where the Authority controls the result of that work, but not the means by which the result is accomplished. An Independent Contractor is not under the control of the Authority. All fees for contract labor are paid directly to the contractor and are not subject to FICA, federal and state withholding, workers' compensation or unemployment insurance. Independent Contractors are not eligible for any Authority offered paid benefits.

Contract Labor arrangements must be pre-approved by Human Resources and the Authority's Legal Counsel.

- **Interim / Acting Appointment Employees:** It is the Authority's policy that under certain circumstances an interim/acting appointment may be appropriate to afford the flexibility required to achieve Authority goals while also ensuring consistency in organizational and compensation policies and practices. The assignment of additional duties to meet organizational needs does not mean an employee has received an interim/acting appointment. An interim/acting appointment must be formally designated by the Authority's CEO in writing, and if such appointment is made, the writing will also address any increase in pay associated with the interim/acting role. In the event the interim/acting appointment position is in a higher pay grade than the position normally held by the appointed employee, and the employee is in the appointed position for at least fifteen (15) days, such employee shall be paid at no less than the minimum/entry level wage for the interim/active position. Employees who are assigned additional duties without an interim/acting appointment are not guaranteed additional pay.

Reasons an interim/acting appointment may be made include but are not limited to:

- To cover all the required duties of another position when the position is vacant;
 - To cover all the required duties of another position when the incumbent is temporarily on an extended leave; or
 - To meet critical business needs of a temporary nature (e.g. a long-term project) by having an incumbent in an existing, authorized position perform work beyond his/her current position description.
- **Student Internship:** A student internship is a form of temporary employment established by a department/division for an undergraduate or graduate student enrolled in a regular course of study in an accredited college or university whose employment with the Authority may earn credit toward graduation. Student internships are for the benefit of the student.

3. Promotions:

Employees are encouraged to seek advancement opportunities, and to seek guidance on advancement from their supervisors and Human Resources. The Authority encourages qualified current employees to apply for vacant positions. Employees may apply for positions if they meet the minimum requirements for the position, have successfully completed the introductory period in their current position and are not on a Performance Improvement Plan or subject to disciplinary proceedings and have no disciplinary actions within the past twelve (12) months. The Authority promotes from within the organization whenever possible, taking into consideration attendance, demonstrated performance, overall qualifications, and the requirements of the Authority. Ultimately, the Authority reserves the

right to select the candidate it determines to be the most qualified for the position. Unless mandated by applicable law, the Authority is not obligated to give hiring or promotional preference to internal applicants. Promoted employees will be subject to the provisions of the Introductory Period in their new positions.

4. **Separation**

It is the Authority's policy to ensure that all instances of employment separation are handled in a professional manner with minimal disruption to the workplace. In the absence of a specific written agreement for a specific term, all Authority employees other than those subject to a CBA, are at-will employees and are free to resign at any time and for any reason, and the Authority reserves the right to terminate employment at any time and for any legally valid reason.

Examples of employment termination scenarios include an employee's resignation or retirement, the expiration of an employment contract, a temporary or permanent reduction in the workforce, a termination resulting from performance or disciplinary issues, or for any other reason not prohibited by law.

Employees who resign their employment are requested to give written notice of their intent to resign and the effective date of the resignation. Employees must give at least two weeks' notice of the effective date of resignation in order to resign in good standing. Employees who resign should submit their Notice of Resignation to their supervisor and the Human Resources Department.

Employees who are absent from work for three consecutive days without being excused or giving proper notice will be considered as having voluntarily abandoned their position.

Requests for employment reference should be made in writing to the Human Resources Department and should include an authorization by the employee for the release of the requested information. It is the Authority's policy that reference information is limited to verification of the employee's position, job location, and dates of employment with the Authority. All requests for a reference are to be forwarded to Human Resources.

Once an employee submits a notice of resignation, Human Resources may reach out to them to ask for an exit interview. Exit interviews are discussions with employees who resign from their employment with the Authority. The discussions are intended to solicit information that can assist the Authority in its efforts to improve the workplace. Employees may choose their interview format or decline to participate.

This policy does not create a legal contract between the Authority and its employees. The Authority reserves the right to implement its policies and procedures as it sees fit. Any exceptions to this policy must be pre-approved by the Chief Executive Officer.