**SECTION: EMPLOYEE CONDUCT & ETHICS**

**POLICY:** Workplace Inspections and Searches **EFFECTIVE DATE**: insert date adopted

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

The primary purpose of workplace inspections and searches is to identify and mitigate potential hazards before they lead to accidents, injuries, or illnesses. Inspections help ensure a safe and healthy work environment, promote compliance with regulations, and foster a culture of safety awareness.

**DEFINITIONS:**

1. Hazard Identification: Inspections systematically examine the workplace to uncover potential dangers, including physical hazards, chemical exposures, ergonomic issues, and unsafe practices.
2. Proactive Risk Management: By identifying hazards early, inspections allow for timely corrective actions to reduce or eliminate risks before they cause harm.
3. Compliance and Legal Requirements: Inspections help ensure that the workplace complies with relevant safety regulations and standards, state and federal laws and regulations.
4. Employee Engagement and Safety Culture: Regular inspections demonstrate a commitment to employee safety and create an environment where safety is a shared priority.
5. Continuous Improvement: Inspections provide valuable feedback for improving safety procedures, training programs, and overall workplace safety practices.
6. Workplace Searches: Workplace searches refer to the examination by the City of an employee's personal belongings, workspace, City provided lockers, City vehicles or vehicles parked on City property, or City provided electronic devices.
7. Unauthorized/Stolen Property: Any property in the possession or control of an employee who does not have authorization from the owner of such property to possess or control the property.
8. Control: Knowing where a particular item is, having placed an item where it is currently located, or having any influence over its continued placement.
9. Reasonable Suspicion: "Reasonable suspicion" is defined as circumstances suggesting to a reasonable person that there is a possibility that one or more individuals may be in possession of a prohibited item as defined above.

**APPLICABILITY:**

This policy applies to all City employees. [Civil Service employees may have different rules]

**PROCEDURES:**

1. The City has the right to monitor compliance with work and safety rules.
2. The city has the right to search for prohibited items. A search may include the employee, their work areas, lockers, vehicles if driven or parked on company property or used on company business, and any other personal items. Other personal items such as bags, purses, briefcases, backpacks, lunch boxes, and other containers may also be subject to search. The areas in question may be searched at any time, with or without the employee being present.
3. Prohibited items stored anywhere on City property, in vehicles, lockers, or on an employee include:
   1. Illegal drugs and/or alcohol
   2. Prescription drugs or medications not used or possessed in compliance with a current valid prescription
   3. Weapons [unless issued as part of public safety positions]
   4. Items of an obscene, harassing, demeaning, or violent nature
   5. Any property in the possession or control of an employee who does not have authorization from the owner of such property to possess or control the property.
4. In conducting a search, the Company is by no means accusing anyone of theft, some other crime, or any other variety of improper conduct.
5. An employee will not be touched without consent.
6. There is no general or specific expectation of privacy in the workplace of the City while on duty. In general, employees should assume that what they do while on duty or on the company premises is not private.
7. Searches may be done on a random basis [check with legal counsel regarding including random basis searches] or based upon reasonable suspicion. Unreasonable searches are prohibited by this policy.
8. Any search under this policy will be done in a manner protecting employees' privacy, confidentiality, and personal dignity to the greatest extent possible.
9. The City will respond severely to any unauthorized release of information concerning individual employees. Discipline, up to and including termination of employment may be warranted.
10. No employee will ever be physically forced to submit to a search. However, an employee who refuses to submit to a search will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

NOTE: Ensure that training is provided to anyone conducting searches to ensure consistency and fairness in the process.