



## Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization

206 Southwind Place, Suite 2B | Manhattan, KS | 66503  
785.620.3070 | FHMPO@FlintHillsMPO.org  
www.FlintHillsMPO.org

### Policy Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

3:30 pm

**Via Zoom Only**

Meeting ID: 919 154 6755

1. Welcome
2. Public Comment Opportunity (for items not on the agenda)
3. Financial Update
  - \$143,856.17 in Checking as of 4/12/2022, \$100,278.17 in money market account
  - \$46,000 outstanding in reimbursements (no CPG contract)
4. Staff Updates
5. KDOT Update: Available on KDOT's website, [here](#)
6. **Action Item:** Approval of the January 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes
7. **Action Item:** Approval of the April 8, 2022 Meeting Minutes
8. **Action Item:** Approve MPO Operations Manual (IV. A. Internal Changes and VI. B. Onboarding New Employees)
9. **Action Item:** Adoption of Amendment #2 to Connect 2040 (note, there are two public comments regarding the I-70 & Taylor Road Interchange)
10. **Action Item:** Approval of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #2
11. **Action Item:** Approval of Amendment #1 to the Unified Planning Work Program
12. **Action Item:** Approval of the Hiring Process
13. **Discussion Item:** 2023 Local Match Estimates
14. Motion for Adjournment

**Next Meeting May 18, 2022**

**Special Accommodations:** Please notify the MPO at (785) 620-3070 or FHMPO@FlintHillsMPO.org at least 72 hours in advance if you require special accommodations to attend this meeting. We will make every effort to meet reasonable requests. The MPO does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, or national origin, according to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For more information or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, visit the MPO office at the address above or www.FlintHillsMPO.org.



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**Policy Board Meeting Minutes  
 January 19, 2022 3:30pm**

Via Zoom Only

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT		
x	Keith Ascher	Geary County Commission
x	Matt Messina	KS Dept of Transportation
x	Usha Reddi	Manhattan City Commission
x	Dee McKee	Pottawatomie Co. Commission
x	Ronna Larson	Junction City Commission
x	John Ford	Riley County Commission
	Clifford Baughman	Wamego City Commission
NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT		
x	Cecelie Cochran (Zoom)	Federal Highway Admin.
	Kelley Paskow (Alt)	Fort Riley Representative
	Eva Steinman	Federal Transit Admin.
x	Anne Smith	Flint Hills ATA

Staff Present		
x	Stephanie Peterson	MPO
x	Jared Tremblay	MPO
x	John Pileggi	MPO

Guests Present	
Kristi Wilson	KDOT (Zoom)

**1. Welcome & Introductions:**

- The Policy Board meeting was called to order by Chairperson John Ford at 3:31pm.

**2. ACTION ITEM: Election of Chairperson**

- Stephanie Peterson stated that the Bylaws do not place a term limit on the Chairperson.
- John Ford stated that he would remain as Chair if no one else was interested in the position.
- Dee McKee motioned to reelect John Ford to Chairperson. Usha Reddi seconded. Motion passed 5-0, with John Ford abstaining.

**3. ACTION ITEM: Approval of November 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

- Ronna Larson motioned to approve the minutes. Dee McKee seconded. Motion carried 6-0

**4. ACTION ITEM: Approval of Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #1**

- Stephanie provided an overview of the Amendment.
- The Board discussed the timeline and scope of several projects included in the amendment.
- Ronna Larson motioned to approve. Usha Reddi motioned to second. Motion passed 6-0.

## **5. ACTION ITEM: Approval of changes to Operations Manual as discussed in November**

- Stephanie provided an overview of the changes.
- Dee McKee asked if the MPO holds money needed to payout vacation leave upon an employee's resignation in a separate account. Stephanie stated that they do not since there are only two employees. Dee suggested staff ask our auditor if we should hold this in a secured account.
- Ronna Larson motioned to approved. Keith Ascher seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

## **6. ACTION ITEM: Authorize Chair to sign employment contract with Stephanie Peterson**

- Stephanie stated that she did not have a copy of her original employment agreement given the Flint Hills Regional Council was the fiscal agent at the time she was hired.
- The Board didn't have any comments on the proposed contract.
- Keith Ascher motioned to approve. Ronna Larson seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

## **7. Update Item: Project Tracking Sheet**

- Stephanie provided an overview of the project tracking sheet. She stated that her intentions were to include this in each Policy Board packet.
- Usha Reddi asked why some of the construction start and end dates were blank. Stephanie stated that she is still waiting on information from two jurisdictions.

## **8. Public Comment Opportunity**

- No members of the public were in attendance and no comments were made.

## **9. Financial Update**

- The updated balance information was included on the meeting agenda.
- Keith Ascher asked what happened to the interest earned on the money market account. Stephanie stated that per the agreement with the City of Manhattan, it would be given back to the City when the initial \$100,000 is returned.

## **10. Staff Updates**

- The MPO office has moved. The new address is on the website and meeting agendas.
- Stephanie introduced the new MPO intern, John Pileggi.
- Per the auditor's recommendation, a surety bond for both Jared and Stephanie was purchased given their financial role with the MPO.
- The MPO will be completing Safe Routes to School Plans for USD 383 and USD 475 in 2022.

## **11. KDOT Update**

- Matt Messina mentioned that recent data shows high crash fatalities statewide. KDOT is working on a "safe systems approach" for projects. He said he would share more about this as information is made available.

Stephanie stated that we will likely not have a February meeting.

Dee McKee motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ronna Larson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:16pm.



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**Policy Board Meeting Minutes  
 April 8, 2022 3:00pm**

Via Zoom Only

<b>VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT</b>		
x	Keith Ascher	Geary County Commission
x	Matt Messina	KS Dept of Transportation
x	Usha Reddi	Manhattan City Commission
	Dee McKee	Pottawatomie Co. Commission
x	Ronna Larson	Junction City Commission
x	John Ford	Riley County Commission
	Clifford Baughman	Wamego City Commission
<b>NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT</b>		
x	Cecelie Cochran (Zoom)	Federal Highway Admin.
	Kelley Paskow (Alt)	Fort Riley Representative
	Eva Steinman	Federal Transit Admin.
x	Anne Smith	Flint Hills ATA

<b>Staff Present</b>		
x	Stephanie Peterson	MPO
	Jared Tremblay	MPO

<b>Guests Present</b>	
Linda Morse	City of Manhattan

**1. Welcome & Introductions:**

- The Policy Board meeting was called to order by Chairperson John Ford at 3:01 pm.

**2. Discussion Item: MPO Staff Changes**

- John Ford stated that Stephanie Peterson had resigned from the MPO and her last day would be May 5<sup>th</sup>. He mentioned that he and Matt Messina had spoken to Stephanie several times in the previous weeks to begin discussions on moving forward with hiring her replacement.
- John Ford suggested the Policy Board create a small committee to oversee the hiring process. Stephanie Peterson stated that the MPO Operations Manual outlines that at minimum the Policy Board Chair (John Ford), a TAC representative, and a representative from KDOT (Matt Messina) are supposed to serve on this committee.
- Usha Reddi asked to be on the committee. John Ford stated that Jeff Underhill, Junction City Mayor and former Policy Board Chairperson, had also indicated his interest in serving on the committee. Stephanie stated that ideally this committee would have no more than three Policy Board Members, otherwise it would fall under Kansas Open Meetings Act, requiring a public meeting and executive session in order to discuss such items.
- Usha Reddi stated that a woman should be on the committee and the City of Manhattan should be represented as they have the largest local match share.

- Ronna Larson offered to sit on the committee.
- Keith Asher asked Anne Smith if she would be willing to serve on the committee. Anne said she would.
- John Ford recommended tabling the committee conversation until the Policy Board's April 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Matt Messina stated that it would be helpful to have a process outlined for the hiring of this position. Stephanie Peterson said she would have something for the Board at their April 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**3. ACTION ITEM: Approve MPO Planning Manager position description and authorize staff to post**

- Stephanie presented several proposed changes to the position description for the Board's consideration.
- She stated that she intended to post the position on several professional planning websites.
- Ronna Larson motioned to approve the posting of the position. Usha Reddi seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
- Keith Ascher motioned to approve Stephanie Peterson as the main contact for the hiring of this position. Matt Messina seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

**4. Discussion Item: Interim duties**

- This discussion was tabled until after the April 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**5. Motion for Adjournment**

- Matt Messina motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ronna Larson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:52 pm.

# Flint Hills

Metropolitan Planning Organization

*Flint Hills*



**MPO**

## Operations Manual

April 2022

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## I. Background Information

The Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the designated MPO for the Manhattan urbanized area. MPOs are required in any urbanized area over fifty thousand in population to oversee the continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process (3-C process) for the metropolitan planning area boundary (MPAB). The MPAB is approved by the Policy Board and with concurrence by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT).

### Flint Hills MPO Mission

To provide a regional forum to coordinate, encourage, and promote a safe, efficient, affordable, and integrated transportation system for all users; in support of livable communities and economic competitiveness.

### Structure

The MPO is governed by a Policy Board consisting of an elected official representing each of the financially contributing jurisdictions, per the Fiscal Agreement. The Policy Board is governed by a set of Bylaws, outlining the Board's structure and procedures. Additionally, this manual provides further guidance on the operations and management of the MPO organization and staff.

### Financing

The MPO receives federal Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) funds, administered by KDOT, for completing the activities identified in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The CPG requires a minimum 20% local match, which is provided by the member jurisdictions, per the Fiscal Agreement.

## II. Operations Manual Changes

Changes to the Operations Manual will need to occur from time to time as the organization changes and grows. The following is intended to outline the changes that can be made administratively by staff, versus changes that require Policy Board action.

### A. Amendments vs. Administrative Modifications

Any change to the Operations Manual that includes financial implications, such as employee benefits, paid leave, or substantial changes to the structure of the organization, should be included as an amendment to the Manual and taken to the Board for approval.

Administrative modifications to the Operations Manual can be made by the MPO Planning Manager without requiring Board approval. These are items that pertain to the day-to-day operations of the organization and are not items listed above requiring an amendment. Anytime staff makes administrative changes to the Operations Manual, the Policy Board should be notified of such changes and a copy of the most current Operations Manual will be uploaded to the Policy Board Portal, located on the MPO's website.

### III. General Procedures

#### A. Professional Standards Policy

The MPO is a governmental entity and it is incumbent on all employees to be mindful of any conduct that could be subject to public scrutiny, comment, and/or criticism. Employees should always conduct themselves in a professional manner.

#### B. Email Use Policy

The MPO email system shall not be used for the creation or distribution of any disruptive or offensive messages, including offensive comments about race, gender, disabilities, age, sexual orientation, pornography, religious beliefs and practice, political beliefs, or national origin. Employees who receive any emails with this content should delete the messages immediately.

A reasonable amount of personal email is acceptable, however, sending chain letters or joke emails from an MPO email account is prohibited. MPO employees shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they store, send, or receive on the organization's email system. The MPO Policy Board or MPO Planning Manager (with prior approval from the Policy Board) may monitor messages without prior notice.

Any employee found to have violated email policy might be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### C. Outside Employment Provisions

Under certain circumstances, the MPO may permit employees to engage in supplementary employment outside of regular working hours. However, in all such circumstances, outside employment will require the prior written approval of the MPO Planning Manager. This prior approval is needed to avoid any real or perceived conflicts between the employee's official duties and his or her outside responsibilities. The following criteria will be utilized in considering the appropriateness of outside employment:

- No activity may be performed by an employee on behalf of another employer or client during regular working hours.
- No activity may be performed by an employee on behalf of another employer or client that will in any way interfere with an employee's responsibilities to the MPO, the stated purpose, goals, or mission of the MPO, or the implementation of the MPO's work program.
- An employee may not be engaged by another employer or client to perform any activity that the MPO, through its staff, might be able to provide that employer or client.
- An employee may not be engaged, in any capacity, by a local unit of government within the MPO's planning boundary without the prior written approval of the Policy Board.
- An employee may not appear before a local unit of government or provide services to a

local government on behalf of another employer or client.

- An employee may not use the material resources of the MPO on behalf of another employer or client.
- An employee may not voluntarily or for compensation provide expert witness in any case even remotely related to the MPO mission or the employee's expertise used in agency work.
- An employee may not represent himself or herself to another party as being an agent of the MPO with regard to any activity for which the employee would receive remuneration from another employer or client.

A copy of all written requests by employees to engage in outside employment activities, along with written approval or disapproval, will be placed in the employee's personnel file. Any employee who engages in outside employment without the prior written approval of the MPO Planning Manager will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including possible suspension or dismissal.

#### **D. Mileage Reimbursement and Travel Procedures**

*Note: The procedures outlined below are to provide general guidance to employees regarding mileage reimbursement and travel procedures; however, the MPO Planning Manager, KDOT, and the U.S. Department of Transportation have the authority to review and determine the eligibility of all costs incurred. This authority takes precedence over any of the following procedures.*

##### Mileage Reimbursement

The MPO will reimburse employees at the federal rate ([www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)) for privately-owned vehicle mileage incurred for allowable work-related purposes. This includes mileage to and from meetings, conferences, training, and data collection efforts. Any mileage incurred for activities not directly specified in this paragraph requires prior approval from the MPO Planning Manager.

Employees should use actual odometer readings to track mileage at the start and end of each trip. Mileage between the employee's home and the MPO office will not be reimbursed. All reimbursable mileage should use the MPO Office as the starting odometer reading (unless an employee is leaving directly from their residence which is closer to the destination than the office).

Mileage should be tracked using the Employee Reimbursement Form and submitted quarterly for reimbursement.

Employees may also be reimbursed for tolls or parking expenses. Receipts for these expenses must be submitted with the reimbursement request. Employees seeking mileage, tolls, or parking reimbursement should use the provided Employee Reimbursement Form and submit quarterly unless otherwise approved.

##### Out-of-Region Travel (Day Trips)

MPO employees traveling out of the region for work-related purposes should receive prior

approval from their direct supervisor before traveling and incurring any expenses. Failure to do so may result in the employee not being reimbursed for incurred costs. Allowable expenses for out-of-region travel may include mileage, meals, tolls, and parking expenses. If the employee seeks reimbursement for meals, the total reimbursement for actual costs should not exceed the Meals and Incidental Expense Rate, as defined at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Employees should use their personal credit card or cash to pay for the meal and then provide an itemized/detailed receipt to the MPO with the expense documented on the Employee Reimbursement Form. If proper documentation is not provided, the expense will not be reimbursed. The MPO will not reimburse any alcohol-related expenses.

### Out-of-Region Travel (Overnight)

MPO employees traveling overnight to attend conferences or training must receive prior approval from the MPO Planning Manager for budgeting purposes. Any conference or training should be listed in the Unified Planning Work Program. If not, the MPO must receive approval from KDOT before attending the event. Employees traveling overnight are eligible to receive a per diem for meals and incidentals, per the federal rate ([www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)). Employees may use their company credit card (if provided one) for conference registration, hotel room expenses, and transportation and transportation-related fees (tolls, parking, shuttles, etc). Expenses other than those listed above should receive prior approval from the MPO Planning Manager before using the company card. Meals should not be paid for using the company card when traveling overnight.

Transportation to and from the conference or training should be paid using the company credit card, after prior approval from the MPO Planning Manager. If an employee takes a personal vehicle, mileage will be reimbursed following the "Mileage Reimbursement" paragraph. If it is more economical to rent a vehicle, no mileage will be reimbursed, but the cost of the rental, fuel, and any tolls would be eligible for reimbursement. This should be discussed with the MPO Planning Manager before travel.

### Meal Reimbursement

For out-of-region travel, employees should follow the policies outlined in the above paragraphs regarding meal reimbursement. Employees incurring meal-related expenses for events in the Flint Hills MPO region may be eligible for reimbursement of meals if the following criteria are met:

- The work-related event (training or meeting) has a meal being served at the expense of the attendee, or the meeting is held at a food establishment. Examples may include Military Affairs Council Breakfasts, Intergovernmental Luncheons, Housing Roundtable Discussions, etc. This would not include a meeting scheduled by the employee at an eating establishment.
- A detailed receipt is obtained for the expense.
- The cost of the meal is not included in the registration costs for the event.

Employees seeking reimbursement for meal-related expenses should receive prior approval from the MPO Planning Manager. All meals should be paid for by the employee and not with the MPO

credit card. Any meals reimbursed will be for the actual costs but should not exceed the Meals and Incidental Expense Rate, as defined at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov).

All meal reimbursements should be included on the Employee Reimbursement Form. The amount and meeting name should be included and documentation for the expense attached.

## E. Equipment and Information Resources Use

### Office Equipment

The MPO's equipment is essential to the effective and efficient operation of the organization. Moreover, as a public agency the MPO must take reasonable steps to maintain and secure such assets. MPO equipment should be predominantly used for work-related purposes.

Employees are expected to take reasonable care of the equipment that has been issued to them to avoid misuse, damage, loss, or theft. Employees are expected to practice due diligence to protect the equipment and the confidential data contained therein. Employees who are deemed to be negligent may be requested to pay personally for the replacement or repair.

Electronic equipment should not be exposed to extreme temperatures or excessive humidity. Therefore, overnight storage of electronic equipment in a vehicle is not permitted.

Office equipment is purchased with federal funding and must be disposed of per federal guidance.

### Information Resources

The term "Information Resources" includes all hardware, software, data, information, network, telephones, facsimile and photocopy machines, and other information technology (IT).

The MPO reserves the right to monitor any and all use of Information Resources, including e-mail, Google Drive, and internet use. Employees have no right to, and no expectation of, privacy concerning the use of information resources. Information including, but not limited to, documents, software, files, and email, that an employee creates, accesses, transmits, or stores while using information resources are MPO property.

Inappropriate use of information resources could result in disciplinary actions, up to and including immediate dismissal from employment or criminal prosecution where the act constitutes a violation of the law.

## F. Drug and Alcohol Policy

The MPO is committed to achieving and maintaining a safe and productive workplace that is free from the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol. Employees are expected to be in suitable mental and physical condition to perform their assigned job tasks satisfactorily and professionally. The use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other intoxicants that interfere with job performance may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including, termination.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance

by an MPO employee while conducting MPO business is prohibited. This includes off-premises activities during lunch breaks or any other break periods after which an employee is scheduled to return to work, as well as immediately before work.

An employee must notify his or her supervisor within five (5) working days of any conviction arising out of the misuse of alcohol or any controlled substance while an employee of the agency.

As a condition of continued employment, every employee must abide by the provisions of this policy with regard to drugs and other controlled substances.

An employee who is not able to perform his or her job satisfactorily because of the effects of an over-the-counter or prescribed medication should request a leave of absence. An employee will be expected to disclose the use of medication if a supervisor questions his or her job performance and the employee believes that a medication that he or she is taking, may be having an adverse effect. Appropriate actions include, but are not limited to, sending the individual home in accordance with leave policies or requiring a drug test.

The MPO requires that this policy be read by the new employees. The MPO views any violation of this policy as a serious offense, which will be fully investigated. Employees are expected to cooperate with any such investigation.

Failure to follow any of the guidelines above may result in termination.

#### **IV. Separation of Duties and Internal Controls**

The following procedures and separation of duties should be followed to maintain internal controls and proper accounting methods.

##### **A. Internal Controls**

Payroll Services: The MPO will utilize QuickBooks Payroll with the help of an on-call bookkeeper to process payroll. For changes in salaries, a salary verification letter will be provided to the employee and maintained in the employee's personnel file. The MPO Planning Manager will sign the letter for the Project Manager, whereas the Policy Board Chair or Vice-Chair will be the signatory for the MPO Planning Manager's letter. The salary letter should be provided to the bookkeeper to reflect any changes in salary within QuickBooks.

The QuickBooks Payroll system will be used to reimburse employees for expenses documented on the Employee Reimbursement Form. For MPO employees (other than the MPO Planning Manager), the MPO Planning Manager will sign off on the employee's reimbursement form and send the approved reimbursement form to the bookkeeper to enter into QuickBooks Payroll. For the MPO Planning Manager's mileage reimbursement, the Policy Board Chair or Vice-Chair will sign the reimbursement form.

Credit Cards: A credit card will be used for most purchases. A receipt should be obtained. If a receipt is not obtained, the employee may have to reimburse the MPO for said expense. At the top of each receipt the employee should note the funding program (CPG, KDHE, ATA, etc) and a general description of items purchased. The receipt should be provided to the MPO Planning



Manager. The MPO Planning Manager will be responsible for downloading an Excel version of the credit card transactions every month and adding columns to reflect the category, funding program, and general description of the item (for coding purposes in QuickBooks. The MPO Planning Manager will input information into the added columns for their expenses and then send the spreadsheet to the Project Manager to code their expenses. The MPO Planning Manager will be responsible for sending the coded credit card transactions spreadsheet to the bookkeeper to manually input into QuickBooks Online (QBO). The bookkeeper will pay the credit card bill each month.

Bill Pay Feature: When credit cards are not accepted by a vendor, the MPO will utilize the Bill Pay feature through the bank. The Planning Manager will review and sign the invoice forward it to the bookkeeper to enter into QBO and pay. It should be noted on the invoice the expense category, funding program, and a general description of the expense. Bill Pay individual transactions will be capped at \$5,000.00 unless approved by the Policy Board Chair. It will be the MPO's policy that before paying a vendor via check, a W-9 must first be provided (if applicable).

Issuing Checks: When an invoice is received requiring payment via check, the Planning Manager will send the expense to the bookkeeper to be entered into QBO. The bookkeeper will print the check and provide it to the Planning Manager to have signed. by one of the designated Policy Board Members. It will be the MPO's policy that before paying a vendor via check, a W-9 must first be provided (if applicable).

Monthly Reconciliation: Each month the bookkeeper will reconcile the bank statements and credit card. The MPO Planning Manager will provide a copy of the bank statement to the Policy Board Chair and bookkeeper. A copy of the Money Market bank statement should be provided to the City of Manhattan Deputy City Manager by the 7<sup>th</sup> of each month. Every quarter, MPO staff will prepare a Balance Sheet and post it to the Policy Board Portal. Any of these statements/reports will be available for the Policy Board's review upon request.

The above processes are in place to establish a separation of duties between the person entering the expenses into QBO, the person reviewing those expenses and authorizing payment, and the authorized signatories for checks.

## V. Office Hours and Leave

### A. Business Hours

The MPO is a small organization consisting of two to three full-time employees and several part-time interns. Several measures have been taken to keep overhead expenses down while providing a flexible work environment for MPO employees. The MPO does not maintain a typical 8 am to 5 pm office schedule, but employees are available Monday through Friday (except holidays) by phone or email.

Each employee has the flexibility to set their schedule, but it is expected that employees attend all relevant meetings, even if outside of their normal work schedule. All employees should communicate their intent to have a flex schedule to their supervisor.

### Accounting for Time Worked

All employees are accountable for tracking and logging the hours they worked. This will be accomplished in the following manner:

- Each employee will utilize the MPO's time management system to document the number of hours worked each day by task. This time tracking is used as a timesheet for payroll; as well as supplied to KDOT with each reimbursement request. Supervisors will ensure all timesheets are submitted in a timely manner. The Project Manager will have access to the MPO Planning Manager's timesheet.

### Lunch

Salaried employees are generally required to take a lunch break ranging from a ½-hour to 1 hour during the workday. This provision is intended to provide additional flexibility in the workday for employees.

Non-salaried employees who are paid on an hourly basis may take either a ½-hour or 1-hour lunch period at their discretion. Lunch breaks do not constitute paid time.

### Office Closing

The MPO Planning Manager must approve office closings due to inclement weather or other causes. It is anticipated that office closings will only be approved in rare instances given the opportunity to work from home. If a decision is made to close, all employees will be notified. Salaried employees will be paid for declared office closings. Office closings will be determined on other institutions closing like Fort Riley, Kansas State University, or local jurisdictions in the MPO region. Employees may elect to work remotely if an office closing is declared.

## **B. Holidays**

Listed below are the holidays that are observed by the MPO. If the holiday falls on a weekend, the holiday will be observed on either the Friday before or Monday following

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ➤ New Year's Day         | ➤ Columbus Day           |
| ➤ Martin Luther King Day | ➤ Veteran's Day          |
| ➤ President's Day        | ➤ Thanksgiving Day       |
| ➤ Memorial Day           | ➤ Day after Thanksgiving |
| ➤ Independence Day       | ➤ Christmas Eve*         |
| ➤ Labor Day              | ➤ Christmas Day*         |

Employees may elect to use either of the starred (\*) holidays to celebrate another religious holiday. This should be communicated with the employee's supervisor in advance and reflected appropriately on the employee's timesheet.

Salaried employees receive full pay for these holidays. Part-time employees do not receive

holiday pay.

### C. Paid and Unpaid Leave

For all types of leave covered in Sections D through Section G, employees will provide advanced notice of any request for leave whenever possible. An email to the employee’s supervisor and reflecting the leave on the calendar will suffice. The MPO Planning Manager will reflect their leave on the calendar and in the fiscal agent’s payroll system. The MPO Planning Manager will provide a summary of leave used to the Policy Board every quarter via the website Policy Board Portal.

In instances in which advanced notice of an absence cannot be provided, the employee will contact their immediate supervisor to inform them that they will not be in that day.

### D. Vacation Leave

All salaried employees, except if contractually agreed upon, shall earn vacation time according to the following schedule:

	<b>1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Years</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Years</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Years</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> Year and over</b>
<b>Hours Accrued Each Year</b>	96	132	168	192
<b>Maximum Accumulation*</b>	144	264	336	384
<b>Maximum Leave Paid**</b>	96	198	252	288

\*Maximum Accumulation of hours between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years is calculated at 1.5 times the number of hours accrued each year. After the third year of service, leave can accumulate to a maximum of two (2) times the number of hours accrued each year.

\*\*Maximum Leave Paid for the 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> years of service is equivalent to the number of hours accrued each year (96 hours). After the third year, the Maximum Leave Paid is equivalent to 1.5 times the number of hours accrued each year.

- When an employee moves to another tier, the higher leave accumulation rate will begin during the pay period in which the anniversary date occurs. For clarification, an employee moves up a tier after completing their third, ninth, and fifteenth years of employment.
- Only time in a salaried position counts in fulfilling this requirement.
- No vacation leave accrues for any month in which five (5) or more days of unpaid leave are accumulated.
- Accrued vacation time may be used in 1/2-hour increments.

Vacation leave may be carried over from one year to another as per the maximum allowed hours defined in the table above (“Maximum Accumulation”). Employees can carry over one-and-a-half times the amount of vacation accrued during the first three years of employment. After that, employees can carry over up to two times the amount of vacation they accrue each year. All

vacation leave over the maximum accumulation shall be forfeited at the end of the last day of the last complete pay period of the calendar year.

If an employee resigns or is otherwise separated from service, accumulated vacation leave, subject to the "Maximum Payment of Leave", as defined in the table above, shall be paid upon separation. Vacation leave will be paid on the employee's final paycheck.

It should be noted that KPERS is not withheld from the vacation leave payout unless the employee joined KPERS prior to 1993. A lump sum amount may be withheld from the vacation leave payout to contribute to KPERS 457. Any employee wishing to contribute to KPERS 457 should communicate this to the bookkeeper prior to their last day of employment.

All employees should notify their supervisor before using vacation leave. Any leave used should be reflected on the KDOT Time Sheet under Task 1.1 and in the Fiscal Agent's payroll system.

#### E. **Medical/Personal Leave**

Salaried employees will **accrue three (3) hours of medical/personal leave** each pay period that can be used any time after it is accrued. Employees must work the entire pay period to receive medical/personal leave. No medical/personal leave accrues to employees for any month in which 5 or more days of unpaid leave are accumulated. Medical/personal time may be used in 1/2-hour increments and may be accumulated without limit.

Medical/personal leave may be used in the following situations for the employee or employee's family: doctor or dental appointments, inclement weather, emergencies, illness (including pregnancy and childbirth), or the adoption of a child or initial placement of a foster child in the employee's home. If an employee wishes to use medical/personal leave for any reason outside of those listed, they should receive prior approval from their immediate supervisor.

An employee may be required to provide proof of such absence, although it is not required to show the medical reason, from a licensed medical doctor or dentist for medical leave in excess of three (3) days.

Employees will not be paid for any accrued medical/personal leave upon leaving the MPO.

#### F. **Overtime/Compensatory Time**

Overtime will not be provided by the MPO, but employees may earn compensatory time (comp time) in lieu of overtime, per the guidance below. Comp time should be tracked in the Excel template housed on the MPO's Google Drive. Employees should notify their supervisor before earning and using comp time. The MPO Planning Manager will oversee the Comp Time Tracking Sheet. If an employee abuses the self-reporting method for tracking comp time, their supervisor may elect to track comp time earned and used for said employee.

To oversee the MPO Planning Manager's use of Comp Time, the MPO Planning Manager will post the Comp Time Tracking Sheet in the Policy Board Portal on the MPO Website.

Exempt Employees:

It is expected that professional and managerial employees who are considered exempt from the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will complete their daily assignments outside of regular business hours without additional compensation. However, an exempt salaried employee may be awarded compensatory time as specified below:

- An exempt employee may request to earn compensatory time for hours worked in excess of business hours (8 hours per day) to attend meetings, events, conferences, workshops, seminars, staff development sessions, and other activities; or to perform extraordinary assignments.
- Comp time cannot be earned on paid holidays.
- Compensatory time will be earned on a 1 to 1 ratio. For 1 hour of extra time worked, 1 hour of compensatory time will be earned.
- If extra time is worked on holidays or weekends to perform professional activities, compensatory time may be granted to an employee, up to a maximum of seven hours per day.
- Compensatory time may be earned in 1/4-hour increments; it will be used in 1/2- hour increments.
- An employee should obtain approval from the MPO Planning Manager before attending one of the approved activities listed above or before they perform extraordinary assignments.
- Use of compensatory time must be approved by the employee's supervisor.
- An employee can carry a maximum of 24 hours of compensatory time, and it must be used within 26 pay periods of earning it. Compensatory time cannot be sold back to the organization.
- In the event of termination of employment, an employee will not be paid for unused compensatory time.

#### Non-exempt Employees:

The MPO may restrict the work of non-exempt employees to the normal workday to the maximum extent, which is consistent with the completion of assigned work. Whenever an FLSA non-exempt employee must work additional hours beyond the normal workday, the following policies and procedures will apply.

- Compensatory time will be earned at a regular pay rate when not more than 40 hours are worked within a single workweek.
- Compensatory time will be earned at time-and-a-half when more than 40 hours are worked within a single workweek.
- A non-exempt employee may earn compensatory time to perform extraordinary assignments as determined by an employee's supervisor.
- Compensatory time may be earned in 1/4-hour increments; it will be used in 1/2- hour

increments.

## G. Other Paid Leave

### Funeral Leave

Up to five (5) consecutive business days of funeral leave will be granted to employees following the death of a specified relative. Specified relatives include husband, wife, partner, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, or the spouse of any of these, or a person living in the same household with the employee. For a married employee, an employee in a common-law marriage, or a domestic partnership, the member of the spouse/partner's family is included. "Steps" of the above-listed relatives are also covered. It is the responsibility of the employee to inform his/her supervisor of the length of time they will require for funeral leave.

Up to two (2) consecutive business days of funeral leave will be granted to employees following the death of the following relatives: immediate cousins, aunts, or uncles.

In the event of the death of a co-worker or the co-worker's immediate family, MPO employees will be allowed time off to attend any funeral service or visitation.

All Funeral Leave granted should be reflected under Task 1.1 on an employee's timesheet by the MPO Planning Manager. It should be reflected in the notes section of the timesheet how much leave was granted each day.

### Court Leave

Any regular, full-time employee of the MPO shall be entitled to a leave of absence if he or she is called to testify in a court case or is summoned to jury duty. The MPO will pay the said employee the regular hourly rate or salary during such time.

An employee requesting a leave of absence for court or jury duty shall notify their supervisor and indicate the absence on their calendar. Appropriate verification should be submitted to the MPO Planning Manager.

All Court Leave granted should be reflected under Task 1.1 on an employee's timesheet by the MPO Planning Manager. It should be reflected in the notes section of the timesheet how much leave was granted each day.

### Military Leave

Salaried employees who are members of the National Guard or the organized military reserve will be allowed up to two (2) calendar weeks of military leave per year. Employees should provide as much advance notice of the need for military leave as possible. Per federal guidelines, employees will be paid their full salary for the two weeks.

Salaried employees will be allowed paid leave for jury duty. Employees should provide as much advance notice of the need for leave for this purpose as possible.

## H. Unpaid Leave

Any absence other than those described above in sections B (Holidays), C (Vacation Leave), D (Sick/Personal Leave), and E (Other Leave) represents an unpaid leave of absence.

Although unpaid leave is generally discouraged, an employee may request an unpaid leave of absence through his or her supervisor; however, no unpaid leave requested by an employee will be granted unless all accrued vacation leave, sick/personal leave, and compensatory time has been exhausted by the employee. As much advanced notice as possible should be provided. A request related to sickness or disability will be evaluated in terms of the *Sick and Disability Provisions* below. The needs of the MPO will be considered in approving or disapproving all other requests for unpaid leaves of absence.

### Sickness and Disability Provisions

The MPO offers disability insurance to provide income continuation to salaried employees who experience an injury or a major illness. The MPO also provides vacation leave and sick/personal leave to salaried employees.

Consistent with the requirements of the organization's insurance program, salaried employees have certain options concerning the type of leave or insurance benefit to use in the event of an injury or illness. However, employees who are eligible for disability benefits may not receive both paid leave and disability payments for the same period of time.

All employees will provide advance written notice (email is acceptable) of requests for leave whenever possible.

If an employee attributes an absence to illness, injury, or medical treatment, the employer reserves the right to request a statement from an attending physician, which documents the nature of the injury or illness. A physician's statement is required for absences of three (3) or more days due to injury or illness. Additionally, the employer may also require an employee who is absent due to sickness for an extended period, or for recurring periods of time, to consult with a physician or medical facility of the employer's choosing to confirm a diagnosis.

### FMLA

The MPO is subject to the provisions of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, as the MPO is considered a public entity. FMLA will be administered following the rules and regulations as set in Title 29, Subtitle B, Chapter V, Subchapter C, Part 825. More information for employees is located in Appendix A of this Manual.

## VI. Personnel Management and Policies

### A. Employee Performance Evaluation

The evaluation process exists to attend to the professional growth and performance of the employee. It is an opportunity to examine work performance and the context in which the work takes place. It provides an opportunity for both the employee and supervisor to discuss,

celebrate success, raise concerns, catalyze new ideas, and stimulate professional and organizational growth and development. The evaluation process is comprised of frequent informal dialogue and an annual formal performance review that does not include any surprises.

### Informal Evaluation Process

This process is an ongoing dialogue between employee and supervisor characterized by a sense of collegiality and partnership. It affirms direction, considers strategy, offers support, notes areas of difficulty or dissatisfaction, and designs mid-course corrections, as needed. It is intended to ensure that there will be no surprises at the annual performance evaluation. It is incumbent upon the supervisor and employee to initiate documentation, as appropriate or desired, with full knowledge of the other party.

### Formal Evaluation Process

The formal evaluation process shall be conducted annually. Upon joining the MPO, a formal evaluation will be completed after the new employee has been with the MPO for six (6) months. After this, each employee will undergo a formal review on the anniversary of the employee's start date each year. The formal process will include:

- Written performance evaluation;
- Dialogue in a face-to-face meeting; and
- Opportunity for the employee being reviewed to comment on the review form.

### Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)

A cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will be analyzed each year during the development of the next year's budget. COLAs will be compared for the surrounding jurisdictions and partner organizations, as well as the Social Security Administration.

### Merit Policy

The MPO will provide each full-time employee a 2% merit increase every two years, when the budget allows, and per satisfactory performance. This will be incorporated into odd-year budgets. Merit increases will only be provided to full-time employees after they complete at least two years of employment.

### Exit Interviews

A final exit interview should be completed by any full-time employee upon resignation or dismissal from the organization. This provides an opportunity for the employee to provide constructive feedback to better the organization.

### Performance Improvement Plans

A performance improvement plan will be written for any employee whose work is determined to be unsatisfactory. Under no circumstance will a performance improvement plan be used to



address a disciplinary concern.

The performance improvement plan will identify:

- The nature of the improvement which is required;
- How that improvement will be measured or assessed;
- The time frame during which improved performance must be demonstrated;
- Any assistance or support which will be provided to the employee; and
- The consequences of not achieving a satisfactory level of performance.

## **B. Hiring of Staff**

There are two types of employees hired by the MPO.

- 1) Hourly positions are generally temporary or part-time in nature. Compensation is based on an hourly wage. As provided for in the law, workers' compensation and unemployment compensation may be provided to hourly positions.
- 2) Salaried positions are full-time and are expected to be continuing in nature. Fringe benefits may include paid leave provisions, health insurance, and retirement programs, as well as workers' compensation and unemployment compensation. All salaried positions will be exempt employees and not be paid overtime.

### Hiring of MPO Planning Manager

A committee should be established to hire the MPO Planning Manager. The committee should include the following individuals, at a minimum:

- Policy Board Chairperson
- TAC Representative
- Kansas Department of Transportation Representative

### Hiring of Project Manager or other Salaried Positions

The MPO Planning Manager is responsible for the hiring of any additional staff members needed to perform the activities outlined in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The hiring of additional staff is granted by the Policy Board through the approval of the UPWP.

A committee should be established to hire the Project Manager or other salaried positions. The committee should include at a minimum, the following individuals:

- MPO Planning Manager
- TAC Chairperson
- TAC At-Large Representative
- Other MPO Staff that may serve as the supervisor of the new employee

### Onboarding New Employees

The MPO Planning Manager is responsible for initiating the onboarding process for new employees by working with the bookkeeper. Below outlines the following responsibilities for each party:

#### **MPO Planning Manager's Responsibilities**

- Execute the employee contract with the employee
- Enter employees name and email address into QuickBooks Payroll and select the option to allow the employee to enter direct deposit and tax information in themselves
- Verify all steps of the New Hire Checklist have been completed
- Send bookkeeper salary and benefit information to bookkeeper

#### **Bookkeeper's Responsibilities**

- Verify all information is inputted in QuickBooks by new employee
- Set up a time with the new employee for them to drop off their W-9, I-9 (bookkeeper will need to verify documentation)
- Bookkeeper will set up salary and benefit information in QuickBooks

### **C. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**

It is the policy of the MPO to abide by all federal and state employment laws and to provide equal opportunities to employees and applicants. To assure full implementation of this policy, the MPO will take action to assure that it:

- Hires only well-qualified people to perform the many tasks necessary in providing high-quality service within budgeted costs;
- Recruits, hires, and promotes without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status; and
- Ensures that all other actions relating to the employer-employee relationship, such as compensation, benefits, transfers, conditions of employment, training, compensation, and termination of employment, will be administered without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status.

Equal employment opportunity is the responsibility of the entire workforce. Supervisors, however, are required to be familiar with equal employment opportunity requirements.

An employee who feels that he or she has not been afforded equal opportunity in an employment matter may pursue his or her complaint in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this manual. An employee who initiates an equal opportunity complaint or who serves as a participating witness in an investigation, will not be retaliated against, disciplined, or discriminated against for having done so in good faith.

## D. Compensation Structure

Hourly employees are paid for hours worked based on their hourly wage.

A salaried employee is paid 1/26th of his or her annual salary every two weeks. However, if unpaid leave is taken during a pay period or if it is the employee's initial or final paycheck and less than a full pay period was worked, the employee will be paid an amount equal to the number of hours worked during the pay period.

## E. Insurance, Retirement, and Other Benefits

As provided for in law, the MPO provides social security, workers' compensation, and unemployment compensation benefits to all employees who are covered by applicable state and federal laws.

The MPO also provides other insurance and benefit programs for salaried employees. The types, amounts, provisions, and providers of these optional insurance programs are subject to change by the Board at any time. Described below are a summary of the various programs and benefits, which are currently in effect.

### Health Insurance

The MPO contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas to provide all eligible employees with health insurance. This program includes fee-for-service health care coverage, dental coverage, vision coverage, and certain other benefits. **The cost-share of the monthly premium is 80% employer-paid and 20% employee-paid.**

All salaried employees and their eligible dependents are eligible to participate in this program, subject to the terms and conditions of the program. The MPO and the employee, through payroll withholding, pay insurance premiums jointly. Because the group health insurance program and its benefits are subject to change, employees are advised to refer to the insurance booklets, which are provided to them for more information.

There is no waiting period for any newly hired employees who are eligible for health insurance coverage. The employer's share of the monthly premium is subject to change at any time.

### Disability Insurance

The MPO provides both long-term and short-term disability insurance to salaried employees. Advance Insurance Company of Kansas provides up to 60% of Basic Weekly Earnings/26 weeks (Short-Term Disability) in the event of a disabling condition due either to on-the-job injury or work-related illness. Insurance premiums are paid in full by the MPO. Because this coverage is subject to change, employees are advised to refer to the insurance booklets, which are provided to them for more information.

Long-term disability insurance is provided through KPERs as part of the pension, providing up to 60% of an employee's annual salary. Only employees contributing to the KPERs pension are eligible for this benefit. The MPO pays for the long-term disability insurance.

### Life Insurance

Basic group life insurance is provided to all employees participating in the KPERS Pension. The benefit is equal to 150% of the employee's annual salary (capped at \$265,000). The cost of this benefit is paid by the MPO. There is also optional life insurance for eligible employees. More information is available on the KPERS website.

All eligible employees will receive life insurance through the Advanced Insurance Company of Kansas. Contact the MPO for more information on this benefit.

### Retirement Fund

The MPO offers KPERS Pension for all qualifying employees. Participation in the program is recommended, but not required, for salaried employees and any employee working over 1,000 hours each year and meeting other qualifications. Each employee choosing to participate in the KPERS Pension is required to contribute **six (6)** percent of his/her gross salary through payroll withholding.

### Deferred Compensation Plan:

All salaried employees are eligible to participate in the KPERS 457 deferred compensation plan, which is offered by the MPO and administered by Empower. Employees who enroll in the program elect to have a certain amount of their pay "deferred" on a pre-tax basis until retirement.

### Professional Memberships

The MPO may elect to pay for a salaried employee's individual membership to a professional organization and/or pay yearly fees associated with maintaining an employee's certification or license, relevant to their position. Such expenses must be approved by the MPO Planning Manager and programmed in an approved Unified Planning Work Program before the expense is incurred by the MPO.

### Communications Allowance

The MPO does not provide employees with a mobile phone or office phone to use for business purposes. The MPO does pay for, Grasshopper, an automated phone system that forwards calls from the MPO's office number to individuals' mobile phones, in lieu of paying for office phones. A communications allowance will be provided to any full-time employee using their personal mobile phone as their primary work phone. The Grasshopper app must be installed on the employee's phone to be eligible for this reimbursement. The communications allowance is \$40 per month, per employee. Employees will remain eligible to receive the allowance as long as they are employed full-time, have an active/operable mobile phone at all times, and have the Grasshopper app installed.

## **VII. Procurement Procedures**

The MPO shall use the procurement procedures as outlined in the KDOT Procurement Guidance

for CPG Funded Consultant Services and Goods. The KDOT Procurement Guidance should be referenced for all standards and procedures. Under all circumstances, the MPO should maintain a copy of the procurement process on file.

The MPO should follow the procurement procedures outlined in the KDOT Procurement Guidance and complete all applicable forms for KDOT approval before the advertisement, selection, or contract execution.

## A. Procurement Cost Thresholds

### Professional Services

The MPO, on occasion, will need to consult with an accountant or an attorney on fiscal or legal matters, respectively. These instances are rare and occur on an as-needed basis. Due to the infrequent use of professional services by the MPO, the MPO will handle the procurement of accounting or legal services differently from other professional or consulting services. Given the amount of time for accountants or attorneys to research and educate themselves on what the MPO is, how it is structured, and the rules and regulations applicable to the organization. This often takes longer than the task itself.

For both accounting and legal services, a contract or agreement should be created to outline the hourly fee and the general nature of the service. The process to select both an accountant and attorney was completed using the suggested procurement method outlined in the “Less than \$5,000” category of the “Consultant Services” section.

Should the services provided by either the accountant or attorney become a reoccurring service, or the task is expected to exceed the cost threshold outlined below, the MPO will follow the procurement standards listed in the “Consultant Services” section.

It is the MPO’s policy that accounting and legal services do not have to go through a formal procurement process if the following criteria are met:

### Accounting Services

The purpose of having an accounting firm available is to provide the MPO with accounting or tax advice in the event the City of Manhattan, as the Fiscal Agent, is unable to provide guidance. It is not anticipated that the accountant will be utilized frequently.

- The amount paid for the professional services is less than 600\* in one calendar year.
- The services requested are on an as-needed basis and the accountant is not providing routine services.
- The purpose of the accountant is to provide guidance on accounting or tax questions that arise.

### Legal Services

- The amount paid for the professional service is less than \$600\* in one calendar year.
- The attorney is not being paid an annual retainer.

- The services requested are on an as-need basis and do not occur routinely.

\*\$600 was selected as the threshold as the hourly rate of accountants and attorneys is typically around \$200. This would allow for three hours of accounting or legal services to be completed for the MPO in a calendar year.

### Bookkeeper

The MPO requires a bookkeeper to be under contract to maintain the separation of accounting duties. Every three years the MPO will procure a bookkeeper per the “Less than \$5,000” section under “Consultant Services”.

### Consultant Services

Less than \$5,000

- It is encouraged that comparative pricing via telephone, fax, letter, or email bids be obtained.
- Advertising is not required.
- Documentation of this process should be kept on file.

\$5,000 to \$25,000

- Solicitation of consultant services with estimated costs within this range shall be made by obtaining project proposals.
- KDOT should be contacted before the solicitation of proposals to inquire about the necessity of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal being established for the contract.
- The scope of work must be advertised for a minimum of 14 days, along with a copy of the selection criteria.

Greater than \$25,000

- A formal competitive bidding process, including KDOT’s review for a DBE goal, is required.
- A minimum 14-day advertising period is required.

### Purchase of Goods

Less than \$500

The MPO defines a small purchase as any item less than \$500. This would include the purchase of general office supplies and equipment throughout the year, including paper, pens, toner, computer cables, and other smaller items. These items are usually consumables that have a shorter lifespan. The MPO does not make bulk purchases and generally purchases office supplies as needed.

\$500 to \$5,000

- It is suggested that comparative pricing via telephone, internet price comparisons, letter, or email bids be obtained.
- Advertising is not required.
- Documentation of this process should be kept on file.

\$5,000 to \$25,000

- The MPO should obtain comparative pricing via letter, fax, or email.
- A minimum of three written bids are required to be obtained.
- A minimum 3-day public posting is required.

Greater than \$25,000

- Formal, competitive solicitation of bids is mandatory.
- A 14-day advertising period is expected.

## B. Selection Committees

For procurement of goods or services over \$25,000, MPO staff should organize a Selection Committee to review proposals and award the contract. The Selection Committee should be comprised of a KDOT representative and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members familiar with the specifics of the proposal. Additional members may be appointed to the Committee as needed.

Any formal procurement process consisting of shortlisting and/or interviews should use a score sheet to grade the proposals on the selection criteria established in the RFP. The MPO will maintain a master score sheet for the procurement process, documenting the scores of the Selection Committee as a whole.

The MPO is not required to hold consultant interviews if the Selection Committee deems it unnecessary, based on the shortlisting process. The score sheet from the shortlisting process should clearly reflect why interviews were not held.

After the Selection Committee's decision and the appropriate approvals from KDOT, MPO staff may work with the vendor or consultant to execute a contract. If the negotiated contract amount is higher than the reflected cost estimate in the approved UPWP, MPO staff should take the contract to the Policy Board before signing.

## VIII. Management of Personal Property and Supplies

### A. Definition of Personal Property

The MPO defines personal property as an asset with a purchase price of over \$100 that has a lifespan of more than a year. This includes laptops, printers, computer monitors, office furniture, bicycle counters, or other property meeting this definition.

## **B. Definition of Supplies**

Supplies are short-term assets that are consumed. This includes paper, toner, pens, and other small consumable items.

## **C. Recording of Personal Property**

Personal property is tracked in an Excel spreadsheet. This will include a description of the equipment, identification number, date purchased, purchase price, and employee using the property.

## **D. Tracking of Supplies**

The MPO spends less than \$200 a year on supplies. Given the minimal amount of supplies purchased on an annual basis, the MPO does not track these expenses in the Personal Property Spreadsheet. A record of these purchases is maintained by the MPO and included in the monthly reimbursement requests sent to KDOT.

## **E. Disposal of Assets**

When personal property is disposed of, the date of disposition and method of disposal will be recorded in the tracking sheet. When electronic assets are retired they will be donated, if still in working order, or recycled. Office furniture being disposed of will be donated or placed in the trash, depending on the condition of the asset.

If an asset is sold, a portion of the compensation received may need to be given back to the CPG. In this situation, the original reimbursement percentage would be used to determine the amount owed back to the CPG.

# **IX. Office Conduct and Management**

## **A. Harassment Policy**

The MPO will provide a productive work environment for its employees and not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any employee that harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another employee's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment. Sexual harassment, in particular, is strictly prohibited and will engender appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including, termination. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for favors or any conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's



work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

While sexual harassment is generally associated with the conduct of a supervisor toward a subordinate, misconduct may also result from the improper actions of co-workers or vendors. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual flirtation, touching, advances, or propositions;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- Graphic or suggestive comments about one's clothes or body;
- Sexually degrading words to describe an individual; and
- The display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, including nude photographs.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been sexually harassed has a responsibility to report the situation as soon as possible to the MPO Planning Manager. Complaints alleging sexual harassment by the MPO Planning Manager should be directed in writing to the current Policy Board Chair for immediate referral to the MPO on-call attorney. The organization's attorney will fully investigate all allegations. Complaints will be investigated and processed according to the grievance procedures as outlined in this manual.

## **B. Encouragement of Reporting**

The MPO encourages complaints, reports, or inquiries about illegal practices or serious violations of the Organization's policies, including illegal or improper conduct by the Organization itself, by its leadership, or by others on its behalf. Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy would include financial improprieties, accounting or audit matters, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies. If a complaint process is already in place, such as raising matters of alleged discrimination or harassment, those complaint processes should be utilized. If those established processes themselves are implicated in the wrongdoing, then this policy should be utilized. This policy is not meant to provide a means of appeal from outcomes in those other mechanisms.

## **C. Protection from Retaliation**

The MPO prohibits retaliation by or on behalf of the agency against employees or volunteers for making good-faith complaints, reports, or inquires under this policy or for participating in a review or investigation under this policy. This protection extends to those whose allegations are made in good faith but prove to be mistaken. The agency reserves the right to discipline persons who make bad faith, knowingly false, or wrongful complaints, reports, or inquiries, or who otherwise abuse this policy.

## **D. Whistleblowing Procedure**

The Policy Board Chair will annually appoint a board member (including ex officio and non-

voting members) of undisputable repute and extensive work experience to be the Whistleblower Ombudsman in charge of the management and administration of any whistleblowing occurrences. Phone and email contact information of this appointment will be prominently posted for agency staff access.

A whistleblower should report a suspected occurrence to the designated board member to fill a formal complaint.

With advice to proceed and/or the employee's desire to proceed the employee will submit a written complaint to the reviewing board member. All whistleblowers' reports should be diligently acknowledged, recorded, and screened. A whistleblower, whose report is not considered bona fide, should forthwith be told so and such report should be disregarded.

If there is an abuse of the process, disciplinary action can occur.

After review of the charge by the designated board representative that is deemed serious and credible, a designated independent attorney, separate from the agency's general counsel, selected by the whistleblower board member and approved by the Policy Board should investigate the report. The report will be forwarded to the investigator, under strict confidentiality rules, as well as to the appropriate person(s) in the agency.

As soon as reasonably possible, the main results of the due diligence examination should be appropriately communicated as feedback to the whistleblower. The person, whose behavior has been reported, should also be informed of the main object of the ongoing procedure, thereby allowing this person to present objections.

All employees should be in a position to report serious occurrences, as defined above, without fear of retaliation or of discriminatory or disciplinary action. Therefore, the whistleblower's employment, remuneration, and career opportunities are protected by the agency during a reasonable period.

The agency will maintain, to the fullest extent possible and at all times, the confidentiality of the data revealed through whistleblowing, and the identity of the whistleblower, subject to overriding legal requirements, and should protect such data with the most appropriate discretion and care.

## **X. Personnel Actions**

### **A. Employment-at-Will Disclaimer**

This manual provides basic information pertaining to policies, practices, responsibilities, and benefits which are associated with employment at the MPO. However, no provision of this manual represents a contract or should be construed as such.

Employment is at the will of the employer. Both the employer and the employee may terminate employment at any time with or without cause. The MPO, through its own action or through the action of the MPO Planning Manager, may change any term or condition of employment whether that term or condition is stated in the Manual or is otherwise established as an

employment practice. Written or oral statements made to employees are not to be interpreted in any way, which alters the “at-will” employment relationship.

The disciplinary procedures identified in this handbook are advisory rather than binding on the employer. They may be adjusted or modified at the discretion of the employer.

## **B. Advancement and Job Posting**

The MPO is committed to staff development. The MPO intends to promote from within to the extent that it is feasible to do so. For this reason, current employees are encouraged to identify developmental opportunities and to pursue advancement within the organization. Employees are also encouraged to share their career objectives with their supervisors so that appropriate advice and assistance can be provided in this regard. Supervisors will be prepared to discuss the employee’s potential for advancement within the organization as part of the annual performance evaluation. Additionally, employees may request the development of a formal individual development plan.

All permanent positions will be posted for at least ten (10) working days and will remain posted until a selection has been made. Depending on circumstances, temporary or intern positions may or may not be posted. A position may be posted concurrently or in advance of outside recruitment to fill a position.

## **C. Disciplinary Procedures**

Employee failures to adhere to the policies and procedures which have been established by the MPO will be addressed informally whenever possible. Further, every effort will be undertaken to prevent the need for disciplinary action.

If formal disciplinary action is required, the progressive application of the following four steps will be followed. The specific step at which discipline is initiated will depend, however, on the nature of the precipitating behavior.

- Step 1, the supervisor will issue an informal (i.e., undocumented) reprimand to the employee.
- Step 2, the supervisor will issue a formal (i.e., documented) reprimand to the employee. The written reprimand will identify: (a) the nature of the action which engendered the reprimand; (b) the action or behavior which is required; and (c) the consequences which will attend to further violations of the established policy or procedure which is in question.
- Step 3, the employee will be issued a written notice of non-performance, which may include a suspension from duty without pay. A suspension may range in length from 3 working days to 60 working days. A suspension may only be issued with the documented approval of the MPO Planning Manager. The written notice of the suspension will identify: (a) the length of the suspension; (b) the nature of the action which engendered the suspension; (c) the action or behavior which is required; and (d) the consequences which will attend to further violations of the established policy or

procedure which is in question. At the discretion of the MPO Planning Manager, step 3 of the progressive discipline process may be repeated in the case of recurring behavior.

- Step 4, the employee will be terminated should the conduct addressed in the previous steps continue.

No advance notice of the application of disciplinary procedures is required. In all such cases, however, the employee will be afforded the opportunity to grieve the specific application of the MPO's disciplinary procedure.

#### **D. Grievance Procedure**

Every effort will be made to resolve employee questions, concerns, and disputes to the satisfaction of all interested parties in a manner that is quick, fair, effective, and fully consistent with the established policies and procedures of the MPO.

A formal grievance procedure is provided as a vehicle for addressing questions, concerns, and disputes, which have not otherwise been addressed to an employee's satisfaction. This procedure applies both to grievances (i.e., complaints which refer to an inappropriate application of policy) and allegations of sexual harassment (whistleblowing reporting of improprieties, fraud, or other illegal behaviors within the organization is covered separately).

The MPO's grievance procedure consists of 4 steps. Each step must be followed in sequence.

- Step 1, the employee will initiate an informal (i.e., undocumented) discussion with his or her supervisor. If the matter pertains to an equal employment opportunity or to a harassment issue, or other impropriety of the supervisor the informal discussion may be initiated through the agency administrator.
- Step 2, the employee will file a formal grievance with the supervisor. If the matter pertains to an equal employment opportunity or a harassment issue, the formal grievance may be filed through the MPO Planning Manager. The employee must file the grievance on a prescribed form within 10 working days of the action or event, which precipitated the complaint, or within 10 working days of the employee's first having become aware of the action or event. Additional time may be granted at the discretion of the supervisor. The grievance form will require the employee to identify: (a) the nature of the complaint; (b) the statute, regulation, policy, or precedent which has been violated; and (c) the remedy which is sought. Within 5 working days of having received the grievance, the supervisor will arrange to meet with the employee to discuss the complaint. The supervisor will issue a written response to the employee within 5 working days of the required discussion.
- Step 3, the employee may appeal the supervisor's decision if he or she is not satisfied with the supervisor's response. A step 3 appeal must be filed in writing within 5 working days of having received the supervisor's response to the formal grievance. Additional time may be granted at the discretion of the MPO Planning Manager. Within 5 working days of having received the appeal request, the MPO Planning Manager will

determine whether or not a meeting with the employee is required. If so, a meeting will be arranged within 5 working days. The MPO Planning Manager will issue a written response to the employee within 5 working days of the meeting if one is held. If a meeting is not held, the MPO Planning Manager will issue a written response to the employee within 10 working days of having received the appeal request.

- Step 4, the employee is allowed to appeal the decision of the MPO Planning Manager. A step 4 appeal must be requested in writing within 5 working days of having received the MPO Planning Manager's response. The request for a step 4 appeal is to be delivered to the MPO Planning Manager who will arrange for the appeal to be considered by the Policy Board in an Executive Session within 60 days. The employee is allowed to make a formal presentation to the Policy Board regarding the complaint. (A formal presentation is optional on the employee's part.) The MPO Planning Manager may identify and secure any additional information or input which might be required for it to adjudicate the grievance. The Policy Board will issue a written response to the employee within 30 working days of its formal consideration of the matter. The Policy Board's decision on the matter is final.

## E. Voluntary Separation

To accommodate the orderly transfer of assignments from one employee to another, all employees are asked to provide as much advance notice as possible (i.e., 2 to 4 weeks) when choosing to leave employment with the MPO.

In cases of retirement, employees are asked to provide written notice at least 60 days prior to their scheduled separation in order:

- to meet the requirements of the established pension plan;
- to accommodate the time needed to process any required arrangements; and
- to provide sufficient time for the orderly transfer of assignments.

Every employee who chooses to separate voluntarily from the organization will be asked to participate in an exit interview conducted by the MPO Planning Manager or his or her designee. The exit interview will be used to obtain feedback – both positive and negative – from the employee about his or her reason(s) for leaving. The feedback received from the employee will be shared with the employee's supervisor and/or other members of the management team. Notes about the exit interview will not be retained in the separating employee's personnel file.

The MPO Planning Manager will secure the return of keys and any other items of value, which are owned by the MPO. Any expenses due to the MPO will be settled separately from the final paycheck unless a settlement is specifically provided for in state law or agreed to in writing by the employee.

Pay for accrued, unused vacation time will be paid to the employee on the first regular pay date after the employee receives his or her final paycheck for time actually worked. Employees will not be permitted to exhaust their unused personal/sick days after notice of separation is

provided.

### Involuntary Separation

With or without notice, an individual may be separated at any time for any reason which is deemed appropriate by the MPO. The following represent some of the possible reasons for the involuntary separation of an employee:

- A reduction or change in the organization's funding or programs;
- Dishonesty;
- The falsification of information or data;
- Neglect or carelessness resulting in damage to property;
- A violation of the organization's drug and alcohol policies;
- Habitual tardiness or absenteeism;
- Unsatisfactory job performance;
- Insubordination; and
- Any other form of behavior, which is deemed to constitute serious misconduct.

Employees who are affected by funding or work program changes may be offered other positions with the organization for which they are qualified. Available funding and the requirements of the alternative assignment will be considered in making a job offer of this kind.

If circumstances warrant, a termination notice of at least 2 weeks (i.e., 10 working days) may be provided to an employee. If the organization elects to terminate an employee immediately or to provide notice of fewer than 2 weeks, severance pay will be issued in an amount equal to the employee's established wage or salary for 10 working days minus the wage or salary paid for the total number of days of advance notice which have been provided to the employee. Unless the organization dismisses the employee immediately, an employee will be required to work until his or her established release date to be eligible for severance pay. Any unused accrued compensatory time for FLSA non-exempt employees and any unused accrued personnel/sick days for salaried employees may be used during the notice period. Unused vacation days may not be used during the notice period. Further, the severance benefit will be waived if the employee enters into a new job before the end of the time period for which severance pay would have been paid.

Accrued, unused vacation pay will be paid to the employee on the first regular pay date after the employee receives his or her final paycheck for time worked.

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION

## LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS



Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered servicemember's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

## BENEFITS & PROTECTIONS

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

An employer may not interfere with an individual's FMLA rights or retaliate against someone for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave;\* and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

\*Special "hours of service" requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

## REQUESTING LEAVE

Generally, employees must give 30-days' advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days' notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally, follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

## EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

## ENFORCEMENT

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information or to file a complaint:

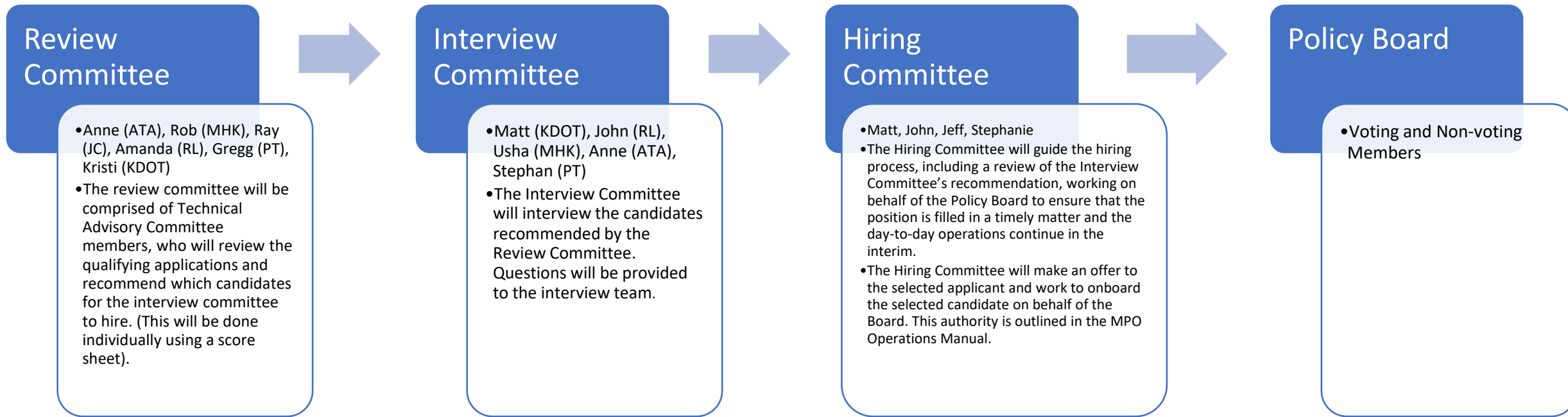
**1-866-4-USWAGE**  
(1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627

**www.dol.gov/whd**

U.S. Department of Labor | Wage and Hour Division



WH1420 REV 04/16



- Stephanie will review each application received to ensure minimum qualifications are met and all applications include references, resume, and cover letter. These will be forwarded on to the Review Committee



2023 Local Match  
May Estimate

Total 2023 UPWP Funding Breakout	Federal Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG)	Local Funds	Total
Estimates	\$180,000.00	\$64,119.67	<b>\$244,119.67</b>
Percentage of Budget	73.7%	26.3%	<b>100%</b>

Jurisdiction	% of MPA Population	2023 Estimate
Manhattan	54.4%	\$34,881.10
Junction City	24.3%	\$15,581.08
Pottawatomie County	7.6%	\$4,873.09
Riley County	5.9%	\$3,783.06
Wamego	4.5%	\$2,885.39
Geary County	3.3%	\$2,115.95
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$64,119.67</b>

**Assumptions**

5% contingency for all employee benefits

Does not include any billable hours to outside agencies