

Texas Fire Chiefs Association
DOCUMENT SUBMISSION FORM

Candidate Department: Coppel Fire Department

Best Practice Standard: 5.03 Release of Information
(insert the Best Practice Standard you are working on - example "1.01")

Proofs of Compliance Submitted:

- Please see the attached City of Coppel Employee Policies, as they pertain to the Open Records Act, and confidential information.

Submitted By: Gregg Loyd	Date: 10/1/2013
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Evaluator's Review

Evaluator:

Date Accepted:

CITY OF COPPELL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Policy No. 1115

Rev. 01/01/2010

The City of Coppell maintains official personnel files in the Human Resources Department for each City employee. Regular performance reviews, change of status records, commendations, disciplinary actions, and educational and professional attainment records are examples of records maintained in personnel files.

Access to Information in Personnel Files. Personnel files of employees are the property of the City and access to the information they contain is restricted. Information contained in personnel files may, however, be subject to disclosure in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act. The Human Resources Department may release impersonal statistical information as deemed appropriate.

Personnel files are open for inspection as follows, subject to procedures established by the Human Resources Department:

- An employee may normally examine the entire contents of his/her personnel file.
- Examination of an employee's personnel file by a potential employer will normally be permitted with a written release acceptable to the City.
- Upon written request, which complies with the provisions of the Public Information Act, anyone may examine information contained in any employee's personnel file, except for that information which is deemed confidential by law.
- A City employee who has supervisory authority over the employee, or an employee with a bona fide "need to know", may examine material in an employee's personnel file.
- By order of a court of competent jurisdiction, any person may examine such portion of any employee's personnel file as may be ordered by the Court.
- As deemed appropriate when in the City's best interest.

Unauthorized removal or alteration of any documents from a personnel file will subject the employee responsible to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

No information from an official personnel file will be released on an active or inactive employee, except with the prior authorization of the Human Resources Department.

Medical Records. Medical records for all employees will be maintained in separate files by the Human Resources Department and treated as confidential. Medical records are not to be maintained outside the Human Resources Department unless authorized by the Human Resources Department in extraordinary circumstances.

Changes in Personnel Information. Employees must provide the Human Resources Department with their current street address and a current phone number and immediately advise the Human Resources Department of any change. Employees are also responsible for keeping the Human Resources Department informed of any changes in name, home phone number, and family status (births, marriages, death, divorce, legal separation) and name and address of dependents (for benefits and tax withholding purposes only), beneficiary designations, persons to be notified in an emergency, educational accomplishments, and relevant certifications or licenses. This responsibility also applies to employees on leaves of absence.

Accuracy of Information. The City relies on the accuracy of information provided by individuals in their resume and employment application, as well as other data provided throughout the hiring process and during employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material and/or purposeful omissions in any of this information will likely result in the termination of the employee or the exclusion of an applicant from further consideration for employment.

CITY OF COPPELL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK**REFERENCES****Policy No. 1118****Rev. 01/01/2010**

All requests for information regarding current and former City employees, including requests for verification of employment and requests for employment references, must be directed to the Human Resources Department. Inquiring parties should be informed that all such requests need to be made in writing. Unless otherwise authorized by the City Manager's office, only the Human Resources Department is authorized to provide information of any kind regarding current or former employees.

Typically, the City will release only dates of employment and job title to third parties unless the employee or former employee has signed a written authorization to disclose further information about his or her employment. The City may also be required to release information in accordance with an open records request or as needed to carry out City business as determined by the City Manager's office or the Human Resources Department.

All employees are expected to strictly abide by the terms and procedures of this policy. An employee who receives a request for information should never make any "off-the-record" statements regarding a current or former employee. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

**CITY OF COPPELL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK
CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION
POLICY NO. 1206**

Rev. 01/01/2010

Safeguarding confidential information is essential. Caution and discretion are absolutely essential in the use and disclosure of any and all confidential and proprietary information. Employees who are privy to such information may share it only with those having a legitimate business need to know. This means that employees may not disclose to or discuss confidential City, vendor, citizen, or employee information with another City employee unless the other employee has a legitimate business need to know the information. Likewise, employees may not disclose such confidential information with other vendors, citizens or other third parties unless there is a legitimate and necessary business reason for doing so. Employees with questions as to what is confidential, what is a legitimate and necessary business reason, who is an appropriate person to discuss confidential information with, or who is an appropriate person to disclose confidential information to, must talk to their supervisor, Department Director, or the Human Resources Department.

Confidential and proprietary information may not be used for personal gain or in any way that is adverse to the City's interests. Using confidential information for the purpose of making personal investments or business decisions is also prohibited.

The inappropriate use or disclosure of confidential information may result in civil and criminal penalties. If you are required to give testimony or depositions regarding the City, you must notify the Human Resources Department and the City Manager's Office immediately.

Any employee who is aware of, or suspects, that an employee is or is about to violate this policy must immediately tell their supervisor or someone else in City management. Any employee who improperly uses or discloses confidential information, or who fails to report a suspected or actual violation of this policy, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.