

Memorandum

Date: October 9, 2019
To: All Employees
FROM: Stephanie Romagnoli, Human Resources Manager
SUBJECT: Ordinance Change – Title 1 10(2)(E)(1)(b)

Employees:

At the October 3 City Council meeting, the third reading of an ordinance amending Title 1 10 (2)(E)(1)(b). This ordinance will take effect upon publication, and employees will be notified when this occurs. The updated ordinance now states:

Any elected official shall deal with City Department Heads and employees, who are subject to the direction and supervision of the City Administrator solely, through the City Administrator, and Council Members shall not give orders to any such Department Heads or employees either publicly or privately. All departmental activity requiring the attention of the Council shall be brought before that body by the City Administrator. Elected officials shall have access to department heads or staff employees for the purpose of open and two-way communications; however, any meetings, issues or concerns raised by department heads, staff or elected officials shall be brought to the attention of the City Administrator.

To assist employees in understanding the effect this may have on their day to day activity, the City Council has also adopted two new policies to be placed in the employee handbook. Until an updated handbook is drafted, we are providing this memo and ask that employees sign for receipt of the policies. These policies are as follows:

Retaliation Policy

It is important to foster an environment that makes employees unafraid to speak—or to choose not to speak—about City-related issues. Employees who choose either to share or not share information with elected officials or citizens—including to report misconduct or suspected violation shall be protected from retaliation.

As such, if an employee is approached by an elected official and/or citizen, and the employee feels uncomfortable with the interaction—the employee shall take his/her concerns to the City HR Manager or the City Administrator. In the event the concerns involve the City HR Manager and the City Administrator, then the employee shall to take his/her concerns to the City Attorney.

Union Policy

Pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 20, the City Attorney is the designated representative for union negotiation matters. As such, it is a violation of Iowa law for any employee to negotiate or attempt to negotiate directly about union matters with any elected official

In addition, this guidance is provided to be sure employees understand their rights and responsibilities related to this change. As City Council has presented this to staff, the intention of the ordinance change is to foster more communication directly between Council and employees. Council members and employees should follow some basic guidelines, however, in ensuring the communication remains appropriate.

- 1) Employees have the option whether to talk to a Council member. If an employee does not wish to speak to the member of Council they are free to decline.**
- 2) Interaction with Council members should be scheduled as much as possible, and should not interfere with accomplishing work.**
- 3) Employees should be aware that City Council can only take action as a body, they are not direct supervisors, and therefore, can not issue work directives to employees.**
- 4) Issues, concerns, or decisions that would normally be handled by management personnel should continue to be addressed to the supervisor, department head, or City Administrator as would normally occur.**
- 5) Union members should refrain from any discussion with Council members related to contract items or negotiations. Doing so is a violation of the law.**
- 6) Employees who meet with the Mayor or a City Council member are required to report any work-related conversations, meetings or issues to the Department Head/City Administrator immediately.**

My signature acknowledges receipt of this memo. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Ordinance change and the associated policies and guidelines.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____