

ARTICLE I

FEDERATION RECOGNITION

- 1.1 The Vermont State Housing Authority, hereinafter termed the "Authority", hereby recognizes the Vermont State Housing Authority Staff Federation of the Vermont State Employees Association, hereinafter termed the "Federation" as the exclusive bargaining agent of a bargaining unit consisting of all nonmanagement employees of the Authority, excluding supervisors and confidential employees consistent with Chapter 22 of 21 V.S.A., as certified by the Vermont Labor Relations Board.
- 1.2 If, during the life of this Agreement, the bargaining unit should be amended by the Vermont Labor Relations Board or by mutual consent of the Authority and Federation, the parties shall meet to discuss the effects of such amendment, and any Article affected by such amendment shall be renegotiated.
- 1.3 Temporary employees shall not be members of the bargaining unit unless and until the number of temporary employees exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) of the number of employees in the permanent bargaining unit, rounded to the nearest whole number, for a period of four (4) consecutive months. This addition of temporary employees to the bargaining unit shall begin the next calendar month following said four (4) month period and shall continue thereafter for six (6) consecutive months. A "temporary" employee is an employee who is hired for a period not exceeding six (6) consecutive months. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits provided to full-time, part-time or limited service employees. Individuals with whom the Authority contracts for specific services or who are hired to perform casual labor shall not be considered temporary employees for the purpose of this Section 1.3. In the event that an individual has been employed as a temporary employee for a total of six (6) months within twelve (12) consecutive months from his/her initial date of hire, said person shall be rehired as a temporary employee only for good cause and with Federation approval.
- 1.4 Should a temporary employee be hired as a full-time, part-time or limited service employee, he/she shall be credited with the time spent as a temporary employee for the purpose of eligibility and accrual of paid leaves of absence under this Agreement.
- 1.5 "Part-time" employees shall be defined as those employees whose normal work schedule is at least twenty (20), but less than forty (40) hours per week. Said employees shall be members of the bargaining unit.
- 1.6 "Full-time" employees shall be defined as those employees whose normal work schedule is forty (40) hours per week. Said employees shall be members of the bargaining unit.
- 1.7 "Limited service" employee is defined as an employee who has completed his/her initial probationary period and is occupying a position for a specified period greater than six (6) months, but not exceeding two (2) years. Said employees shall be members of the bargaining unit. An employee who has been on limited service status for more than two consecutive years shall become a full-time or part-time employee within the bargaining unit.
- 1.8 Individuals with whom the Authority contracts for specific services or who are hired to perform casual labor shall not be members of the bargaining unit.

ARTICLE II

MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

- 2.1 Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Agreement or otherwise specifically agreed to in writing between the parties, determination of policy, the operation and management of Authority facilities, the control, supervision and direction of employees, and any and all other matters which are committed by law to the Authority or otherwise involve the exercise of reserved or retained managerial prerogatives are vested exclusively in the Authority with appropriate authority to act delegated to the Executive Director of the Authority.
- 2.2 None of the provisions of this Agreement shall operate to preclude the Authority from taking such action as it deems necessary for the care and protection of its employees, equipment and facilities in case of emergency.
- 2.3 The Authority shall have the right to adopt, amend and promulgate as necessary, rules, regulations, policies and procedures not addressed in this Agreement for the efficient and orderly administration of Authority business. Said rules, regulations, policies, procedures or amendments thereto shall be in writing and shall be distributed to all employees.
- 2.4 The Authority may contract out bargaining unit work, consistent with the provisions of Article VI.

ARTICLE III

FEDERATION RIGHTS

- 3.1 The Federation shall have the right to make reasonable use of Authority facilities, in accordance with Authority policy, upon appropriate request, provided that such use does not interfere with normal Authority operations. Any reasonable repair or replacement costs necessitated by such use shall be borne by the Federation. The Federation shall be permitted to have a bulletin board at the Authority's Central and Regional offices for the purpose of posting Federation information and materials. The Authority shall approve the size, location and installation of the bulletin board and the Federation shall be responsible for the purchase and maintenance of the bulletin board.
- 3.2 The Federation shall have the right to make reasonable use of the Authority's copy machine at the rate of five cents (\$.05) per copy.
- 3.3 Rights and benefits set forth in this Agreement shall be part of any individual contract or notice of intent to employ. In the event of conflict, the terms of this Agreement shall be controlling.
- 3.4 Paid leave for Federation business shall be provided to employees as follows, upon appropriate request and approval by the appropriate supervisor, provided that such leave does not interfere with the operation of the Authority:
- A. Federation Stewards shall be provided reasonable time during normal working hours to process grievances and attend grievance hearings.
 - B. The Federation Chair shall be provided reasonable opportunity during normal working hours to discuss issues with Authority management and Federation members.
 - C. Federation members, collectively, shall be provided up to 120 hours on a fiscal year basis during normal working hours to participate in Federation business; i.e. attend V.S.E.A. Council and Committee meetings, steward trainings, prepare for union meetings, preparation for Collective Bargaining Negotiations, and attendance by the Federation Chair or other designated member to attend VSHA Board Meetings. Use of the time allotted to the Federation by any Federation member must first be approved by the Federation Chair or designee.
 - D. Three (3) Federation members shall be provided reasonable paid time during normal working hours to attend Collective Bargaining Negotiations. Nothing herein shall preclude the parties from agreeing to schedule negotiations during non-work hours.
 - E. The Federation Chair, or other designated member, shall be provided paid time during normal working hours, up to one hour per new employee, to review the Collective Bargaining Agreement with said new employee. Such review shall be conducted as part of the new employee orientation process.
- 3.5 The printing and distribution of the Agreement shall be at the expense of the Authority. The Authority shall provide each bargaining unit employee with one (1) copy of the Agreement, including each newly hired employee, plus four (4) additional copies for the Federation. Upon request, the Authority will provide the Federation with a copy of the Agreement in a mutually agreeable machine readable format.

ARTICLE IV

NONDISCRIMINATION

- 4.1 The Authority and the Federation each agree to adhere to all applicable federal and state laws, and all related rules and regulations, intended to protect individuals against discrimination, intimidation or harassment, including sexual harassment. The Authority has adopted and promulgated an Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy and an Anti-Harassment Policy. Allegations of discrimination and/or harassment shall be handled by the Authority in compliance with those policies as they may be amended, from time to time.
- 4.2 A "whistleblower" shall be defined as a person covered by this Agreement who makes public allegations of inefficiency or impropriety in government. No provisions of this Agreement shall be deemed to interfere with such an employee in the exercise of his/her constitutional right of free speech and such person shall not be discriminated against in his/her employment with regard thereto.

ARTICLE V

NO-STRIKE AGREEMENT

- 5.1 During the term of this Agreement, the Federation guarantees, on behalf of itself and each of its members, that there will be no strike, boycott, work stoppage, slow down or any other form of interference, coercive or otherwise, with the operation of the Authority.
- 5.2 The Authority shall have the right to take disciplinary action against any employee who violates this Article V. If such disciplinary action is grieved, the only issue shall be the participation or non-participation of the grievant in any of the activities prohibited by this Article V.
- 5.3 In the event of a violation of this Article V, the Authority shall have the right to avail itself of any legal and equitable right available.

ARTICLE VI

CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES

- 6.1 No bargaining unit employee will be laid off or otherwise reduced in hours as a result of work performed by a contractor, temporary, intern, volunteer or other non-regular (non-bargaining unit eligible) employee except in circumstances when a special license, certification, accreditation or skill, not possessed by current staff is required; or in circumstances where the contract or employment is in response to an emergency, or is seasonal in nature. It is understood that reasonable accommodations will be made in situations where a license can be obtained expeditiously (such as a C.D.L.).
- 6.2 This Article VI shall not constitute a restriction on the right of the Authority to reduce its work force where a layoff is made necessary for the efficient operation of Authority business or due to budgetary restrictions. Determinations of when a layoff is necessary, and in what areas/divisions, shall be the Authority's prerogative consistent with the provisions of Article II. Layoffs shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of Article XXVIII.
- 6.3 " Contracts for the services of private contractors" shall be any service provided to the Authority by agreement between an authorized representative of the Authority and an individual organization in which no employer/employee relationship exists.

ARTICLE VII

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

- 7.1 The Authority shall make available to the Federation, upon reasonable request, all such statistics, financial information, job descriptions and personnel reports necessary for negotiation and implementation of this Agreement.
- 7.2 The Federation shall provide the Executive Director a regularly updated list of Federation officers.
- 7.3 The Authority and the Federation agree that requests for information, approvals and authorizations shall be handled within a reasonable period of time in relation to the nature of the request.

ARTICLE VIII

FEDERATION DUES AND FAIR SHARE ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The Authority shall deduct Federation dues for employees who have joined the Federation and have signed an authorization card.
- 8.2 The Authority shall deduct a fair share assessment for all members of the bargaining unit who are not also members of the Federation, provided his/her most recent hire date with the Authority is after September 6, 1979. Members of the bargaining unit shall be subject to a fair share assessment beginning with the first pay period following completion of 60 calendar days of employment.
- 8.3 The fair share assessment shall be at a rate not to exceed eighty-five percent (85%) times the amount of Federation dues, provided such assessment is supported by Federation audit data.
- 8.4 All deductions under this Article VIII shall be made on a monthly basis beginning with the employee's first monthly paycheck and shall be transmitted to the Federation Treasurer by the fifteenth (15th) of the month following the month in which deductions are made.
- 8.5 The Federation agrees to hold the Authority harmless for any and all claims stemming from deductions under this Article VIII.
- 8.6 The Authority shall not be required to collect Federation dues or fair share assessment from an employee not receiving sufficient compensation during the applicable pay period to permit the deduction of dues or fair share payment.

ARTICLE IX

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 9.1 The Authority, Federation and employees each agree to recognize their obligation to adhere to the standards set forth in the federal and state Occupational Safety and Health Act.
- 9.2 Any alleged violation of this Article IX shall be subject to the grievance procedure of this Agreement as well as the complaint procedure of the OSHA and the VOSHA.
- 9.3 All protective clothing or safety equipment required by OSHA or VOSHA regulations applicable to Authority employees shall be provided at the expense of the Authority. The wearing of protective clothing or safety equipment shall conform to VOSHA standards.
- 9.4 In the event that an employee is injured while on the job as a result of:
- A. assault by a person not employed by the Authority, or
 - B. an attack by an animal, or
 - C. exposure to a contagious disease, or
 - D. a car accident when Authority business requires travel, or
 - E. acts occurring in or around the dwelling unit of a current or potential recipient of Authority assistance, and
 - F. the employee is found eligible for temporary total or temporary partial disability (“TTD” or “TPD”) benefits under Worker's Compensation, then the employee will be paid the difference between his/her basic weekly salary, and his/her TTD or TPD Worker's Compensation benefits. Any work time lost by the employee as a result of events noted herein shall not be charged to his/her sick leave. In any instance, the determination of the Worker's Compensation Board shall be determinative as to whether an injury is job-related. Payment of monies in addition to TTD or TPD Worker's Compensation benefits under this Section 9.4 will be barred when the employee's negligence was the proximate cause of his/her injury, the determination of which shall be subject to the grievance provision of this Agreement.

ARTICLE X

HIRING, PROMOTION, DEMOTION AND RECLASSIFICATION

- 10.1 All employees shall be given notice and opportunity to apply for each position the Authority intends to fill. A recruitment announcement shall be provided to all employees at their assigned site location or notified individually via electronic mediums. Upon completion of notification to all staff, the Authority shall be permitted to advertise vacancies. Employees who apply for vacant positions shall be granted an interview provided they meet the essential position requirements and qualifications and have not been subject to a disciplinary suspension within the last six (6) months or in a performance plan.
- 10.2 The Executive Director shall retain complete discretion to fill positions according to his/her assessment as to the qualifications of applicants. Any such decision shall not be subject to the grievance procedure of this Agreement.
- 10.3 Upon being hired by the Authority, an employee shall be on "initial probationary status" for a period of six (6) months, during which time the employee may be discharged without cause and without recourse to the grievance procedure of this Agreement. The Executive Director may on a case-by-case basis reduce or extend this probationary period as appropriate to the circumstance; however, under no circumstances shall the total "initial probationary status" exceed nine (9) months.
- 10.4 A promotion shall occur when an employee accepts a new position which has a higher pay grade and different duties/responsibilities than his/her current position. Employees who are promoted shall be on "promotional probationary status" for a period of six (6) months. The Executive Director may on a case-by-case basis reduce or extend this promotional probationary period as appropriate to the circumstance. Extension of the promotional probationary period shall be only upon consensus between the promoted employee, the promoted employee's supervisor, and the Executive Director. Federation representation shall be offered to the promoted employee at the meeting to discuss an extension of promotional probation. A written explanation of why an extension of the promotional probationary period is being considered shall be presented to the employee prior to meeting to discuss the matter. The total promotional probationary period shall not exceed nine (9) months. If at any time during the promotional probationary period should the promoted employee's supervisor determine that the promoted employee is incapable of performing the duties of the new position in a manner consistent with the position description and in a manner satisfactory to the supervisor, the promoted employee shall be returned to his/her previous position provided it is open and the Authority is actively soliciting applicants for that position. If the employee's previous position no longer exists, or is not then available under the conditions set forth above, the employee shall be terminated subject to being offered re-employment pursuant to Section 10.5 hereof. A promotional probationary employee who is discharged for cause shall have no such re-employment rights.
- 10.5 In the event a promotional probationary employee is terminated for other than cause pursuant to the provisions of Section 10.4, such employee shall be eligible to be offered employment by the Authority for any unit position within the Authority which is open or becomes open within two years (2) of the date of the termination of the employee and which the Authority intends to fill, provided the terminated employee meets the minimum qualifications for the available position and the position is at the same or lower pay grade or classification as the position from which the terminated employee was promoted. The terminated employee accepting the available position

shall be compensated at the rate of pay he/she was receiving prior to being promoted plus any eligible pay increases.

The terminated employee may limit the positions for which he/she will be available for re-employment by factors which include, but are not limited to, location, pay scale and department, or in the alternative, he/she may refuse up to two (2) re-employment offers. An employee who limits his/her availability under this Section 10.5 may refuse only one (1) re-employment offer.

The Authority shall give the terminated employee written notice via certified return receipt mail of the availability of the position and the terminated employee shall have ten (10) working days from the date the letter is deposited, postage prepaid, in the United States postal system of the re-employment offer to accept the same in writing. If the re-employment offer is accepted, the terminated employee shall report at the Authority for work within ten (10) working days after accepting the re-employment offer. If the position is refused, the Authority shall have no further obligation to the former employee.

- 10.6 A demotion shall occur when an employee is changed from one (1) pay grade to a lower pay grade. An employee may be demoted for his/her failure to satisfactorily perform the duties of his/her position, or as a result of a reorganization initiated by the Authority based upon efficiency or budgetary reasons or by voluntarily assuming a position in a lower pay grade. Where such demotion is the result of a reorganization, the employee shall not suffer a reduction in pay and shall have a notice placed in his/her personnel file noting that said demotion was not due to unsatisfactory performance. An employee who is demoted based upon an unsatisfactory performance review pursuant to Section 12.2 of this Agreement shall have his/her salary reduced in an amount not to exceed ten (10) percent; or in the case of an employee who voluntarily assumes a position in a lower pay grade, shall have his/her salary reduced in an amount not to exceed five (5) percent. Unless otherwise negotiated, if an employee's base salary exceeds the maximum of the lower pay grade following the adjustments specified herein, the employee's salary will be frozen until such time as the maximum rates increase and the employee's base salary is within the range. In no event shall the employee's salary be reduced below the end of probation rate.
- 10.7 At the discretion of the Executive Director, a temporary employee hired as a full-time, part-time or limited service employee in a like position to that which they filled on a temporary basis, may be credited with time spent as a temporary employee, for purposes of "initial probationary status".
- 10.8 A. The Authority shall have the right to establish the criteria for assigning pay grade classifications to unit positions and to apply said criteria to establish the pay grade for each unit position. This shall include the right to modify said criteria and individual pay grade classifications during the life of this Agreement. The exercise of these rights shall not be subject to the grievance/arbitration procedure of this Agreement.
- B. An individual employee, the Federation or a Supervisor may request a review of the pay grade classification for a unit position(s) under the following conditions:
- (i) The request is submitted in writing;
 - (ii) The pay grade classification of the position has not been reviewed within the prior twelve (12) months;
 - (iii) The review request is based upon facts which demonstrate that the position has been changed in terms of duties, responsibilities or qualifications.

(iv) Should it be demonstrated that a position has been substantially changed in terms of duties, responsibilities, or qualifications within a twelve month period following a review of that position, the Executive Director reserves the right to waive Criteria B.(ii) in order to have the panel re-review the position.

C. Reviews for pay grade classifications for a unit position(s) shall be conducted by a review panel consisting of the position's Supervisor, the Director of Human Resources and Administration and a Federation representative. The reclassification shall be submitted to the Executive Director who shall make the final decision.

D. Any employee who has his/her pay grade increased as a result of a classification review, shall be eligible for a salary increase pursuant to 21.3 of this Agreement. Any employee who has his/her pay grade decreased as a result of a classification review, shall have his/her salary maintained at his/her present level.

ARTICLE XI

EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL RECORDS

- 11.1 Each employee shall have only one (1) official personnel file which shall be maintained by the Executive Director or his/her designee. An employee shall receive a copy of any document placed in his/her personnel file and shall have the right to submit in writing any response to such document and such written response shall be appended to the document. An employee shall have the opportunity to sign any reprimand, warning, derogatory notes, notices of suspension for disciplinary reasons or notices of performance or behaviors inconsistent with the policies or standards of the Authority prior to such documents becoming part of his/her official personnel file. Any responses or signatures by employees to any document shall be submitted within 10 working days from receipt of the document; otherwise, such document shall be placed in the employee's personnel file with a note to the effect the employee did not avail himself/herself of the opportunity to sign or comment on such document.
- 11.2 An employee shall be entitled to have documents of commendation placed in his/her personnel file, provided said document is unsolicited and noted that it is being included at the employee's request.
- 11.3 An employee may request in writing that a written reprimand, warning, derogatory note, notice of performance or behavior inconsistent with the policies or standards of the Authority, notice of suspension for disciplinary reasons, or grievance that is more than two (2) years old be removed from his/her personnel file. The document will be removed if the document is not pertinent or relevant to a pending personnel matter or disciplinary proceeding involving that employee. Unless removal of the requested document(s) is refused, said documents, including the request, shall be given to the employee. Any refusal to remove documents shall be in writing, and shall specify the reason for refusal.
- 11.4 Upon reasonable request, an employee shall be entitled to inspect his/her personnel file during normal working hours on Authority premises and in the presence of the Executive Director or his/her designee. A designee of the employee may inspect his/her personnel file upon written verifiable authorization of the employee.

ARTICLE XII

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

- 12.1 An employee who is on initial probationary status shall receive a written evaluation of his/her performance upon completing ninety (90) calendar days and at the completion of the probationary period.
- 12.2 Each full-time, part-time and limited service employee shall receive a written evaluation of his/her performance on an annual basis during the month of December. Until such time as an employee receives written comments to the contrary, he/she may assume his/her performance is satisfactory. Any such comments shall be made within a reasonably prompt period of time in relation to the subject of the comment. In no event shall an employee receive a less than satisfactory performance evaluation at his/her annual performance review unless such unsatisfactory review was preceded by written comments of performance deficiencies.
- 12.3 Upon being promoted to a position under a different supervisor, an employee shall receive a performance evaluation from his/her previous supervisor. Promoted employees shall receive their annual written evaluations based on the schedule outlined in 12.2. As a promotional probationary employee, he/she shall also receive a written evaluation after ninety (90) calendar days in the new position. At the end of the promotional probationary period, the employee shall receive a written evaluation. The employee shall receive a copy of the evaluations for comment and signature and a copy shall be placed in their personnel file. If at any time during the promotional, probationary period the employee's supervisor believes there to be shortcomings in the employee's performance, the employee will be notified in writing within a reasonable amount of time from the determination.
- 12.4 Performance evaluations shall begin with a meeting between the employee and his/her supervisor to evaluate performance and establish goals and workplans for the future. The employee shall be given at least one work day's notice prior to meeting with their supervisor to discuss their upcoming performance evaluation. A written summary shall be prepared by the supervisor with opportunity for written comment by the employee which shall be appended to the evaluation. Supervisors, employees and the Executive Director shall have the opportunity to sign the evaluation before it's placement in the employee's personnel file. Any responses or signatures by employees to performance evaluations shall be submitted within 10 working days from receipt of the evaluation; otherwise, such evaluation shall be placed in the employee's personnel file with a note to the effect the employee did not avail himself/herself of the opportunity to sign or comment on the evaluation.
- 12.5 When a non-probationary employee receives a less than satisfactory performance review or a notice of job performance that is unsatisfactory or otherwise inconsistent with reasonable standards of competence, quality or timeliness, a written performance plan shall be developed between the employee and the employee's supervisor. The plan shall contain all of the following:

- A. A description of the specific activities indicating a record or pattern of performance deficiencies.
- B. Recommendations to correct noted deficiencies.
- C. Expectations of the supervisor concerning the satisfactory level of performance.
- D. The duration of the performance plan including a list of measurable, attainable goals with specific agreed-upon timelines for completion and consequences of noncompliance. The employee and supervisor shall meet at agreed-upon intervals to discuss the employee's progress towards each goal.
- E. The plan shall be signed by both the supervisor and the employee.

In the event the employee is not in compliance with the plan within the specified time periods set forth in the plan, the employee will be placed in warning status for a period of not less than thirty (30) nor more than ninety (90) calendar days. If the employee is not in compliance with the plan within the time limits established for the warning period, the employee will be dismissed.

In the event the employee refuses to accept a written performance plan, the employee will be subject to the Discipline and Discharge Procedure in Article XIII, 13.1 C.

Employees shall only be eligible for a written performance plan once during a two-year period. An employee shall be subject to discipline and discharge pursuant to Article XIII, beginning at Section 13.1 C (ii) if his or her job performance is found to be unsatisfactory or otherwise inconsistent with reasonable standards of competence, quality or timeliness more than once in a two-year period. Said two-year period shall begin from the date of the first unsatisfactory performance review or notice of unsatisfactory performance.

12.6 This Article XII shall be subject to the grievance procedure of the Agreement only as to the following issues:

- A. the timely receipt and review of the annual and probationary evaluations, and
- B. the inclusion of corrective recommendations in less than satisfactory evaluations, and
- C. the execution of the written plan agreed to by the supervisor and the employee as outlined in 12.5, and
- D. the placement of an employee in warning status for performance reasons, and
- E. the dismissal of an employee for performance reasons.

ARTICLE XIII

DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

- 13.1 The Authority and the Federation jointly recognize the deterrent value of disciplinary action. Accordingly, the Authority shall:
- A. act promptly and justly to impose discipline within a reasonable time of the offense;
 - B. apply discipline with a view toward uniformity, consistency and just cause;
 - C. impose a procedure of discipline in increasing order of severity as follows:
 - i) written reprimand;
 - ii) written letter of warning;
 - iii) suspension without pay;
 - iv) discharge.

The parties agree, however, that there are appropriate cases that may warrant bypassing progressive discipline or applying discipline in differing degrees, so long as appropriate discipline is imposed for just cause.

- 13.2 Employees shall not be dismissed, except for just cause. Whenever an employee is dismissed, written notification shall be provided, in person or by certified mail, to the employee and the Federation within forty-eight (48) hours of verbal notification of dismissal. Said written notice shall include a statement of the reasons for the dismissal and his/her right to appeal.
- 13.3 Section 13.2 notwithstanding, when an employee is dismissed for non-disciplinary reasons, he/she shall receive either two (2) weeks advance notice or two (2) weeks pay in lieu thereof. When an employee is dismissed for disciplinary reasons, the Executive Director shall have the discretion to grant this two (2) week notice or pay in lieu thereof when he/she deems it appropriate.
- 13.4 Any other provision of this Article XIII notwithstanding, the following offenses may result in the immediate dismissal of the offending employee without prior notice or pay in lieu of notice:
- A. gross neglect of duty,
 - B. gross misconduct,
 - C. refusal to obey lawful and reasonable order given by supervisors,

- D. conviction of a felony,
 - E. conduct which places in jeopardy the life or health of a coworker or client.
- 13.5 A Federation representative, at the request of an employee, may attend any meeting between the employee and the Authority which involves the discipline of said employee, including any investigatory interview which is conducted for the purpose of determining whether the employee or any co-worker should be subject to discipline. If the Authority contemplates imposing discipline, or reasonably believes that discipline may be imposed following the interview of the employee, the Authority will so inform the employee prior to the meeting.
- 13.6 When the Authority contemplates dismissing an employee, or imposing a disciplinary suspension or demotion with a resulting loss of pay, the employee will be notified in writing of the reason(s), and will be given an opportunity to respond either orally or in writing prior to the time a final decision is made. The employee or representative shall advise the Authority within 24 hours of receipt of the Notice if he/she desires to provide a written or oral response, and will respond either orally or in writing within four (4) work days of the date of receipt of said Notice. Deadlines may be extended upon mutual agreement.
- The purpose of the meeting is to provide the employee with an opportunity to present points of disagreement with the facts relied on by the Authority, to identify supporting witnesses or mitigating circumstances, or to offer other arguments as to why the Authority should not terminate, suspend or demote the employee. Either party may elect to record any oral meeting conducted hereunder, and may introduce the recording/transcript or any written response provided by the employee into evidence at any subsequent step of the grievance process.
- 13.7 Discharge or discipline of an employee on initial probationary status shall not be subject to the terms of this Article XIII.

ARTICLE XIV

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

14.1 DEFINITIONS:

- A. A "grievance" is a claim that there has been a violation, a misinterpretation or an arbitrary or capricious application of the express terms of this Agreement.
- B. For the purposes of this Article XIV, all "days" shall be "working days".

14.2 An employee shall have the right to be represented by the Federation at every step of the grievance procedure if he/she so chooses, and Management staff of the Authority shall also have the right to have representation at any grievance procedure by the Director of Human Resources and Administration or his/her designee from the Executive Staff, exclusive of the Executive Director, in the event of conflict. Nothing herein shall preclude the Authority from having legal representation at any step of any grievance proceeding.

14.3 Failure by the grievant or his/her representative to adhere to the procedures of Section 14.4, within the specified time periods, shall terminate the grievance as null and void. Failure of the appropriate Authority representative to render a decision, within the specified time period, shall be construed as a denial of the grievance, and the grievant may then proceed to the next step of the procedure. The time periods and procedures of Section 14.4 may be modified or waived only by mutual agreement of the Executive Director and the Federation.

14.4 PROCEDURE:

Step 1: The parties acknowledge that it is usually most desirable for an employee and his/her immediately involved supervisor to resolve problems through open and informal communications. An employee shall, therefore, notify his/her immediate supervisor of a grievance within twenty (20) days from the date upon which the employee could have reasonably been aware of the occurrence which gave rise to the grievance. The supervisor shall hold a meeting with the grievant within three (3) days of said notification. The immediate supervisor shall give his/her answer to the employee within two (2) days following this meeting.

Step 2: If no satisfactory settlement is reached at Step 1, the grievance shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director within ten (10) days of the Step 1 decision. Each written grievance shall include a statement of the facts, underlining the grievance, make reference to the specific terms of the Agreement which have been allegedly violated and the redress sought.

The Executive Director shall hold a meeting with the grievant within ten (10) days of receipt of the grievance. The grievant shall present any evidence, testimony, documents, data, facts or figures which he/she relies upon to support his/her grievance. The Authority shall likewise present such evidence, testimony, documents, data, facts or figures which it believes to be relevant to the grievance. The Executive Director shall, within five (5) days following this meeting, give his/her written decision to the grievant, a copy of which shall be provided to the Federation.

In recognition of the parties commitment to reconcile their differences in the least adversarial manner possible, the parties may, with mutual agreement, utilize grievance mediation on any complaint or grievance. The parties agree to utilize the services of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service or other professionals with the concurrence of both parties; any costs associated with this process shall be shared equally. If mediation does not produce a resolution, the issue shall continue to the next pending step of the grievance procedure.

Step 3: In the event that a grievance alleging either a discharge from employment in violation of Article XIII, a demotion in violation of Article X, or actions taken by the Authority which have had or will have a significantly negative impact on compensation or benefit issues directly related to written provisions of the contract is not resolved in Step 2, the Federation may, within ten (10) days of the date of the Executive Director's decision, or in the case of mediation, within 10 days of a declaration of impasse in mediation, demand in writing that the grievance be submitted to final and binding arbitration. If the demand for arbitration is not filed within ten (10) days, then the grievance will be deemed null and void. In the event that the Authority and the Federation mutually so agree, grievances which are unresolved by the Executive Director's decision or which are unresolved following mediation and which are eligible for arbitration shall be pursued by an appeal to a court or government agency of competent jurisdiction, rather than arbitration.

The arbitrator shall be determined by mutual agreement between the Authority and the Federation. Should the parties be unable to agree upon the arbitrator within ten (10) days after the date of the demand for arbitration, the grievance will be referred to the American Arbitration Association (AAA) pursuant to the AAA rules for Voluntary Labor Arbitration.

- 14.5 The expenses for the arbitrator's services shall be borne equally by the Authority and the Federation; however, each party shall be responsible for compensating its own representative and witnesses, except that no employee or grievant shall lose compensation for appearing as a witness or by subpoena at any grievance proceeding. Further, the arbitrator's authority shall be limited to interpreting and applying the provisions of this Agreement consistent with the statutory and common laws of the State of Vermont. The Arbitrator shall have no power to add or subtract from, alter or modify any of the said provisions. The arbitrator shall be limited to the issues raised by the parties and shall not be empowered to substitute his/her judgment for the good faith exercise of judgment by the Authority on any matter which under this Agreement or by law is committed to the discretion of the Authority.

- 14.6 Other provisions of this Article XIV notwithstanding, a grievance alleging, in whole or in part, a violation of Article IV, Nondiscrimination, which remains unresolved after the Executive Director's decision, or which are unresolved following mediation, may be pursued by filing suit with a court or governmental agency of competent jurisdiction. Such grievances shall not be subject to the arbitration provisions of the Agreement.
- 14.7 **This Agreement contains the ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ARBITRATION provision.**

ARTICLE XV

WORK WEEK

- 15.1 The work week shall be based on forty (40) working hours, and the normal working day shall extend from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday with a forty-five (45) minute lunch break. Additionally, a fifteen (15) minute break shall be granted between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and between 2:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. There shall be no tacking of break times, except when an employee's supervisor requests that he/she postpone his/her normal break time.
- 15.2 Subject to the operating needs of the Authority, the Executive Director may establish alternative work schedules in which starting and quitting times, as well as length of meal breaks for individual employees may vary from preestablished standard work schedules. Alternative work schedules include, but are not limited to, job sharing, four-day work weeks, alternative schedules with core-time and actual flex-time. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit an employee's ability to request an alternate work schedule.
- 15.3 Time spent traveling between an employee's home and work locations shall be considered time actually worked for those employees who normally work out of their homes.
- 15.4 An employee is obligated to notify the Authority, by telephoning his/her supervisor or supervisor's designee of any unscheduled absences from work. Such notification, except in the case of an emergency, shall be made within the first hour of the employee's scheduled work day on the day that the employee is absent. Failure to notify the Authority of an unscheduled absence within the first hour shall constitute an unexcused absence and is subject to Article XIII, 13.1.

Except in the case of an emergency or extenuating circumstance, any employee who is on an unscheduled absence for three (3) consecutive work days shall be subject to Article XIII, 13.4.

ARTICLE XVI

OVERTIME

- 16.1 Overtime shall be assigned to volunteers whenever practicable and shall be distributed as equitably as reasonably possible. Upon written request, an employee shall be excluded from consideration for overtime; however, this exclusion may be revoked in the event of extraordinary needs of Management, when all employees are required to work, or by the employee himself/herself.
- 16.2 When overtime is deemed necessary by the Authority, notice shall be provided to employees as far in advance as is practical and, except in the case of an emergency, such notice shall be provided at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the working of overtime.
- 16.3 Employees who are on leave shall not be required to work overtime, except in the case of an emergency.
- 16.4 All overtime must be authorized in advance by the Authority, and no employee shall be paid for unauthorized overtime. In the event that unforeseen circumstances make it impossible for an employee on a field assignment to secure advance authorization, payment for overtime shall not be unreasonably denied.
- 16.5 Eligibility for overtime compensation shall be based upon hours actually worked, paid holidays, compensatory time and time spent on annual leave. Sick leave shall not be counted in determining eligibility for overtime compensation.
- 16.6 Employees in pay scales 1 through 6 and other employees determined to be non-exempt under the FLSA shall be compensated for overtime at the rate of one and one-half (1-1/2) times his/her normal hourly rate for all authorized hours of work in excess of forty (40) hours per week. Employees in pay scales 7 through 10 shall be compensated at his/her normal hourly rate for all authorized hours of work in excess of forty (40) hours per week. In the event the Authority determines that a position in Pay Scale 7 or above is not exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Authority shall compensate the employee(s) in such position(s) at one and one-half (1-1/2) times his/her normal hourly rate for all authorized hours of work in excess of forty (40) per week. The smallest division of an hour to be used in computing overtime shall be fifteen (15) minutes.
- 16.7 An employee may request compensatory time-off in lieu of cash payment for overtime. Said request shall be made on a biweekly basis consistent with Authority pay periods. Said request shall be granted based on the operating needs of the Authority. In the event that an employee does not utilize compensatory time-off within sixty (60) days, or upon further extension granted by the Executive Director, of said request, the Authority shall provide cash payment in accordance with Section 16.6 for the compensatory time in the next regularly scheduled pay period. An employee shall not be denied reasonable leave request to use accumulated compensatory time within the time allotted by this Agreement.

ARTICLE XVII

CALL-IN AND ON-CALL PAY

- 17.1 When an employee is called in and required to work at any time other than continuously into his/her normally scheduled work time, he/she shall receive compensation at his/her overtime rate for all hours worked, but not less than three (3) hours of compensation at his/her applicable overtime rate.
- 17.2 "On-call" is the requirement that an employee remain on or so close to either the employer's or the employee's premises that he/she cannot use non-working time effectively for his/her own purposes. On-call duty shall be compensated at the overtime rate. However, an employee who is merely required to leave word at his/her home or with the supervisor where he/she may be reached shall not be considered to be on-call.

ARTICLE XVIII

PAID HOLIDAYS

18.1 The following paid holidays shall be observed by the Authority:

New Year's Day - January 1
Martin Luther King's Birthday, Federal Observance
President's Day - Federal Observance
Memorial Day - Federal Observance
Independence Day - July 4
Bennington Battle Day - August 16
Labor Day - First Monday in September
Columbus Day - Federal Observance
Veteran's Day - November 11
Thanksgiving Day - Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day - December 25

Two floating holidays, granted to employees employed as of January 1, to be used within the calendar year. Such days shall be scheduled in advance with the employee's supervisor.

18.2 Any paid holiday which falls on a Saturday shall be observed on the preceding Friday. Any paid holiday which falls on a Sunday shall be observed on the following Monday.

18.3 The Executive Director may declare an administrative holiday in addition to those days designated above. Offices and facilities shall close on such a day, except for those operations which must maintain essential services. Time worked on an administrative holiday, at the direction of the Authority, shall be compensated for in the same manner as time worked on a legal holiday. An employee shall not normally be required to work on legal or administrative holidays, except as necessary to provide and maintain essential services. Essential services are those necessary to provide for the health and welfare of residents of Authority-managed projects.

Upon mutual agreement between the employee and the supervisor, an employee may request to work on an administrative holiday at their regular rate of pay in order to take a different day off to be taken within the next 60 calendar days unless otherwise agreed.

18.4 Subject to the operating needs of the Authority, leave without loss of pay shall be granted on the day after Thanksgiving. Such day shall not be considered as a holiday under this Article XVIII; provided, however, leave granted shall be considered as time actually worked for the purpose of determining eligibility for overtime compensation.

18.5 An employee who is required to work on a legal holiday shall receive overtime pay at the appropriate rate for his/her pay scale on an hour-for-hour basis in addition to minimum biweekly pay otherwise due for the work on that day.

- 18.6 Upon mutual agreement between the employee and the supervisor, an employee may request to work on a legal holiday at their regular rate of pay in order to take a different day off to be taken within the next 60 calendar days unless otherwise agreed.
- 18.7 To be eligible for a paid holiday or for leave under Section 18.4, an employee must work or be on approved paid leave the last scheduled work day before and the first scheduled work day following said holiday.
- 18.8 Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall receive holiday pay on a pro rata basis.

ARTICLE XIX

PAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE

19.1 ANNUAL LEAVE: Each full-time, part-time, and limited service employee shall be entitled to paid "annual leave" for purposes of vacation and personal convenience, as set forth in this Section 19.1. Annual leave must be requested and approved in advance, except in the case of an emergency. The scheduling of annual leave is the exclusive prerogative of the Authority; however, approval of such leave shall not be unreasonably withheld. Annual leave shall be taken in increments of no less than two hours in a work day. When a paid holiday, pursuant to Article XVIII, occurs while an employee is on annual leave, the employee shall receive his/her holiday pay for that day.

A. Termination of Employment

An employee who resigns his/her employment with the Authority shall be paid in a lump sum for all unused annual leave which has been earned. An employee shall be credited with annual leave for his/her last month of employment, provided he/she has not been on unpaid leave of absence or absent from work without authorization for more than five (5) days during his/her final calendar month of employment. An employee who fails to give two (2) weeks notice of resignation shall forfeit the number of unused annual leave days by which his/her notice is deficient, unless said failure is due to an emergency situation which is beyond the control of the employee.

B. Accrual

Full-time and full-time limited service employees shall earn annual leave based on completed calendar months of service at the rate set forth in this Section 19.1. Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall earn annual leave on a pro rata basis. In no event shall annual leave be earned for any calendar month during which an employee is either on unpaid leave of absence or absent from work without authorization for more than five (5) days.

Annual leave shall not be used during the first six (6) months of employment and shall be earned based on the following criteria:

- i) A full-time and full-time limited service employee shall be credited with six (6) days upon completion of six (6) months of service;
- ii) A full-time and full-time limited service employee with more than six (6) months but fewer than three (3) years of full-time service shall earn annual leave at the rate of one (1) day per completed calendar month of service, to a maximum of twenty-four (24) days;
- iii) A full-time employee with at least three (3) but fewer than six (6) years of full-time service shall earn annual leave at the rate of one and one-quarter (1-1/4) days per calendar month of service, to a maximum of thirty (30) days;

- iv) A full-time employee with a least six (6) but fewer than ten (10) years of full-time service shall earn annual leave at the rate of one and one-half (1-1/2) days per calendar month of service, to a maximum of thirty-six (36) days;
- v) A full-time employee with ten (10) or more years of full-time service shall earn annual leave at the rate of one and three-quarter (1-3/4) days per calendar month, to a maximum of forty-one (41) days.

19.2 SICK LEAVE: Each full-time, part-time and limited service employee shall be entitled to paid sick leave as set forth in this Section 19.2. Where use of sick leave can be foreseen, as in the case of elective surgery or pregnancy, an employee shall provide advance notice to his/her supervisor as soon as is practicable. In all other instances, an employee shall notify his/her supervisor within the first hour of his/her regularly scheduled work day. The Authority may require an employee to provide a physician's certificate of illness when there exists a reasonable basis to suspect that sick leave is being abused. In addition, when there is reasonable basis to question the validity of said physician's certificate, the Authority may require an examination by an Authority-designated physician, in which case the Authority will pay all costs attendant to said examination.

A. Use

Sick leave may be used for personal illness, physical disabilities, including disabilities connected with or resulting from pregnancy, or for emergency periods to attend to the illness of a member of an employee's immediate family, as defined in Section 19.3. An employee who becomes ill during a scheduled paid vacation so as to require hospitalization or bed rest for three (3) or more days (as certified by a physician), shall have such period of hospitalization or bed rest credited to sick leave rather than annual leave.

Sick leave may be used to offset an employee's loss of income while he/she is receiving Worker's Compensation benefits.

Sick leave may also be used for medical and dental appointments which cannot be scheduled during non-working hours. Sick leave shall be taken in increments of no less than two hours in a work day.

B. Accrual

Full-time and full-time limited service employees shall earn sick leave based on completed calendar months of service at the rate set forth in this Section 19.2. Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall earn sick leave on a pro rata basis. Sick leave shall not be earned for any calendar month during which an employee is either on an unpaid leave of absence or absent from work without

authorization for more than five (5) days. Employees shall not earn sick leave while on layoff.

Sick leave accumulation shall be unlimited; however, such accumulation shall terminate when an employee's employment with the Authority is terminated, unless he/she is laid off pursuant to Article XXVIII of this Agreement. The rate of sick leave accrual shall be as follows:

- i) A full-time and full-time limited service employee shall be credited with six (6) days upon his/her date of hire.
- ii) A full-time and full-time limited service employee with at least seven (7) months but less than five (5) years of service shall earn one (1) day per month.
- iii) A full-time employee with at least five (5) but fewer than ten (10) years of service shall earn one and one-quarter (1-1/4) days per month.
- iv) A full-time employee with at least ten (10) but fewer than twenty (20) years of full-time service shall earn one and one-half (1-1/2) days per month.
- v) A full-time employee with twenty (20) or more years of service shall earn one and three-quarter (1-3/4) days per month.

19.3 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE: Each full-time, part-time and limited service employee shall be granted up to five (5) days paid leave per instance for the death of a member of his/her "immediate family" to handle necessary arrangements and attend any services and for other appropriate bereavement purposes. Additional days for travel purposes may be granted at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall receive bereavement leave on a pro rata basis. Immediate family shall be defined as follows: parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild or member of the immediate household.

19.4 EMERGENCY LEAVE: Each full-time, part-time, and limited service employee shall be granted up to three (3) days paid leave per year to be used in the event of the hospitalization of a member of his/her immediate family, as defined in Section 19.3. Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall receive emergency leave on a pro rata basis.

19.5 PERSONAL LEAVE: Each full-time, part-time, and limited service employee, who in any calendar quarter (commencing October 1, January 1, April 1 and July 1) uses no more than four (4) hours of sick leave during said quarter shall be entitled to one and one-quarter (1-1/4) personal leave day, but not more than five (5) per year. Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall earn personal leave on a pro rata basis. Such personal leave days shall not be compensable in cash, convertible to other forms of leave or accumulated from fiscal year to fiscal year. Personal leave shall be taken in increments of no less two hours in a work day.

19.6 COURT/JURY DUTY LEAVE: Upon reasonable request, a full-time, part-time or limited service employee who is summoned to serve on a jury shall receive either the

difference between his/her jury duty pay and his/her take-home pay or, upon request, annual leave.

An employee shall receive his/her regular rate of compensation when he/she is required to appear as a witness in court at the direction of the Authority.

- 19.7 FIRE/RESCUE DUTY LEAVE: Subject to the operating needs of the Authority and upon proper notice to the Executive Director of his/her membership in a municipal fire or rescue team, a full-time, part-time or limited service employee shall be paid for the time spent answering an emergency call during working hours, provided said call is within the municipality of his/her work place. Additionally, such an employee shall be paid when he/she arrives to work late as a result of responding to an emergency call in his/her own community regardless of its location.
- 19.8 CIVIC DUTY LEAVE: A full-time, part-time or limited service employee who holds an elected position in his/her community may be granted, subject to the operating needs of the Authority, three (3) days of paid leave per year to attend meetings stemming from his/her elected position which cannot otherwise be scheduled during non-working hours. Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall receive civic duty leave on a pro rata basis.
- 19.9 TRAINING LEAVE: A full-time employee may be granted up to eighty (80) hours paid leave per year to take job-related courses with the approval of the Executive Director.
- 19.10 PAID MILITARY LEAVE: A full-time and full-time limited service employee shall be entitled to two (2) weeks of paid leave on a fiscal year basis to attend annual training for the Reserve or National Guard and shall further be entitled to take either annual leave or unpaid leave should such training exceed two (2) weeks in any calendar year. Part-time and part-time limited service employees shall be granted such paid military training leave on a pro rata basis. Employees shall receive either the difference between his/her military pay and his/her basic weekly salary, less required federal and state withholding.

Employees who are ordered into full-time active duty as members of the National Guard or other branches of the United States Military shall receive the difference between their military pay and their regular take home pay for a period not to exceed three (3) months. In the event such employee and his/her dependents are participants in one of the Authority sponsored health and/or dental plans at the time the employee is activated for duty, the dependents may continue participation in the plan(s), subject to the normal employer/employee contribution rates for a period not to exceed six (6) months. Thereafter, the employee's dependents may continue in the plan(s) under COBRA provisions.

- 19.11 SICK BANK: The Authority shall maintain a Sick Bank for all employees in accordance with Administrative Policy XIV.

ARTICLE XX

UNPAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE

- 20.1 FAMILY, PARENTAL AND MEDICAL LEAVE: The Authority shall grant unpaid leave to an employee as required by federal and state law under the requirements of the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the Vermont Parental and Family Leave Law as outlined in Authority policy. In the event this Agreement provides greater benefits, the greater benefits shall prevail provided such benefits do not violate state or federal laws. In those cases where an employee qualifies for leave benefits under both this contract and the state or federal statutes, those benefits will run contemporaneously and will not be “piggy-backed” or “pyramided.”
- 20.2 WORKERS COMPENSATION: When an employee is awarded compensation under the provisions of the Worker's Compensation Act, he/she may be granted sick leave, or annual leave when sick leave credits are exhausted, to the extent that such leave is necessary to make up the difference between his/her compensation benefits and his/her regular weekly pay.
- 20.3 MILITARY LEAVE: The Authority shall grant an unpaid leave and such re-employment rights as required by federal and state law to an employee who enters active duty with any branch of the armed forces of the United States.
- 20.4 GOOD CAUSE LEAVE: An unpaid leave of absence may be granted to an employee at the discretion of the Executive Director. Such leave may be granted for, but not limited to, the following purposes: education, political activity, and assignments in accordance with the Federal Intergovernmental Personnel Act.
- 20.5 LEAVE TERMS: The duration of an unpaid leave under this Article XX shall be at the discretion of the Executive Director unless otherwise provided for under state and federal laws. Unless otherwise required by applicable law, time spent on an unpaid leave under this Article XX shall not be counted for purposes of accruing seniority, annual leave or sick leave credit, but shall be counted as time employed for the purposes of leave accrual rates. Except in the case of an emergency, all unpaid leave must be requested in writing and approved in advance. Time on unpaid leave counts towards vesting in the pension plan provided the employee does not experience a break in service.

An employee who has been granted an unpaid leave under this Article XX, Section 20.1, may continue coverage under the various insurance plans of this Agreement, pursuant to the requirements of state and federal law as outlined in Authority policy.

An employee who has been granted an unpaid leave under this Article XX, Sections 20.3 and 20.4, may elect to continue coverage under the various insurance plans of this Agreement, if allowable under the terms of the insurance policy in question provided the employee assumes the full cost of the total plan premium and forwards complete payment of said premium to the Authority prior to the date payment must be forwarded to the insurance company.

ARTICLE XXI

SALARIES AND WAGES

- 21.1 Employees shall be compensated according to the salary and wage schedule in Schedule A, attached hereto.
- 21.2 In addition to the salaries and wages set forth in Section 21.1, an employee may receive a special compensation adjustment upon recommendation of the management supervisor and approval of the Executive Director. Such adjustment may be in the form of a nonrecurring bonus, or in the case of an employee not at the maximum of his/her pay scale, an increase in the base pay, or the employee may be granted additional personal time. Any action taken under this Section 21.2 shall not be subject to the grievance procedure of this Agreement.
- 21.3 An employee, not serving an initial probationary period, who is promoted pursuant to Section 10.5 or has his/her pay grade increased, whose pay is less than the end of probation salary for the new position, shall have his/her pay increased to the end of probation salary of the new position; and any employee whose pay is more than the end of probation salary of the new position grade shall receive a two percent (2%) increase.
- In any such case, no increase will be granted upon completion of the promotional probationary period.
- 21.4 An employee who satisfactorily completes his/her initial probationary period is entitled to a salary increase to the appropriate end of probation salary.
- 21.5 Salaries shall be computed by hourly rates rounded to the nearest cent.
- 21.6 No provision of this Article XXI shall limit the discretion of the Executive Director to approve the hiring of a new employee above the minimum salary of his/her pay scale.
- 21.7 Employees shall be paid on a biweekly basis with payments made on the first Wednesday following the end of each biweekly period. Time sheets for overtime shall be submitted on the Monday prior to payment.

ARTICLE XXII

ALTERNATE PAY RATE

- 22.1 An employee may be required to temporarily assume higher level duties, or take over the job of an employee who has a higher pay grade than his/her own on a temporary basis. An employee who does so shall receive the "alternate pay rate" provided:
- A. The performance of said higher level work is authorized by the Executive Director or his/her designee;
 - B. The employee performs a clear majority of the duties of the higher level job for an entire eight (8) hour work shift.
- 22.2 The alternate pay rate shall equal one hundred eight percent (108%) of the employee's normal base rate or the minimum of the pay scale for the higher level position, whichever is greater. In no event, however, shall the alternate pay rate be greater than the end of probation of the pay scale for the higher level position.
- 22.3 The overtime status of an employee shall not change when he/she receives the alternate pay rate.

ARTICLE XXIII

INSURANCE

- 23.1 The Authority provides the following health insurance plans and coverages for each full-time and full-time limited service employee (for single, two-person or family coverage), as selected by the employee:

Vermont Health Partnership – Option 1
Vermont Freedom Plan – Option 1
Vermont Health Partnership Plan – Option 3B (Effective January 1, 2009)

During the term of this Agreement, the Authority and the Federation agree to review and consider alternate health insurance carriers and coverages. At the request of either party, the Agreement shall be reopened for the limited purpose of negotiating changes to health insurance carriers or coverages. Prior to implementing any changes to the current carrier or coverages, during the term of this Agreement, the Authority agrees to negotiate with the Federation to the extent required by law.

Regular and limited service full and part time employees may enroll in any plan offered by the Vermont State Housing Authority and the Authority will pay an amount equal to eighty percent (80%) of the premium cost (prorated for part-time employees, see 23.4) for the plan selected (single, two person or family coverage). The employee shall pay the balance of the premium cost for the plan and coverage.

Employees who obtain health insurance coverage elsewhere will be provided an annual buyout amount of \$750.00 payable over 24 pay periods; provided a minimum of two (2) employees currently covered under one of VSHA's offered plans drop coverage under the VSHA plan and move to another health insurance plan. Such move must occur with the open enrollment period January 1, 2009.

If any state and/or federal law negates or alters any part of the VSHA's health insurance coverage plan, the parties shall immediately reopen Article XXIII, Section 23.1 for the limited purpose of negotiating any impact of such change.

- 23.2 For each full-time and full-time limited service employee, the Authority shall pay one hundred percent (100%) of the premium cost for the Northeast Delta Dental or another plan of comparable coverage for the plan selected (single, two person or family coverage).
- 23.3 In the event that an employee is exposed, or is likely to be exposed, to a contagious disease in the performance of his/her duties, the Authority shall pay for all necessary medical examinations and inoculations to the extent that those services and procedures are not covered, or are only partially covered, by the employee's health insurance plan or workers compensation plan, whichever is applicable.

- 23.4 For each part-time and part-time limited service employee, the Authority shall pay a pro rata portion of the health and dental premium costs paid by the Authority for a full-time employee, provided he/she satisfies the eligibility requirements of the insurance policy in question. The employee shall pay the remaining cost for the coverage selected.
- 23.5 As a condition of employment, each employee who uses his/her personal vehicle while conducting Authority business shall maintain a minimum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) of liability coverage for such vehicle and shall provide a certificate of such coverage to the Executive Director or his/her designee. In no event shall the Authority reimburse an employee for damage to his/her personal vehicle resulting from collision, fire, lightning or any other cause except as provided in this Section 23.5. In the event that an employee's vehicle is vandalized or stolen while he/she is on Authority business, the Authority shall pay either the amount of loss or the amount of the insurance policy deductible, whichever is less, provided the employee submits a copy of the police investigation report.

Additionally, employees whose position requires regular driving may be required to participate in a defensive driving training course or similar courses as determined by the Authority. The Authority will pay the costs associated with any such required training. In the event such training places the employee in an overtime situation in accordance with Article 16, the Authority will compensate employees at their applicable overtime rate. Employees shall suffer no discipline for failure to pass any exams given during the course of such training.

Employees receiving mileage reimbursement are required to immediately notify their supervisor in the event their driver's license is suspended, revoked or otherwise conditioned or discontinued.

- 23.6 During the life of this Agreement, the Authority may develop and implement flexible spending accounts for health care expenses and dependent care pursuant to Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code. Participants in the Plan will pay one-hundred percent (100%) of the monthly administrative fee assessed by the Plan Administrator, except that the Authority will pay one-hundred percent (100%) of the administrative fee assessed during any month in which there are more than twenty-five (25) combined participants in the Plan.
- 23.7 The Authority has arranged a Long Term Care insurance program which shall be available to eligible employees and their family members at group rates. A minimum of three employees must enroll to obtain group rates.

ARTICLE XXIV

PENSION PLAN

- 24.1 The Authority shall provide a non-contributory pension plan for all full-time and part-time employees. Employees shall be eligible for the pension plan upon completion of a twelve-month waiting period and shall be credited with vesting time from date of hire. Limited service employees shall not be eligible for the pension plan. The Authority shall contribute toward the plan an amount equal to thirteen and seven-tenths percent (13.7%) of the employee's annual salary.
- 24.2 Pursuant to the terms of the Pension Plan set forth in this Article XXIV, the Authority shall provide life insurance at least equal to one and one-half (1-1/2) times the employee's annual salary. Life insurance coverage provided by the Authority shall be reduced to 65% at age 65 and 50% at age 70.

ARTICLE XXV

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

- 25.1 In the event that Authority business requires an employee to travel, actual expenses reasonably incurred shall be reimbursed to the employee for travel, lodging, postage, parking, tolls, communications, mileage and meals (as set forth in Section 25.2 and 25.3). Travel between the employee's residence and assigned workstation will not be reimbursed. In the event an employee's workstation is changed after October 1, 1999, at the discretion of the Authority, and said change increases the employee's normal commute by more than thirty (30) miles, the employee will be reimbursed the increased commuting distance for a period not to exceed three months.
- 25.2 The maximum reimbursement for meals, including gratuity, shall be as follows:
- A. Breakfast - Five dollars and eleven cents (\$5.11)
 - B. Lunch - Six dollars and fifty eight cents (\$6.58)
 - C. Dinner - Seventeen dollars and fifty three cents (\$17.53)
- Upon request, the maximum may be waived at the discretion of the Executive Director or his/her designee.
- 25.3 The mileage reimbursement rate for all employees shall be the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rate, minus two cents; however, notwithstanding the foregoing, the mileage rate shall not be less than thirty one (31) cents per mile.
- 25.4 Reimbursement of expenses as set forth in this Article XXV shall be provided pursuant to reasonable rules as adopted by the Authority, provided such rules do not violate any term or condition of this Agreement. Reimbursement for expenses not listed in this Article XXV may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director.

ARTICLE XXVI

TRAINING AND CONFERENCES

- 26.1 In-service training shall be made available to employees where it has been established by the employee's management supervisor and the Executive Director that said in-service training is necessary for the efficient operation of the Authority.
- 26.2 Where it is determined by the employee's management supervisor or the Executive Director that the employee's ability to perform the duties required by his/her position will be enhanced, or that the Authority will benefit from his/her attendance at a particular conference, the Executive Director may authorize attendance. The Authority shall pay all reasonable costs and expenses necessary for employee attendance pursuant to the terms set forth in Article XXV.
- 26.3 The Authority shall post notices of training conferences/seminars which it deems relevant to the duties of employees. Employees may request authorization to attend conferences/seminars pursuant to the terms of this Article XXVI.

ARTICLE XXVII

EQUIPMENT, TOOLS AND PERSONAL ARTICLES

- 27.1 The Authority shall reimburse maintenance staff employees for the cost of repairing or replacing those personal tools which the employee is required by the Authority to provide as a condition of employment in accordance with the provisions of Section 27.3 herein.
- 27.2 An employee shall be informed when hired, and from time- to-time thereafter, of the specific tools which the Authority requires the employee to provide as a condition of his/her employment. Such notification shall be in writing and shall comprise the complete list of personal tools so required by the Authority. In the event that a maintenance employee is required to perform special duties not required of all maintenance employees, the Authority shall supply all special equipment, clothing, tools or devices necessary to perform such duties.
- 27.3 Employees may be required to provide periodic inventories of all tools and equipment assigned to them. VSHA shall repair or replace necessary tools and equipment as needed, provided such repair or replacement is based on normal wear and tear or circumstances beyond the employee's control, and not the result of irresponsibility or intentional misuse by the employee. When a tool owned by an employee is lost or damaged due to the employee's own negligence or intentional misuse the employee shall not be reimbursed by the Authority.
- 27.4 The Authority shall provide for the replacement or repair of personal articles used by employees where said article has been damaged or broken due to malfunction of Authority equipment or facilities.

ARTICLE XXVIII

LAYOFF PROCEDURE

28.1 It shall be the exclusive prerogative of the Authority to determine that a layoff of employees is necessary, the timing of such layoff and the positions to be effected by such layoff. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to imply otherwise.

A layoff may occur due to a lack of work, lack of funding or otherwise pursuant to management rights.

28.2 For the purposes of this Article XXVIII, seniority shall be based upon the number of days of continuous service with the Authority. Seniority shall accrue during time spent on a paid leave of absence and a period of layoff as set forth in Section 28.11. Any time spent on paid or unpaid leaves of absence and layoff shall not constitute a break in an employee's continuous years of service. Seniority shall not accrue during time spent on unpaid leaves of absence.

28.3 Only full-time, part-time and promotional probationary employees shall have seniority rights under this Article XXVIII. Part-time employees shall accrue seniority on a pro rata basis.

28.4 Employees who are initial probationary, temporary and "limited service" shall have no rights under this Article XXVIII, unless otherwise specifically provided.

28.5 A limited service employee is an employee who has completed his/her initial probationary period and is occupying a position for a specified period not to exceed two (2) years. An employee who has been on limited service status for more than two consecutive years shall become a full-time or part-time employee, and the time spent by the employee in limited service status shall be counted in computing his/her seniority under this Article XXVIII.

28.6 An employee shall be notified in writing that he/she is to be laid off at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the effective date of the layoff or he/she shall receive four (4) weeks pay in lieu of said notice.

28.7 In the event of a layoff, employees who have seniority rights under Section 28.3 shall be laid off in reverse order of seniority within the job position and classification affected by the reduction. Such employees shall be entitled to occupy any unit position at the same or lower pay grade within the Authority, provided he/she meets the minimum qualifications of the position and the position:

- A. is open and the Authority intends to fill it, or
- B. is occupied by an employee listed in Section 28.4, or

- C. is occupied by a promotional probationary employee, or
- D. is occupied by a full-time employee with less seniority than the displacing employee; and
- E. the displacing employee notifies the Executive Director of his/her desire to occupy such position within five (5) working days after receiving the notice of layoff.

28.8 A laid off employee shall be paid a lump sum for all annual leave and compensatory time earned as of the date of his/her layoff, except that an employee may elect to retain his/her earned annual leave for a period of four (4) months following such layoff. Such retained leave shall be reinstated should the employee become re-employed by the Authority during said four (4) month period.

28.9 An employee shall not be compensated for earned sick leave upon layoff but such leave shall be reinstated should the employee be re-employed pursuant to Section 28.11. All such earned benefits shall be forfeited upon the expiration of Section 28.11 re-employment rights, except as set forth in Section 28.10.

28.10 An employee who is on sick leave at the time of layoff and who is totally and permanently disabled and is ineligible for disability retirement benefits shall retain one-half (1/2) of his/her sick leave credits to a maximum of one hundred twenty (120) days for non-job related disability or one hundred percent (100%) of accumulated sick leave for job-related disability and shall suffer no loss of benefits until such time as earned sick leave is exhausted. No provision of this Section 28.10 shall alter the effective layoff date of a disabled employee.

Other provisions of this Section 28.10 notwithstanding, should the layoff be prompted by a lack of funds, a disabled employee will not be entitled to his/her sick leave benefits after the date of layoff; however, the Authority shall petition for the funds necessary to pay such sick leave.

28.11 Employees who have seniority rights under Section 28.3 shall retain the right to be recalled in reverse order of layoff to any position filled by the Authority for a period of two (2) years provided:

- A. the employee meets the minimum qualifications for the position, and
- B. the position is at the same or lower pay grade as the position from which the employee was laid off; however, an employee shall have recall rights to the position from which he/she was laid off should the pay grade of said position be increased.

The recall right shall terminate sooner should the employee fail to either accept a recall offer, pursuant to the conditions of Section 28.12, within five (5) working days of receipt of the offer or report for duty within ten (10) working days thereafter. Acceptance of a

temporary, limited service or part-time position with the Authority shall not alter these recall rights.

- 28.12 An employee may limit the positions for which he/she will be available for recall by factors which include, but are not limited to, location, pay scale and department or, in the alternative, he/she may refuse up to two (2) recall offers. An employee who limits his/her availability under this Section 28.12 may refuse only one (1) recall offer.
- 28.13 An employee recalled from layoff pursuant to Section 28.11 shall be paid at the same salary/wage he/she was receiving at the time of layoff, provided this salary/wage does not exceed the maximum of the pay scale of the position the employee is recalled to fill.
- 28.14 Disability, Separation and Recall: An employee with a disability who can no longer perform one or more of the essential functions of his/her job, with or without reasonable accommodation, may be separated from his/her position provided that the employee has exhausted leave balances available to them, and all entitlements to unpaid leave as defined in the Agreement and applicable law. Prior to separation, the employee will be considered for any vacant position of an equal or lower pay grade in the bargaining unit which is under recruitment, and will be placed in that position, provided that the employee meets minimum qualifications and is capable of performing the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation. In the event an employee is separated pursuant to this section, and the employee has seniority rights pursuant to Section 28.3 of the Agreement, the employee shall have recall rights and obligations as set forth in Sections 28.11, 28.12 and 28.13 of the Agreement, subject to the additional qualification that the employee be capable of performing the essential functions of any position to which he/she may be recalled, with or without reasonable accommodation.

ARTICLE XXIX

CONTINGENCY RENEGOTIATIONS

- 29.1 Should Authority funding, either as allocated by HUD or as appropriated by Congress, be insufficient to allow for the full implementation of the terms of this Agreement, the parties agree to reopen the contract, for a period not to exceed 30 calendar days, to discuss whether a mutual agreement can be reached on modifying the terms of the Agreement. In the event that no mutual agreement is reached, the Authority shall retain the right to implement any decisions within its legal authority to address the loss of funding, including, but not limited to the Authority's right to implement reductions in force in accordance with Article XXVIII.

ARTICLE XXX

SEVERABILITY AND SAVINGS CLAUSE

- 30.1 If any provision of this Agreement or any application thereof to any employee or group of employees is held to be contrary to law, then such provision or application shall not be deemed valid and subsisting, except to the extent permitted by law, but all other provisions or applications of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.
- 30.2 The Federation and Authority shall meet not later than ten (10) days after any such holding for the purpose of renegotiating the provision or provisions affected.

ARTICLE XXXI

COMPLETE AGREEMENT

- 31.1 This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the Authority and the Federation, arrived at as a result of collective bargaining negotiations, except such amendments as shall have been reduced to writing and signed by the parties.
- 31.2 During negotiations which resulted in this Agreement, the Authority and the Federation considered all matters which are lawfully subject to collective bargaining. Therefore, the Authority and the Federation, during the life of this Agreement, each agrees that the other shall not be obligated to negotiate with respect to any subject or matter referred to or covered in this Agreement.

ARTICLE XXXII

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF AUTHORITY FACILITIES

- 32.1 The Executive Director or his/her designee shall have the sole discretion over decisions to close any or all Authority facilities due to emergency conditions which include, but are not limited to, adverse weather conditions, "acts of God" and equipment breakdown. In such instances, employees who are authorized to leave work early shall suffer no loss of pay or benefits.
- 32.2 An employee who is required to remain at work in a facility which has been closed pursuant to this Article XXXII shall receive, in addition to his/her regular pay for the time worked, hourly pay at straight time rates for the hours so worked or compensatory time off at straight time rates.
- 32.3 An employee who is unable to report to work due to weather or other adverse conditions when his/her work place has not been closed pursuant to this Article XXXII shall have his/her absence charged against accrued leave time. Accumulated compensatory time must be used before any other leave time is charged. Sick leave may not be used under this Section 32.3.
- 32.4 In the event that a facility is closed and an employee of that facility who has not been so notified works his/her regular hours, said employee shall receive his/her hourly pay at straight time rates for the hours so worked in addition to his/her regular pay.

ARTICLE XXXIII

AUTHORITY WORK RULES

- 33.1 The Authority shall promulgate those rules of conduct and procedure it deems necessary for its efficient operation, and all employees affected by such rules must be given clear and reasonable notice that such rules have been adopted or changed. The Federation shall be notified and given reasonable notice of all rules adopted or changed which affect all unit members.
- 33.2 Any action taken against an employee based upon a rule may be grieved.

ARTICLE XXXIV

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ARBITRATION

We understand that this Agreement between the Vermont State Housing Authority and the Vermont State Housing Authority Staff Federation of the Vermont State Employees Association contains an agreement to arbitrate. After signing this document, we understand that we will not be able to bring a lawsuit concerning any dispute or grievance that may arise which is covered by the arbitration provision, unless it involves a question of constitutional or civil rights. Instead, we agree to submit any such dispute to an impartial arbitrator.

Vermont State Housing Authority
Staff Federation of the Vermont
State Employees Association

Date

Vermont State Housing Authority

Date

ARTICLE XXXV

DURATION AND RENEWAL

This Agreement shall take effect at 12:01 a.m., October 1, 2008 and shall continue in full force and effect until midnight, September 30, 2011. This Agreement shall be automatically renewed from year to year thereafter until either party notifies the other at least one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the termination date of this Agreement of its intent to terminate or amend this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Vermont State Housing Authority and the VSHA Staff Federation have caused this instrument to be signed and sealed by its duly authorized representatives, this _____ day of _____, 2008.

Federation

Authority

Jes Kraus, VSEA Director

Gary Hoadley, Co-Negotiator

Marty Raymond, Co-Negotiator

SALARY SCHEDULE

Effective First Full Pay Period Following October 1, 2008

<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>Minimum</u>		<u>End of Probation</u>		<u>Maximum</u>	
1	\$20,196.80	\$9.71	\$21,278.40	\$10.23	\$26,457.60	\$12.72
2	\$21,860.80	\$10.51	\$22,942.40	\$11.03	\$28,516.80	\$13.71
3	\$23,524.80	\$11.31	\$24,793.60	\$11.92	\$30,846.40	\$14.83
4	\$25,459.20	\$12.24	\$26,707.20	\$12.84	\$33,280.00	\$16.00
5	\$27,518.40	\$13.23	\$28,932.80	\$13.91	\$35,900.80	\$17.26
6	\$29,660.80	\$14.26	\$31,283.20	\$15.04	\$38,833.60	\$18.67
7	\$32,073.60	\$15.42	\$33,800.00	\$16.25	\$41,932.80	\$20.16
8	\$34,652.80	\$16.66	\$36,483.20	\$17.54	\$45,281.60	\$21.77
9	\$37,793.60	\$18.17	\$39,707.20	\$19.09	\$49,400.00	\$23.75
10	\$41,080.00	\$19.75	\$43,305.60	\$20.82	\$53,788.80	\$25.86

Effective first full pay period following October 1, 2008:

1. Employees not on initial probation shall receive a 5.0% increase.
2. Maximum rate on salary schedule increased by 5.0%.

SALARY SCHEDULE

Effective First Full Pay Period Following October 1, 2009

<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>Minimum</u>		<u>End of Probation</u>		<u>Maximum</u>	
1	\$20,592.00	\$9.90	\$21,694.40	\$10.43	\$27,518.40	\$13.23
2	\$22,297.60	\$10.72	\$23,400.00	\$11.25	\$29,660.80	\$14.26
3	\$24,003.20	\$11.54	\$25,292.80	\$12.16	\$32,073.60	\$15.42
4	\$25,958.40	\$12.48	\$27,248.00	\$13.10	\$34,611.20	\$16.64
5	\$28,059.20	\$13.49	\$29,515.20	\$14.19	\$37,336.00	\$17.95
6	\$30,264.00	\$14.55	\$31,907.20	\$15.34	\$40,393.60	\$19.42
7	\$32,718.40	\$15.73	\$34,486.40	\$16.58	\$43,617.60	\$20.97
8	\$35,339.20	\$16.99	\$37,211.20	\$17.89	\$47,091.20	\$22.64
9	\$38,542.40	\$18.53	\$40,497.60	\$19.47	\$51,376.00	\$24.70
10	\$41,912.00	\$20.15	\$44,179.20	\$21.24	\$55,931.20	\$26.89

Effective first full pay period following October 1, 2009:

1. Employees not on initial probation shall receive a 4.0% increase.
2. Minimum and EOP rates on salary schedule increased by 2.0%.
3. Maximum rate on salary schedule increased by 4.0%.

SALARY SCHEDULE

Effective First Full Pay Period Following October 1, 2010

<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>Minimum</u>		<u>End of Probation</u>		<u>Maximum</u>	
1	\$21,216.00	\$10.20	\$22,339.20	\$10.74	\$28,350.40	\$13.63
2	\$22,963.20	\$11.04	\$24,107.20	\$11.59	\$30,555.20	\$14.69
3	\$24,731.20	\$11.89	\$26,041.60	\$12.52	\$33,030.40	\$15.88
4	\$26,728.00	\$12.85	\$28,059.20	\$13.49	\$35,651.20	\$17.14
5	\$28,891.20	\$13.89	\$30,409.60	\$14.62	\$38,459.20	\$18.49
6	\$31,179.20	\$14.99	\$32,864.00	\$15.80	\$41,600.00	\$20.00
7	\$33,696.00	\$16.20	\$35,526.40	\$17.08	\$44,928.00	\$21.60
8	\$36,400.00	\$17.50	\$38,334.40	\$18.43	\$48,505.60	\$23.32
9	\$39,707.20	\$19.09	\$41,704.00	\$20.05	\$52,915.20	\$25.44
10	\$43,160.00	\$20.75	\$45,510.40	\$21.88	\$57,616.00	\$27.70

Effective First full pay period following October 1, 2010:

1. Employees not on initial probation shall receive a 3.0% increase.
2. Minimum and EOP rates on salary schedule increased by 3.0%
3. Maximum rate on salary schedule increased by 3.0%.

