

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP AND  
NEW JERSEY FIREFIGHTERS  
MUTUAL BENEVOLENT NJ FMBA  
LOCAL 482 AGREEMENT**

This Final Agreement dated December 13, 2024 by and between Hopewell Township, a municipal corporation of the State of New Jersey, hereinafter referred to as the "Township," and the New Jersey Firefighters Mutual Benevolent NJ FMBA 482, hereinafter referred to as the "Local."

**PURPOSE**

It is the intent and purpose of the parties hereto to promote harmonious and cooperative relationships subject, however, to the paramount right of the public to keep inviolate the guarantee for the health, safety, and welfare. Unresolved disputes between the Township and the Local are injurious to the public and both parties are therefore aware that adequate means must be established for minimizing them and providing for their resolution. The Township and Local agree that this overall policy may be best accomplished by negotiating in good faith and entering into written agreements evidencing the result of such negotiation and establishing procedures to provide for the protection of the rights of the Township, the Employees, and the Local, and to insure to the public orderly and uninterrupted service.

## **ARTICLE 1**

### **RECOGNITION**

The Township hereby recognizes the Local as the exclusive representative for the purpose of collective bargaining negotiations for all full-time Police Dispatchers of the Township.

This Agreement shall exclude all managerial executives, confidential employees, professional employees, and employees in other recognized collective bargaining units of the Township.

Collective bargaining with respect to the rights and duties of the "Township" and "Local," the resolution of legitimate grievances, rates of pay, hours of work, and other terms and conditions of employment shall be conducted by the duly authorized bargaining agents of each of the parties. Unless otherwise designated, the Administrator of the Township or their designee(s) and the Business Representative or their designee(s) of the Local shall be the respective bargaining agents for the parties. Collective bargaining meetings shall be held at times and places mutually convenient at the request of either party.

## **ARTICLE 2**

### **DURATION OF AGREEMENT**

This Agreement shall be in full force and effective from January 1, 2022, until Midnight, December 31, 2027.

The parties agree that negotiations for a successor agreement, altering the terms or provisions of this Agreement, shall commence on or about August 1, 2027. In the event a successor agreement is not executed before December 31, 2027, this present Agreement will continue in full force until said successor agreement has been executed and becomes effective between the parties.

## **ARTICLE 3**

### **MANAGEMENT RIGHTS**

#### Section 1

It is recognized that the management of the Township, the administrative control of its properties, and the maintenance of order and efficiency are inherent rights of the Township. Accordingly, the Township retains and reserves unto itself without limitation all powers, rights, authority, duties, and responsibilities conferred upon and vested in it prior to the signing of this Agreement by the laws and constitution of the State of New Jersey and of the United States, including but not limited:

1. to select and direct the working forces;
2. to hire, suspend, demote, discipline or discharge employees for just cause;
3. to assign, promote, or transfer employees;
4. to determine the qualifications and conditions for continued employment or assignment;
5. to determine schedules of work and the amount of overtime to be worked;
6. to reduce the working force;
7. to decide the number and location of its facilities, stations, etc.;
8. to determine the work to be performed and the amount of supervision necessary;
9. to maintain and repair machinery and equipment;
10. to purchase services of others, contract or otherwise;
11. to make reasonable and binding rules and regulations which shall not be inconsistent with this Agreement and State Law.

## Section 2

The exercise of the foregoing powers, rights, authority, duties, and responsibilities of the Township, the adoption of policies, rules, regulations, and practices in furtherance thereof, and the use of judgment and discretion in connection therewith shall be limited only by the specific and express terms of this Agreement and then only to the extent such specific and express terms hereof are in conformance with the Constitution and laws of New Jersey and the United States.

## Section 3

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to deny or restrict the Township of its rights, responsibilities, and authority pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40 and 40A or any other national, state, county or local laws.

# **ARTICLE4**

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

### Section 1

The provisions of this Agreement shall be applied equally to all employees without discrimination as to age, sex, marital status, race, color, creed, national origin, political affiliation or association affiliation. Both the Township and the Local shall bear the responsibility for complying with this provision of this Agreement.

### Section 2

All references to employees in this Agreement designate both sexes and wherever the male gender is used, it shall be construed to include male and female employees.

### Section 3

The Township agrees not to interfere with the rights of employees to become members of the Local. There shall be no discrimination, interference, restraint, or coercion by the Township or any Township representative against any employee because of association membership or because of any employee activity permissible under the New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act of 1968, as amended.

### Section 4

The Local recognizes its responsibility as bargaining agent and agrees to represent all employees in the bargaining unit without discrimination, interference, restraint, or coercion.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### **STRIKES OR WORK STOPPAGES**

During the life of this Agreement, the Local pledges that there shall be no strikes, walkouts, stoppages of work, sit-downs, slowdowns, boycotts, or any other direct interference with the Employer's operation or any violations of law. In the event of any breach of this clause, the Employer shall have the right to institute a suit in the appropriate court for damages and/or injunctive relief without regard to and without having to invoke, proceed under, or abide by any provision or arbitration as hereinafter provided.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **ASSOCIATION BUSINESS**

### Section 1

The Local may designate officers whose names shall be furnished to the Township Administrator in writing. Local Officers will be required to perform normal work duties and any duties in relationship to the Local shall be confined to non-working time. If the

Township schedules a meeting with Local Officers during normal work hours, and the Officers shall not lose any pay for the time spent in the meeting.

#### Section 2

A designated Local Officer may be permitted reasonable time to present or process grievances during normal working hours, provided the Local Officer has requested said time from the Chief of Police or designee, the request is reasonable, the time spent will not, in the opinion of the Chief, be disruptive of the Township's operation. The Local Officer will not suffer loss of pay for time spent where he has obtained the prior permission of the Chief of Police as provided above.

#### Section 3

Local Officers shall have no authority to take strike action or any other action interrupting the Township's business. The Township, in so recognizing such limitations, shall have the authority to impose proper discipline, including discharge, in the event Local Officers take unauthorized strike action, slow-downs, or work stoppage in violation of this Agreement.

#### Section 4

Local Officers shall not give orders to other employees nor countermand orders of management. Further, they shall not be the sole judge in determining whether there are unsafe or unsanitary conditions existing. However, the Business Representative shall have the right to investigate and determine, along with management, disputes regarding unsafe or unsanitary conditions.

### **ARTICLE 7**

#### **ACCESS TO PREMISES**

Upon notice to the Township Administrator, Chief of Police, or his designee, authorized agents of the Local shall have access to the Township premises at any time during working hours for the purpose of adjusting disputes, investigating working conditions, and collecting dues.

Access of said Local Official shall be subject to reasonable time and place limitations and shall in no case interfere with or impede Township business activities being conducted on or around municipally-owned facilities or disrupt the work of employees.

## **ARTICLE 8**

### **DUES CHECK OFF**

#### Section 1

The Township, upon being authorized voluntarily and in writing by an employee subject to this Agreement, shall deduct from compensation paid to the employee dues for Local membership in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52: 14-15.9e, as amended.

A check-off shall commence for each employee who signs a properly dated authorization card, supplied by the Local and approved by the Township, during the month following the filing of such card with the Township.

#### Section 2

The Local may revise its certification of the amount of the representation fee upon 30 days' notice reflecting changes in the regular Local membership dues, fees and assessments.

#### Section 3

Deductions for membership dues will be made on a per pay basis based on 24 pays. All deductions of Local membership dues shall be paid to an official designated by the Local.

#### Section 4

The Local shall indemnify, defend and save the Township harmless against any and all claims, demands, suits or other forms of liability that shall arise out of or by reason of any action taken in making deductions and remitting same to the Local. In consideration for the Township action in implementing Agency Shop (P.L. 1979, C.407, amending N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5 *et seq.* the Local agrees to reimburse the Township for court costs, fees and judgments incident to suits or other forms of liability

that may be incurred by the Township that shall arise out of any check-off deductions.

## **ARTICLE 9**

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

#### Section 1

A grievance shall be defined as a complaint by an employee or the Local that there has been an inequitable, improper or unjust application or interpretation of any provision of this Agreement.

#### Section 2

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, and as quickly as possible, an equitable solution to problems with respect to the administration of this Agreement, which may arise from time to time, in order to ensure the smooth running of the organization and to promote good employee morale. Both parties agree that the processing of grievances will be kept



as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the process. No resolution of a grievance shall be in conflict with the provisions of this Agreement.

### Section 3

In the presentation of a grievance, the grievant shall have the right to present his or her own case, or designate a Local representative to appear with him/her. There shall be no loss of pay for time spent by the grievant in presenting the grievance.

### Section 4

A grievant shall first attempt to resolve his/her complaint with his/her immediate Supervisor verbally. If this fails, the grievant shall institute action under the provisions of this Article by delivering, to the appropriate superior, a signed complaint within fifteen (15) days of the time he/she had knowledge, or should have had knowledge, of the occurrence. Failure to act within said 15 days shall constitute an abandonment of the grievance.

Failure of the grievant to file his/her grievance in a timely manner at any step in the grievance process, in the absence of an extension, shall constitute an abandonment of the grievance.

Failure of a superior or other management representative to respond, in a timely manner, to a properly filed grievance shall constitute a denial of the grievance, unless an extension of time has been agreed upon. Where such a denial occurs, the grievant may proceed to the next step in the process.

Extensions of time may be agreed upon, at any step in the process, by mutual Agreement of the parties, in writing.

### Section 5

#### Step 1. Immediate Supervisor

After first attempting to resolve the grievance verbally, the grievant shall file the grievance, in writing, to his/her immediate superior within the required time period. The superior shall render a decision, in writing, within six (6) of his/her working days after the filing of the grievance.

### Step 2. Chief of Police

In the event that the parties are unable to satisfactorily resolve the grievance at Step 1, the grievant may, within five days of the response by the immediate superior, refer the grievance, in writing, to the Chief of Police for resolution. The Chief, or his designated representative, shall render a decision, in writing, within ten (10) of his/her working days after the referral.

### Step 3. Township Administrator

In the event that the parties are unable to satisfactorily resolve the grievance at Step 2, the grievant may, within five days of the response by the Chief or his representative, refer the grievance, in writing, to the Township Administrator for resolution. The Township Administrator, or his/her designated representative, shall render a decision, in writing, within fifteen (15) of his/her working days after this referral. The decision of the Township Administrator shall be final and binding.

### Section 6

All meetings and hearings conducted during the grievance process shall be closed to the public and shall include only the parties at interest and/or their designated representatives. All written correspondence and other documentation or evidence generated during the process shall be made part of a permanent file in the office of the Township Administrator.

## **ARTICLE 10**

### **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

All employees, prior to becoming a regular employee with the Township shall serve a probationary of one (1) year. During the probationary period an employee shall serve at will, and may be terminated with or without cause.

## **ARTICLE 11**

### **SENIORITY**

#### Section 1

Seniority is defined as an employee's accumulated length of continuous service with the Township, computed from the most recent date of hire and an employee's length of service shall not be reduced by time lost due to absence for bona fide illness or injury certified by a physician, or by an approved leave of absence. The Township shall maintain and annually post an accurate, up-to- date seniority list showing each employee's date of hire, and position classification, and shall furnish one (1) copy to the Local upon request.

#### Section 2

If the Township establishes different starting times for employees in the same job classification, the senior person, if qualified in the classification, shall have the choice.

#### Section 3

Newly appointed probationary employees shall have no seniority and shall not be eligible for seniority under the terms of this Agreement until they have completed the probation period. Once an employee has completed the probation period, seniority reverts to the employee's date of hire and shall accumulate until that employee resigns, is discharged or retires.

#### Section 4

Inability to perform work because of proven illness or injury shall not result in the loss of seniority rights.

## **ARTICLE 12**

### **SICK LEAVE**

#### Section 1. Accumulation

A. Each full-time regular employee in the Local may accumulate up to ninety-six (96) hours of sick leave per year earned at the rate of eight (8) hours per calendar month worked.

- B. Sick leave shall begin to accrue when an employee enters the service of the Township.
- C. On January 1 of the year, each full-time regular employee shall have credited to his/her account 96 hours of sick time in anticipation of working the 12 months of the coming year.
- D. There shall be no limit to the number of unused sick days that may be accumulated. Employees shall be given a written accounting of accumulated sick leave hours by the Finance Office prior to February 1 each year.

#### Section 2. Use of Sick Leave

- A. Sick leave will be used in accordance with the Hopewell Township Sick Leave policy. Sick leave may be used only for employee's or family member's (spouse, domestic partner, child, step-child, parent or grandparent) sickness or injury, not work-related, unless taken in conjunction with injury leave as provided in Article 13, Injury Leave. Sick leave shall not be taken in increments of less than one hour.
- B. Generally, employees shall not be permitted to take sick leave in excess of that which has been credited to his/her account. However, upon approval by the Chief of Police and the Township Administrator, an employee may take anticipated sick leave not in excess of that which would be accumulated by the end of the calendar year in which the excess is to be taken. The Chief and the Administrator shall consider the employee's past history of the use of sick leave when considering approval of the use of anticipated sick leave.
- C. Should the employee leave the service of the Township before he/she has earned the anticipated sick leave used, he/she shall reimburse the Township for the unearned portion which portion shall be deducted from his/her final paycheck.
- D. An employee who becomes ill when on authorized annual leave may report the circumstances to the Chief of Police by phone or by letter and, upon presenting a certificate of inability to work from a licensed physician, may be allowed to charge to sick leave the time lost by reason of illness while on annual leave.

### Section 3. Certificate of Liability to Work

A. The Chief of Police may require certification from a licensed physician or the Township physician, or other evidence of an employee's inability to work, before sick leave is approved.

B. When an employee has been absent for five consecutive working days or more because of illness, he/she shall not be permitted to return to work until the Township physician has determined that he/she is medically fit to return. The Township Administrator will not authorize the employee's return to work without such determination by the Township physician, which shall be made on a form acceptable to the Township Administrator.

C. The provisions of this section shall apply to the return to work for light duty as well.

### Section 4. Sick Leave Incentive

As an incentive to use sick leave for its intended purpose, and to increase productivity and reward employees with excellent attendance records, the following shall apply:

1. Upon retirement, an employee will receive payment for fifty (50) percent of the accumulated sick leave based on the annual record they receive each year by February 1 or \$15,000 whichever is less. The payment shall be based on the employee's current hourly rate of pay at retirement. This benefit will be available only to Township employees eligible to retire with benefits under the provisions of the Public Employees' Retirement System and shall not apply to employees who retire prior to that time for any reason. Should an employee eligible for retirement die while in service of the Township, this benefit will be paid to the estate if hired prior to May 21, 2010. Nothing contained herein shall supersede the limitations on sick pay at retirement contained in L2010 c.3.

A. This benefit will be available only to employees of the Local who are eligible for benefits under the provisions of the Public Employees' Retirement System immediately upon retirement, and shall not be available to those who retire prior to that time for any reason.

### Section 5. Maintenance of Records

The Township Human Resources Office shall maintain the official sick leave records for each employee.

## **ARTICLE 13**

### **INJURY LEAVE**

#### Section 1

Each regular full-time employee who is unable to work as a result of an injury arising out of and in the course of his employment with the Township, shall receive his full salary for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months following the date of injury. Such salary shall be paid in accordance with the Township's standard pay schedule.

#### Section 2

In the event that an injured employee receives temporary disability under worker's compensation during the course of the aforementioned twelve (12) month period, the employee shall endorse said draft payable to the Township of Hopewell solely and is to tender said draft to the Treasurer of the Township. Said tender of draft to the Township will be in way of reimbursement toward payment of the injured employee's full salary during the course of the twelve (12) month period. It is intended hereby that no employee shall receive more than his full salary during the twelve (12) month period because of an injury arising out of and in the course of his employment.

#### Section 3

After twelve (12) months from the date of the injury, the employee shall use any accumulated sick leave for any time beyond the twelve (12) months for each day of absence beyond the twelve (12) month period.

## **ARTICLE 14**

### **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

#### Section 1

Each regular full-time employee shall be permitted up to three (3) consecutive working days with pay for purposes of attending to the arrangement of a funeral and/or attendance at the funeral of the employee's immediate family member.

The term immediate family shall include the following:

Spouse	Sister	Brother	Child	Parent
Father-in-law	Mother-in-law	Grandparents	Grandchildren	
Step-parents	Step-children	Step-grandparents	Step-grandchildren	

## Section 2

When a death occurs to a full-time employee's relative, not considered as immediate family, the Township Administrator may grant, upon request, time off without pay or the use of available personal leave.

## **ARTICLE 15**

### **JURY DUTY AND WITNESS LEAVE**

A regular full-time employee shall be granted necessary time off with pay when summoned to perform jury duty as prescribed by applicable law. In no event shall an employee be excused from work for more days than those required for such duty. The employee shall notify the Chief of Police or his designee immediately of the requirement for this leave and subsequently furnish evidence that the jury duty was performed. Any employee called for jury duty shall be required to return to work when not actively serving on a jury, or when released prior to 12:00 P.M.

## **ARTICLE 16**

### **MILITARY LEAVE**

A regular employee who enters upon active duty with the military or naval services in time of war or emergency, as declared by the Congress of the United States, shall be granted a leave of absence in accordance with New Jersey State and Federal Laws.

## **ARTICLE 17**

### **DISCIPLINE**

#### Section 1

Disciplinary actions shall follow the procedures outlined in the Hopewell Township Police Rules & Regulations, as amended.

## **ARTICLE 18**

### **WORK SCHEDULE**

#### Section 1

The regular work day shall be eight (8) or depending on the assigned schedule, twelve (12) hours and no more than sixteen (16) hours, and the regular work year shall be January 1 through December 31 consisting of 2080 hours for pay purposes. The parties recognize that the work year may involve more than 2080 hours, and that the number of hours is used only to calculate hourly wages.

#### Section 2

It is recognized that the determination of work schedules and assignment of employees to said schedules are the prerogative of the Chief of Police or his designee. The workweek shall vary, depending on the schedule instituted by the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police or his designee shall arrange reasonable work hours for employees so that they are available to the public at all times. Under normal working conditions, employee shall have five (5) calendar days' notice of any change in work schedules or assignments.

#### Section 3

The normal work day shall include one (1) fifteen (15) minute paid break in the first half of the shift and one (1) fifteen (15) minute break in the second half of the shift and one half-hour lunch break so long as the employee's positions are covered.

## **ARTICLE 19**

### **OVERTIME**

#### Section 1

Overtime worked by a Local member in excess of their daily workday established pursuant to Article 18. Such work must be authorized, directed and approved by their supervisor. In addition, work performed on the employee's regular day off (RDO) shall be compensated at the overtime rate.

Overtime will not be filled more than 30 days in advance. The senior dispatcher will be responsible for monitoring the dispatch overtime needs and ensuring that attempts are made to fill the overtime once the date is 30 days or less from the date needed.

#### Section 2

Overtime shall be calculated beginning thirty (30) minutes after the completion of the normal working shift. In the event that the employee is required to remain at his duty beyond the completion of his regular shift, the overtime period shall commence at the end of the scheduled work shift and run through the completion of the aforesaid duty.

#### Section 3

The rate of overtime shall be at one and one-half times the employee's hourly rate and shall be computed and paid on the pay date that shall fall immediately after the completion of each pay period. The hourly rate shall be computed by dividing the employee's annual salary by 2080 hours. There shall be no pyramiding of overtime.

#### Section 4

Any employee who is required to report to work during periods in addition to a regularly scheduled shift shall be paid at the rate of time and one-half (1 1/2) the regular rate of pay for such hours worked and be guaranteed not less than four (4) hours pay at the overtime rate unless the additional hours are contiguous to the normal work day. If said hours worked are contiguous to the

normal work day, then pay at the overtime rate will be granted only for the actual hours worked in addition to the regular work day. The Chief of Police or his designee may at his option require an employee to work the full four (4) hours regardless of the time required to complete the original task, unless the employee waives his right to the balance of the call back period.

#### Section 5

The Chief of Police or their designee will make every effort to offer overtime as fairly as possible among bargaining unit employees who normally perform the work and are available. A rotation system for overtime assignments shall be created by the Chief. Volunteers shall be sought to fill the overtime on a rotation basis and shall be assigned in accordance with the Dispatch Overtime Policy of the Department. If the overtime is created due to an annual leave or compensation time leave request and no one accepts the overtime, the requested leave may be denied. If the overtime is created due to sick leave or personal leave and no one accepts the overtime, the most junior dispatcher, according to seniority, who is scheduled off, will be ordered to fill the overtime.

#### Section 6

Notwithstanding the aforesaid provisions, the Township reserves its rights to require any employee to perform overtime work and to require that employee to stay on the job for the number of hours directed absent a valid medical or other authorized reason.

#### Section 7

Compensatory Time - Employee may opt to convert and accumulate overtime earned to compensatory time up to a maximum accumulation of 480 hours. Compensatory time may be taken by the employee when authorized by the Chief of Police. Compensatory time procedures are set forth as follows:

1. Compensatory time shall be credited at time and a half.
2. Only time documented on the bi-weekly pay sheets approved by the Administrator will be eligible for compensatory time off.

3. Compensatory time may accumulate from year to year, provided it does not exceed four hundred eighty (480) hours.

4. Compensatory time shall be applied for, forty-eight (48) hours in advance on the regular Township Leave Request form.

5. Compensatory time should be taken soon after the occurrence of extra hours of work as is reasonable.

6. Pay for accumulated compensatory time will be given upon retirement or termination of employment for any unused compensatory time credit. Such pay shall be calculated as set forth by F.L.S.A. guidelines.

7. Compensatory time will normally be granted in partial day or single day units. It is not to be accumulated to extend vacation or annual leave.

## **ARTICLE20**

### **COURT TIME**

#### Section 1

Employees required to testify or appear in any Court, not during a regular work schedule, relating to matters resulting out of the performance of his duties, shall be compensated at a rate of one and one-half (1½) times the regular rate of pay, and shall receive a minimum of four (4) hours compensation subject to the productive work requirement of Article 19, Section 5.

#### Section 2

An employee required to testify or appear in any Court on a job-related matter during a regularly scheduled shift shall be considered to be on assignment as part of the regular shift.

## **ARTICLE21**

### **PERSONAL LEAVE**

#### Section I

Each regular full-time employee shall be entitled to twenty-four personal hours of absence with pay in each calendar year. The employee can take off after such leave request is pre-approved by a proper supervisor, which shall not be unreasonably refused. Such leave shall not involve any loss of pay, annual leave, sick leave, reserve time or compensatory time. During the first calendar year of employment, personal leave shall be earned at eight (8) hours for each four (4) months worked. Personal leave may be taken in minimum increments of four (4) hours. Temporary employees and part-time employees are not eligible for personal leave.

#### Section 2

Unused personal leave will not accumulate. Unused personal days, at the end of the calendar year, will be added to the employee's accumulated sick leave account. Employees will not be paid for personal days not used in the year of their termination or retirement.

#### Section 3

Requests for personal leave should be submitted for approval to the Chief of Police, or his designee, as soon as possible prior to the desired time off. Requests shall be granted, by the Chief of Police, or his designee, so long as the employee's absence can be granted without adversely affecting the proper conduct of Departmental business.

#### Section 4

If an emergency requires calling into work of an employee from a scheduled and approved personal leave day, or if the employee voluntarily makes himself available for work during an emergency on a scheduled and approved personal leave day, then in that event, his personal leave day shall be re-scheduled.

## Section 5

The Township reserves the right to limit personal leave on any given day. In the case of multiple requests for personal leave, they shall be considered based on seniority.

## **ARTICLE 22**

### **ANNUAL LEAVE**

#### Section 1

Annual leave shall be defined as that time an employee has specifically requested and which has been properly authorized by the Township Administrator, and taken by the employee for which accumulated vacation leave is reduced. An employee's entitlement to earned Annual Leave is based on the number of complete calendar years of employment defined as a year in which an employee works a regular schedule from January 1 through December 31.

#### Section 2

During the first year of service, Annual Leave entitlement shall be one hundred ninety-two hours accrued as follows:

<u>Month of Hire</u>	<u>Annual Leave Earned</u>
January - March	100%
April - June	75%
July - September	50%
October - December	25%

New employees shall be eligible to take annual leave during probation; however, if said employee does not successfully complete six (6) months of the probationary period, the Township shall be reimbursed for any annual leave used.

### Section 3

Beginning with January 1 following the date of hire, the annual leave entitlement shall be:

First (1) full calendar year	192 hours
Second (2) full calendar year through the fifth (5) full calendar year	200 hours
Sixth (6) full calendar year through the tenth (10) full calendar year	224 hours
Eleventh (11) full calendar year through the fifteenth(15) full calendar year	248 hours
Sixteenth (16) full calendar year through the twentieth(20) full calendar year	272 hours
In the twenty-first (21) full calendar year	296 hours

Employees shall receive eight (8) additional annual leave hours for each full calendar year of service beyond twenty-one (21) years up to a maximum of 312 annual leave hours.

### Section 4

It is understood that annual leave shall be accrued on a monthly basis. In the event an employee is separated from Township service after having utilized unearned annual leave, the dollar equivalent of such unearned leave shall be deducted from the employee's final pay.

### Section 5

No more than two years accumulation of earned annual leave may be carried over into the following year. Nothing contained herein shall supersede L.2007 c.92 concerning the limitation of accumulation of vacation leave to one year for employees hired after May 21, 2010. Employees hired after May 21, 2010, cannot accrue more than one year of vacation time.

### Section 6

Employees shall submit annual leave requests in accordance with departmental policy. Preference for annual leave time shall be given solely on the basis of seniority within the Dispatcher Unit. The Township reserves the right to deny annual leave requests based upon the working needs of the Township. Once annual leave has been approved, it will not be cancelled without good cause. In the

event the Township must cancel an annual leave period previously approved, the employee shall be permitted to reschedule the annual leave or carry over the annual leave into the next calendar year.

#### Section 7

It is recognized that the scheduling of annual leave is a management prerogative. In accordance with such recognition, annual leave shall be scheduled by the Chief of Police and taken in workweek blocks as often as possible to maintain efficiency and smooth operation of the Department.

#### Section 8

An employee who is retiring or who is otherwise separated in good standing shall be entitled to any unused and earned vacation to the date of separation. An employee who dies shall have any accrued annual leave paid to his estate.

#### Section 9

It is understood that annual leave represents a combination of holidays and vacation leave granted to each employee. In the event that the Township declares any additional legal holidays for other municipal employees, these additional holidays will be added to the annual leave days granted under this Agreement.

### **ARTICLE 23**

#### **MATERNITY LEAVE**

Regular employees shall be entitled to Maternity Leave in accordance with the New Jersey Family Medical Leave Act.

## **ARTICLE 24**

### **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

#### Section 1

Any regular employee desiring leave without pay for an extended period of time for personal reasons shall make a request in writing to the Chief of Police not less than four (4) weeks in advance of the date for which such leave is desired, stating the reasons for the leave and the time requested. Leaves may be granted or denied at the discretion of the Township Administrator who shall review all recommendations for leaves of absence as submitted to the Chief of Police. A leave of absence exceeding six (6) months may only be applied for after all other leave time has been exhausted, and is not intended to extend vacation, sick or personal leave. Employees may not be gainfully employed during the period of such leave. Falsification of the reason for leave, or failure to return promptly at the expiration of the leave, shall be considered reason for discharge. Leaves shall be granted or denied in writing.

#### Section 2

Any Township paid medical benefits will terminate after thirty (30) calendar days of any unpaid leave of absence. Upon termination of these benefits, the employee will be eligible to participate in the Township's group insurance plan in accordance with the provisions of COBRA.

#### Section 3

An employee returning from an authorized leave of absence as set forth above will be restored to his/her original classification at the then appropriate rate of pay, with no loss of seniority, provided, however, that sick leave, vacation leave and seniority credits shall not accrue for the period of time involving the leave of absence.

## ARTICLE 25

### WAGES

#### Section I - Pay Grade 1

The following shall constitute the Local's salary schedule for pay Grade 1:

Salary-

2022-0%  
2023-0%  
2024- 4% September 1, 2024  
2025-2% September 1, 2025  
2026-2% January 1, 2026  
2027-2% January 1, 2027

Dispatch salary steps will be as follows:

	9/1/2024 To 8/31/2025	9/1/2025 To 12/31/2025	1/1/2026	1/1/2027
Step 1	53,799.24	54,875.23	55,972.73	57,092.19
Step 2	56,488.67	57,618.44	58,770.81	59,946.23
Step 3	59,311.74	60,497.98	61,707.94	62,942.09
Step 4	62,277.92	63,523.48	64,793.95	66,089.83
Step 5	65,390.76	66,698.57	68,032.55	69,393.20
Step 6	68,660.87	70,034.09	71,434.77	72,863.47
Step 7	72,094.21	73,536.10	75,006.82	76,506.96

New hires shall begin at Step 1. All Dispatchers not at the top of the pay rate shall be guaranteed an annual automatic step movement on each successive anniversary date.

## Section 2 Pay Grade 2

There are no Steps in Pay Grade 2. The following shall constitute the Local's salary schedule for Pay Grade 2:

Salary- 2022-0%  
2023-0%  
2024- 4% September 1, 2024  
2025-2% September 1, 2025  
2026-2% January 1, 2026  
2027-2% January 1, 2027

With the increases shown above, new dispatch salary steps will be as follows:

2024	2025	2026	2027
76,468.90	77,998.28	79,558.25	81,149.41

## **ARTICLE 26**

### **LONGEVITY**

#### Section 1

All regular full-time employees shall be entitled to an annual longevity payment in accordance with the following schedule:

After 10 years service .....	\$1,000
After 15 years service .....	\$1,500
After 20 years service .....	\$2,000 (maximum)

All new employees hired on or after January 1, 2017 shall not be entitled to longevity.

#### Section 2

All employees who have completed the above required years of service during any quarter of the calendar year shall have their longevity benefit added to their base wages at the beginning of the next calendar quarter.

#### Section 3

The longevity benefit shall be included for payroll purposes in the base wages of eligible employees and payable throughout the year during regular pay periods; however, annual pay increases shall be calculated on base salaries, exclusive of the longevity benefit.

## **ARTICLE 27**

### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

#### Section 1. Health Benefits Insurance Policies

The parties agree that Chapter 78 contributions will be implemented as required under the law.

Regular full-time employees shall receive Hospitalization, Major Medical, Dental, and Vision Care benefits from the Township as follows:

Effective September 1, 2024 the "base plan" for hospitalization, medical, and prescription coverage provided by the Township shall be the Direct Access 25/50 Plan and prescription 20/40/60 (the "Base Plan"). The Township shall pay the full premium for each full-time employee, and where appropriate, for dependent insurance coverage for the Base Plan (hospitalization, medical and prescription coverage) as well as for the dental and vision care benefits less the employee's required Chapter 78 contribution. Existing employees who were hired after January 1, 2017, may elect to enroll in the Direct Access 20/30 Plan, Direct Access 20/40, or the EPO plan. Existing employees who were hired PRIOR to January 1, 2017, may elect to enroll in the Direct Access 20/30 Plan, Blue Cross-Blue Shield P.P.O. Plan (PPO-10), Direct Access 20/40, Horizon Direct Access 10 (DA 10) or the EPO plan. The employee may select any available coverage but shall be responsible for paying the full amount of the difference in total premium between the Base Plan and the selected coverage (provided the selected coverage has a higher total premium) plus the amount of the employee's required C. 78 contribution for the Base Plan. In the event that a selected plan is less expensive than the Base Plan, the employee shall pay his or her premium contributions based upon the Base Plan premium less the full amount of the difference in total premium between the Base Plan and the selected lower cost coverage, which shall be deducted from any employee premium contribution. In addition to the Base Plan, employees may choose to enroll in the OMNIA Plan.

Effective September 1, 2024, all new employees shall be enrolled in the OMNIA Plan.

Domestic Partners and their dependent children will be eligible for Family coverage if 1) the full-time employee requests it or 2) the employee provides the required Certificate of Domestic Partnership and other information needed to provide coverage for the domestic partner and any dependent children. The employee is responsible for all deductibles and co-pays occurring for domestic partners or their covered dependent children.

Vision Care Coverage shall be \$200 per family member, not to exceed \$400 per family.

Regular part-time employees, working a minimum of 25 hours per week, are eligible to receive single coverage for the benefits listed above. Family coverage for these benefits may be obtained at the employee's expense.

The Township provides health insurance in accordance with COBRA.

Additionally, regular full-time employees shall receive life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance benefits up to one and one-half of base salary to a maximum of \$150,000.

The benefit plans are outlined in booklets received from the respective insurance companies and distributed to all employees by the Administration Office.

Each full-time employee shall pay a portion of the medical premium as directed by P.L. 2011 c. 78, and where appropriate, for dependent insurance coverage.

## Section 2. Procedure

New employees are eligible for benefits two calendar months after the date of hire. New employees will be enrolled in the health plans by the Personnel Officer or designee. Changes in status affecting benefits should be reported to the Personnel Officer or her designee promptly by the employee so that the necessary forms can be completed and forwarded to the appropriate insurance company. Employees who have questions or concerns regarding any of their health and life insurance benefits should contact the Personnel Officer.

Section 3. The Township reserves the right to change health insurance benefits carriers at its discretion provided that any such change will provide equivalent or better coverage for these

bargaining unit employees. The Township shall notify the Local forty- five (45) days in advance of any potential change to health insurance carriers.

Section 4. Coverage for those on Leave of Absence or terminating service with the Township Health insurance coverage for employees on a non-medical leave of absence, or who cease Township of Hopewell employment will terminate at the end of the month in which the leave begins or employment is terminated except coverage will continue for up to twelve weeks for employees on leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act and up to thirty weeks for employees on Military Leave. Upon termination of coverage, employees may extend health insurance coverage for themselves or their dependents by taking advantage of the Public Health Services Act provision for a period of eighteen months to thirty-six months. All newly hired employees and their spouses shall receive a notice of Cobra rights upon being hired. For more information, consult the Personnel Officer.

Section 5. The Township agrees to provide retirement benefits in accordance with applicable New Jersey Statutes.

Upon retirement, an employee shall receive payment for 50% of his accumulated sick leave based upon annual statement received each year, or \$15,000 whichever is less. Such payment will be calculated upon the employee's current hourly rate of pay at time of retirement. An employee shall be eligible for this payment only if they are eligible to retire with benefits under the provisions of the Public Employees Retirement System and shall not apply to employees who retire prior to that time for any reason.

By agreement with the employee, the Township may use the sick leave payout as described above to cover the cost of health insurance coverage for the employee's spouse if the employee retires before age 60.

**Retiree Health Insurance:**

Hopewell Township will provide retiree medical benefits to any retiree who meets the following criteria. All coverage will be coverage in place at the time of an employee's retirement: all

premiums will be subject to Chapter 78 contributions in addition to any other contributions required by this policy or by law. Payments for benefits accrue by the first day of the month for the following month's benefit coverage.

- A. Retirees with at least twenty-five (25) years in the pension retirement system and twenty-five (25) years of service with the Township of Hopewell will be provided with the cost of medical benefits. The retiree may add his/her spouse or domestic partner - provided the spouse or domestic partner is not covered under his/her own medical benefit plan - and shall pay 100% of the added cost of this coverage to insure his/her spouse or domestic partner. Once the employee reaches age 60 the retiree shall pay 50% of the added cost of this coverage to insure his/her spouse or domestic partner. Should the retiree obtain benefits from another employer, that employer's coverage will be primary.
- B. Retirees who are at least sixty-five (65) years of age, with twenty-five (25) years in the pension retirement system and at least ten (10) years of service with the Township. The retiree may add his/her spouse or domestic partner, provided such spouse or domestic partner is not covered under his/her own medical benefit plan. The retiree shall pay 50% (fifty percent) of any additional cost of coverage to insure his/her spouse or domestic partner.
- C. Retirees who are sixty-two (62) years of age and have at least fifteen (15) years of service with the Township. The retiree may add his/her spouse or domestic partner, provided such spouse or domestic partner is not covered under his/her own medical benefit plan, and the retiree shall pay 50% (fifty percent) of any additional cost of coverage to insure his/her spouse or domestic partner.

The amount of contribution to be paid by the retiree is to be based on the benefit in effect at the time the retiree becomes eligible for the benefit as a retiree, provided that the retiree pays at a minimum the contribution required by P.L. 2011, c. 78.

Section 6 Unless otherwise set forth by applicable law, any Employee who is eligible for health care coverage and elects to waive the coverage by the Township, shall receive an annual amount (to be paid on per pay basis) which shall not exceed 25% or \$5,000, whichever is less, of the amount saved by the Township (N.J.S.A. 40A:10-17.1). An employee who waives coverage shall be permitted to resume coverage under the terms and conditions as applied to initial

coverage if the employee ceases to be covered through the employee's spouse for any reason, including, but not limited to, the retirement or death of the spouse or divorce.

**Notice is hereby given that employees hired on or after the effective date of P.L. 2011, C. 78 may be affected by its terms and should consult with the Local, the Division of Pensions and Benefits and or the Pension and Benefits Representative at the Township.**

## **ARTICLE 28**

### **EDUCATION INCENTIVE**

#### Section 1

For the purpose of encouraging police personnel to continue their education, the Township will reimburse employees fifty percent (50%) of the cost of tuition for enrollment in courses leading to degrees in law enforcement or criminal justice. These approved courses must be part of recognized law enforcement curriculum such as offered by the College of New Jersey, or Rider University or any other accredited institution. To be eligible for reimbursement, an employee must provide evidence of completion of the coursework with a passing grade.

#### Section 2

All courses taken relative to this program must have the prior approval of the Chief of Police to accommodate reimbursement procedures and enable proper scheduling to minimize potential scheduling conflicts.

## **ARTICLE 29**

### **LAYOFF AND RECALL**

#### Section 1

All regular full-time employees shall be given a thirty (30) working day written notice prior to any layoff. All part-time and probationary employees within the Department shall be laid off prior to any regular employees. The Township agrees that employee layoffs shall be on the basis of seniority.

## Section 2

Employees on layoff shall be recalled in the inverse order of layoff. Notice of recall shall be made in writing and sent by certified mail to the employee's home address of record. The employee must provide the Township with any address change while waiting for recall.

## Section 3

The Township will not hire new employees while there are employees on the recall list qualified to perform the duties of the vacant position unless such employees on recall refuse to accept such employment. The recalled employee must report for reinstatement within fourteen (14) days after notice. If the employee does not so report, the right to recall shall be forfeited. In all circumstances, recall rights shall be terminated one (1) year from the date of layoff.

## Section 4

When an employee is recalled from layoff and reinstated, the employee is considered to have continuous service credit for computation of future earned benefits, however, the total period of continuous service shall not include the length of the period of the employee's layoff.

# **ARTICLE30**

## **TRAVEL ALLOWANCE**

The Township agrees to reimburse employees for the use of personal vehicles in connection with official travel at the current rate permitted by the Internal Revenue Service. Reimbursement shall be subject to procedures, rules and regulations promulgated by the Chief of Police.

## **ARTICLE31**

### **UNIFORMS**

#### Section 1

All uniforms and equipment shall be supplied and replaced for all employees by the Township at no expense to the employee as set forth in Attachment A.

#### Section 2

Effective January 1, 2025, the uniform allowance shall be increased from \$800 to \$1050. Payment of the uniform allowance shall be made on or before June 1 of each year.

#### Section 3

All cleaning, maintenance and repair of uniforms and equipment shall be supplied by the Township at no expense to the employee.

## **ARTICLE32**

### **BULLETIN BOARDS**

The Township agrees to allow the Local to post notices, relating to Local meetings and official business only, on the bulletin board presently available in the Police Department.

The Local agrees to limit its posting of notices and bulletins to such bulletin board. All bulletins or notices shall be signed by a Local Officer or his designee.

## **ARTICLE33**

### **TRAINING**

In addition to State mandated training , the Township reserves the right to require employees to attend work-related courses or seminars. The Township will pay the cost of such additional training.



## **ARTICLE34**

### **RESIGNATION**

#### Section 1

Any employee who fails to return to his duties within three (3) days after the expiration date of an authorized leave period without notifying the Department Head may be considered by the Township as having resigned without notice and not in good standing, provided that failure to give notice was not caused by unavoidable circumstances.

## **ARTICLE35**

### **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

#### Section 1

The Township reserves the right to institute an employee performance evaluation system for all employees covered by this contract. The system will include a formal process whereby the employee and his designated supervisor mutually review performance and the goals and work standards appropriate to the job description, which shall be the basis for measuring the employee's performance during a rating period.

#### Section 2

The required signature of the employee on the annual employee assessment review form or any related form shall be acknowledgment but shall not be construed to mean Agreement with the content unless such Agreement is stated thereon by the employee.



## **ARTICLE 36**

### **LABOR/MANAGEMENT MEETINGS**

It is agreed that representatives of the Township and representatives of the Local may meet from time to time upon request of either party to discuss matters of general interest or concern, or for the purposes of collective bargaining. Any such labor/management meetings shall be held at time and places convenient to both parties. The Township agrees to grant the necessary time off to the authorized delegates to attend the N.J. State F.M.B.A. Conventions in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 11:26C-4. The Local shall submit the convention date and the names of said delegate(s) to the Chief of Police at least forty-five (45) days prior to the convention. At the request of the Chief of Police or his designee, each delegate shall furnish the Chief with a certificate of attendance, attesting to the dates he attended the state convention.

## **ARTICLE37**

### **SEPARABILITY AND SAVING CLAUSE**

If any provision of this Agreement is subsequently declared by a proper legislative or judicial authority or court of competent jurisdiction to be unlawful, unenforceable, or not in accordance with applicable statutes or ordinances, all other provisions of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

## **ARTICLE38**

### **EFFECT OF AGREEMENT**

This Agreement contains the entire understanding of the parties and for all purposes shall be deemed the full and final settlement of all bargainable issues between the Township and the Local. The parties acknowledge that they have had the opportunity to present and discuss collective bargaining issues and related proposals without prejudice.

During the term of this Agreement, neither party will be required to negotiate with respect to any such matter, whether or not covered by this Agreement, and whether or not within the knowledge or contemplation of either or both of the parties at the time they negotiated or signed this Agreement.

By mutual consent only, the parties may enter into negotiations during the term of this Agreement for the purpose of amending same. This Agreement shall not be modified in whole or in part except by mutual Agreement of the parties. Mutually acceptable amendments shall be reduced to writing and submitted for acceptance by both parties.

## **ARTICLE 39**

### **JOB CLASSIFICATIONS**

A system of job classifications with appropriate position descriptions is presently utilized by the Township. Copies of positions descriptions shall be maintained in the Administrator's Office and shall be made available to the Local upon request. The Township will seek input from the Local when creating new titles or determining compensation for new titles related to this contract.

**ARTICLE 40**  
**TITLE CHANGES**

There are no title changes associated with this contract.

**SCHEDULE A**  
**INITIAL ISSUE TO NEW DISPATCHER EMPLOYEES**

7 Long Sleeve Shirts\*  
7 Short Sleeve Shirts\*  
5 Pairs of Pants\*  
2 Ties\*  
1 Pair of Shoes\*  
2 Turtleneck Shirts\*  
1 Name Plate  
1 Garrison Belt  
1 Breast Badge  
1 Approved Sweater\*

**Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are the responsibility of the Officer or Dispatcher for replacement.**

**SCHEDULE B**  
**PAY GRADES**

**Pay Grade**

1	Dispatcher
2	Senior Dispatcher

On the employee's 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary the employee shall become a Pay Grade 2 Senior Dispatch.

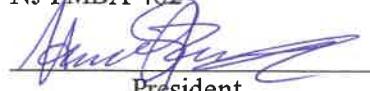
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In witness whereof, the parties have caused this Agreement to be signed by their proper officers and attested to on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

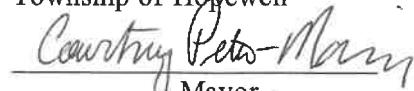
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President

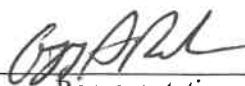
Date: 12/13/24

Township of Hopewell



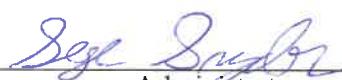
Mayor

Date: 1/22/25



Representative

Date: 12/15/24



Administrator

Date: 1/16/25

