

AGREEMENT

Between

THE CITY OF ALTOONA

And

**THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS
LOCAL NUMBER 299**

January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2030

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Entered into this 24th day of April, 2026 between The CITY OF ALTOONA, a municipal corporation, with the seat of government located in the City of Altoona, County of Blair and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, herein designated as “the City”;

AND

The INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS, LOCAL NO 299, of the aforesaid City, County and Commonwealth, herein designated as “the Union”.

WITNESSETH:

In accordance with the Act of Assembly No. 111, approved in June of 1968, the City Council of Altoona and the international Association of Firefighters, Local No. 299 negotiated a contract effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2030 and intending to be legally bound thereby, agree as follows:

ARTICLE I - DEFINITIONS

SECTION 1: DEFINITIONS OF TERMINOLOGY

Except as otherwise stated in this agreement where used herein, the respective terms hereinafter mentioned shall have the meaning as set forth as follows:

- A. The term “the City” shall mean the City of Altoona.
- B. The term “the Union” shall mean the International Association of Firefighters, Local No. 299.
- C. The term “Firefighters” shall mean a regular full-time employee of the Altoona Fire Department assigned to one of the following job classifications, namely, Assistant Fire Chief, Fire Inspector, Assistant Fire Inspector, Captain, Engineer and Firefighter. This agreement covers only regular full-time Firefighters hired pursuant to and in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Firemen’s Civil Act and the Third Class City Code.
- D. The term “Grievance Committee” shall mean the grievance committee selected by the Union, and shall consist of three (3) Union members.
- E. The term “seniority” shall except as otherwise defined in these Agreement Provisions, mean and refer to continuous Fire Department service established by Bargaining Unit employees, from the dates of their initial employment for such service. The decision to restore a break in service due to furlough, military leave, suspension or terminations shall have no impact on establishing a different seniority status. Such restoration shall impact only on pension and longevity.
- F. The term “Continuous Service” shall mean the total number of months of service, converted into total years for purposes of seniority, vacation, longevity, and retirement, which term shall exclude periods of furlough, termination, or suspension.

Effective January 01, 2000 Firefighters who have been laid off/furloughed and are recalled to work for the City may, for pension and longevity purposes, restore the break in service by purchasing not more than twenty-four (24) months of the time lost in the same manner that they would for restoring a break in service caused by an absence for military duty. This purchase **MUST BE MADE** within one hundred eighty (180) days of the effective signing date of this contract or one hundred eighty (180) days after a recall from layoff or furlough, whichever is later. This option **MAY ONLY BE TAKEN**, if any previous pension fund monies which we refunded to the member have been reinstated by repayment to the Altoona Paid Fireman’s Pension Fund prior to this purchase of furlough time.

- G. The term “Normal Retirement” shall mean retired with monthly pension benefits in conformance with Chapter 94, Article I, §94-4, of the City Code of Ordinance. Therefore, a Normal Retirement is required to receive the hereinafter-described post

Normal Retirement hospitalization benefits for those employees hired before January 1, 2005.

- H. The term “Monthly Salary” for the purpose of computing retirement benefits shall be the higher of that amount calculated by dividing the sum of the Firefighter’s base annual salary rate as of the effective date of retirement, plus longevity pay, plus overtime pay and yearly holiday pay divided by twelve (12), plus any additional increments earned by Statute and the collective bargaining agreement or that amount calculated pursuant to the provisions of Act 204 as amended; whichever is greater. (Pension contributions shall be made at the contractual rate contained herein below, on the monies in the preceding paragraph.) This paragraph shall not apply to employees hired on or after January 1, 2014.
- I. The term “additional increment” shall mean those monies earned in the same manner and by the same calculation contained in the Act and paid by the City to the retiree in a separate check each month. Furthermore, said increments, meaning that paid by the pension board and that paid by the City, are included in the COLA calculations to bring the retirees pension benefit to seventy-five percent (75%) of the original total figure used to calculate the initial monthly pension benefit. This paragraph shall not apply to employees hired on or after January 1, 2014.
- J. The term “COLA” shall mean the yearly Cost of Living Adjustment, contained herein and wherein it is applicable, to either an active or retired bargaining Unit Member. Said Cost of Living Adjustment shall be based on the CPI-W National or the comparable index used to calculate the cost of living adjustment for past retirees, whichever is greater.
- K. The term “Pension Benefit” shall be that amount calculated by multiplying the monthly salary by fifty (50%) percent and then adding any applicable service increments which shall then constitute the Firefighters’ monthly pension benefit. This benefit shall be supplemented by additional increments currently being paid, one from the pension fund and one from the City in a separate check, including the COLA adjustment payable to retirees as set forth in a grievance resolved in 1999. This paragraph shall not apply to employees hired on or after January 1, 2014.
- L. The term “Pension Contribution” shall mean five percent (5%) of the Firefighter’s base salary, plus longevity pay, plus Holiday Pay, plus overtime pay earned in any calendar year. This paragraph shall not apply to employees hired on or after January 1, 2014.
- M. The term “Temporary” contained herein shall mean less than ninety (90) days.
- N. The term He or She, contained herein, shall automatically incorporate the opposite gender.
- O. The term “Company” contained herein shall mean a designated piece of fire apparatus assigned to a designated Fire Station whose manpower makeup consists of one (1) or more members of the Collective Bargaining agreement who have bid

or been temporarily assigned to a job or position on said apparatus. Said bid or temporary assignment shall be in compliance with the language contained herein after.

- P. The term “house” contained herein shall mean a permanently designated Fire Station containing one (1) or more pieces of Fire apparatus. i.e., Station No. 1 (also known as Station No. 310) houses Engine Company No. 1 (311), Ladder Truck No. 351, the Assistant Chief’s vehicle and the Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector vehicle. Fire station’s No. 2, (320) No. 3 (330) and No. 4 (340) contain Engine Companies No. 2 (312), Engine Company No.3 (313) and Engine Company No. 4 (314) respectively. Furthermore, some of the houses contain Spare Engine Companies, Spare Ladder truck Companies as well as other equipment integral to the operations of the Services provide by the Fire Department.

ARTICLE II - APPLICATION OF AGREEMENT

SECTION 1: AGREEMENT APPLICATION, INTENT, AND PURPOSE

- A. It is the intent and purpose of the parties hereto set forth herein, so far as to the same is practical and legal under the Third Class City Code, or any amendment thereto, or other statutory laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the agreement between them in respect to rates of pay, hours of work and working conditions and terms of employment of the Firefighters of the City of Altoona.
- B. This agreement covers only regular full-time Firefighters hired pursuant to and in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Firemen’s Civil Service Act and the Third Class City Code.
- C. The provisions of this Agreement constitute the initial procedure for the processing and settlement of any claim by the Firefighters represented by the Union of a violation by the City of the Agreement. As the representative of the Firefighters, the Union may process grievances through the grievance procedure in accordance with this agreement or adjust or settle the same.
- D. It is a continuing policy of the City and the Union that provisions of this Agreement shall be applied to all Firefighters without regard to age, race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, disability status, or Union membership, Union affiliation, Union Activities and/or the holding of any Union Office.
- E. Each party, as a matter of policy, shall encourage the prompt settlement of all problems by mutual agreement at the initial level.
- F. It is understood and agreed by and between the parties hereto that this agreement, in its’ entirety, has been negotiated and executed in good faith by all parties and that if at any time during or after the term of agreement all or any portion of the agreement shall be determined to be or have been unlawful, all of the parties hereto shall save and hold harmless all of the other parties from any and all liability or any claim which might

exist in favor of one of the parties against the other party as the result of such unlawfulness.

- G. This Collective Bargaining Agreement constitutes a full and complete agreement between the parties and confirms that there are no side agreements or binding past practices. All past practices not incorporated into this CBA are null and void. This CBA represents the entire agreement between the parties with respect to terms and conditions of employment.

SECTION 2: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. Written policies and procedures shall be established, published, and uniformly applied and shall remain in effect until the City changes such policies or procedures in writing. Changes in policies and procedures may be made in the sole discretion of the City. The City shall prepare an official Policy and Procedure Manual and provide the Union with a copy. No provisions of the aforementioned manual shall be in contradiction to or supersede the contract.
- B. The City shall meet with the Union and subsequently shall respond, in writing, within twenty (20) days to a written request from the Union for clarification of any policy or procedure.
- C. Policies and procedures issued by the City during the term of this collective bargaining agreement shall be copied to the Union.

SECTION 3: OVERTIME POLICY

Each member shall be afforded overtime opportunities in a fair and equitable manner. The Overtime Policy is attached hereto as Attachment A subject to the parties' ability to meet and discuss changes to that policy.

SECTION 4: RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

Firefighters shall be required, as a condition of employment, to live within twenty-five (25) road miles from 1319 Washington Avenue Altoona PA, 16601.

SECTION 5: EMERGENCY CALL OUT

If a Firefighter refuses to respond on an emergency call back after being contacted by the Call Back System on three consecutive instances, the Chief or his designee can charge the Firefighter a sick day.

ARTICLE III - RECOGNITION OF UNION MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: THE UNION AS A REPRESENTATIVE

Subject to the provisions of the Third Class City Code, or any amendment thereto, or other statutory laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the City recognizes the Union as the exclusive representative of all Firefighters insofar as wages, hours of employment, and other conditions and terms of employment are concerned.

SECTION 2: MAINTENANCE OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. Each Firefighter who, on the date of this agreement is a member of the Union in good standing, and each Firefighter who becomes a member after the date, shall, as a condition of permanent employment, maintain membership in the Union. Each Firefighter hired on or after the date of this agreement shall, as a condition of employment commencing on the date that this (their) probationary period expires according to law, acquire and maintain membership in the Union. At the time of his permanent employment, each Firefighter may execute an authorization for the check off of union dues or other changes, in a form agreed.

SECTION 3: AGENCY FEE

All employees (bargaining Unit Members) who do not become Union Members after the effective date of this Agreement shall, as a condition of continued employment, pay to the Union each month a service charge as a contribution toward the administration of this agreement, an amount equal to the regular monthly dues and assessments of the Union. Upon failure to pay the charge; the Employer shall discharge the employee when advised by the Union.

SECTION 4: JANUS PROVISION

Article III, Sections 2 and 3 (maintenance of membership and agency fee) shall be unenforceable in accordance with the decision of the United States Supreme Court in *Janus v. AFSCME*, with the understanding that if these provisions become viable based on a future Court decision, these provisions shall be reinstated as currently drafted so long as such reinstatement is consistent with the status of the law at that time and if not, the parties shall bargain provisions that are lawful and implement the same with the understanding that in the event the parties fail to agree upon terms, either shall have the right to arbitrate this limited issue.

ARTICLE IV - JOB CLASSIFICATIONS AND RATES OF PAY

SECTION 1: JOB CLASSIFICATIONS

- A. The classifications of the Firefighter shall include:
- Assistant Fire Chief
 - Fire Inspector
 - Assistant Fire Inspector
 - Captain
 - Engineer
 - First Class Firefighter
 - Probationary Firefighter
- B. Any Firefighter temporarily assigned to a higher classification shall be paid at the hourly rate attributable to said higher classification for such time as he continues to serve in a higher classification. Said assignment(s) shall be made on the basis of seniority and qualifications. Senior employees within the company, and then the house, who are not granted said assignments, may request a reason, in writing, for being denied the assignment. Said request shall be made, in writing, to the Chief or his designee and will be answered by the Chief or his designee within five (5) days of receipt of said request.
- C. Rates of pay for Firefighters and rates for temporary assignments are contained herein.
- D. Any Firefighter temporarily or permanently assigned to a lower job classification shall continue to receive the higher salary of his prior job assignment. Said assignment shall be at the sole discretion of the Chief and or his designee. This provision shall not apply to any Firefighter who is demoted from a higher classification for cause when the basis of the demotion can be appealed by either party through the Civil Service procedures, or grievance arbitration.
- E. Per the previously signed MOU dated May 15, 2025, effective throughout the duration of this Agreement, all Probationary Firefighters will sign a Financial Commitment with the City of Altoona for all costs associated with their training. Changes to the scope and amount of reimbursement are intended to at least partially offset the high cost of training newly hired candidates at the Harrisburg Area Community College, or other similar Academy, in order to achieve the required training, as well as the cost of lodging and sustaining these candidates during their training at the Fire Academy. These changes are designed to discourage turnover and increase new hire retention within the Altoona Fire Department.
1. Newly hired Firefighters who attend the Harrisburg Area Community College Fire Academy, or other similar Academy, will be required to enter into a four (4) year Commitment Agreement that will require each Firefighter to reimburse the City for 100% of all costs incurred by the City for providing the candidate with paid tuition, lodging, and meals while in training at the Fire Academy, if the Firefighter

voluntarily leaves employment within the first two (2) years. If the Firefighter voluntarily leaves during the 3rd year of employment, the Firefighter will reimburse the City 75% of all such costs incurred by the City; and 50% of all such costs incurred during the 4th year of employment.

2. The costs associated with attending the Harrisburg Area Community College Fire Academy, or other similar Academy, include and are limited to tuition, lodging, and meals. These amounts are identified in the Commitment Agreement, however are subject to change based on the training provider and current costs and fees at the time of enrollment.
3. Exceptions to reimbursement by the Firefighter to the City would be granted if the Firefighter fails to successfully complete the Fire Academy, if the Firefighter fails to successfully complete the probationary period with the City, or would result as the consequence of a catastrophic event. In the case of a catastrophic event, a panel consisting of Union and City members will determine if individual circumstances merit such an exception

SECTION 2: WAGES

- A. Base annual salary rates shall be as set forth below for the duration of this Agreement from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2030.
- B. Firefighter job classifications and rates of pay as of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2030:

Table 1. Firefighter Pay Rate by Classification

Job Class	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Assistant Chief & Fire Inspector	\$77,533.04	\$80,634.36	\$83,859.73	\$87,214.12	\$90,702.68
Asst. Fire Inspector	\$73,466.16	\$76,364.81	\$79,379.41	\$82,514.59	\$85,775.17
Captain	\$72,466.16	\$75,364.81	\$78,379.41	\$81,514.59	\$84,775.17
Engineer	\$69,745.52	\$72,535.34	\$75,436.81	\$78,454.28	\$81,592.45
Firefighter 1 st Class	\$67,175.68	\$69,862.70	\$72,657.21	\$75,563.50	\$78,586.04
Probationary Firefighter	\$40,305.20	\$41,917.41	\$43,594.11	\$45,337.87	\$47,151.38

The Assistant Fire Inspector shall be paid at an annual salary set \$1,000.00 above the Captain rate in the above chart.

- C. The parties agree the hourly rate for the above listed classifications is obtained by dividing the base salary by two thousand one hundred eighty four (2184). Furthermore, the parties agree the bi-weekly paycheck total shall be computed by dividing the base

rated by twenty six (26) and then dividing that number by eighty four (84) to establish the bi-weekly base hourly pay rate.

- D. All wages for Probationary Firefighters shall be based on the percentage of the First Class Firefighter. Firefighters are considered to be on probation for one (1) year from the date he/she successfully completes the Academy.

While on probation, Firefighters will receive the negotiated annual increases at sixty percent (60%) of the First Class Firefighter salary as negotiated in this Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Upon successful completion of the one (1) year probation anniversary, the Firefighter will move to 100% of a First Class Firefighter.

- E. Canine Program

- 1. Participation in the Canine Program will be governed by the Canine Program Policy. Firefighters who meet the qualifications outlined in the Altoona Fire Department (AFD) Canine Policy may elect to apply to be selected to become a handler. All Firefighters selected to be a handler will sign a Commitment Agreement with the City of Altoona and will abide by the Canine Policy and procedure.

- 2. The Commitment Agreement will require all selected employees to reimburse the City of Altoona for the Actual amount paid for the AFD Canine if the canine is unable to be reassigned, at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

- 3. Canine handlers will be compensated in compliance with the Garcia Ruling, twenty (20) minutes a day for at home care of the AFD canine. This will be paid at time and half (30 minutes) for a total compensation of three and one-half (3.5) hours per week. This compensation will be paid as overtime pay.

- 4. The Canine Program will be administered in accordance with the Altoona Fire Department Canine Policy, listed in the Altoona Fire Department Tactical SOG/ Accelerant Detection Canine, which may be revised from time to time in sole discretion of the City.

SECTION 3: PAY RATES/TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENTS FOR FIREFIGHTERS

- A. All Firefighters shall be paid at the applicable rate they are in for any temporary vacancies/assignments they are qualified to fill.
- B. Furthermore, the same rate of pay shall apply to acting out of grade for routine or emergency call out in overtime status.

- C. Pay differential percentages shall terminate in any circumstance whatsoever upon a Firefighter attaining First Class Firefighter status which makes him whole/equal in all aspects to a First Class Firefighter.

SECTION 4: PAY RATE INCREASES

- A. The pay rate increases shall be those set forth in Section 2B above through the term of this Agreement.

SECTION 5: PAYDAYS AND PAY PERIODS

Paydays and pay periods shall be established as follows:

- A. The wages and salaries which may become due to Firefighters covered under the terms of this agreement shall be paid every other Friday, during the term of this agreement.
- B. All wages for the preceding pay period shall be paid to each Firefighter. There shall be no delayed or deferred payment of wages for such pay periods.
- C. Nothing in this article shall prohibit the establishment of any schedule of shorter pay periods and more frequent paydays therefore, however, by the City.

SECTION 6: LONGEVITY

A Unit Member employed prior to January 1, 2014 shall receive a longevity pay increase according to the following schedule:

Table 2. Longevity Increases for Unit Members employed prior to January 1, 2014

Continuous Service Time	Longevity Pay
25+ years	10.5% of Base Pay
21-25 years	8.5% of Base Pay
16-20 years	6.5% of Base Pay
11-15 years	4.5% of Base Pay
6-10 years	2.5% of Base Pay

Unit Members employed by the City on or after January 1, 2014 shall receive a longevity pay increase according to the following schedule:

Table 3. Longevity Increases for Unit Members employed on or after January 1, 2014

Continuous Service Time	Longevity Pay
21+ years	8.5% of Base Pay
16-20 years	6.5% of Base Pay
11-15 years	4.5% of Base Pay
6-10 years	2.5% of Base Pay

SECTION 7: EFFECTIVE DATE OF FIREFIGHTER PROMOTIONS AND CERTAIN FRINGE BENEFITS

- A. The parties are agreed that, assuming all other requirements are met, a Probationary Firefighter shall be appointed to a First Class Firefighter upon completion of his/her one (1) year probationary period from the date in which he/she completed the Academy.
- B. Longevity and vacation entitlement as provided under this Agreement shall be based on January 1st effective dates. For example, if a newly hired Firefighter was hired on March 30, 2021, he shall be considered to have completed his first year at the end of calendar year 2021. Therefore, the Firefighter would be eligible for vacation and longevity effective January 1, 2022. However, this same Firefighter will not be considered to have completed his/her one-year anniversary of employment until March 30, 2022.

ARTICLE V - REQUIRED CERTIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS; WORK ASSIGNMENTS

SECTION 1: FIREFIGHTER QUALIFICATIONS

- A. All Firefighters hired on or after January 01, 2000, must obtain and maintain the herein listed certifications prior to their assignments to Fire Suppression/Rescue/ EMS Duties. Said certifications shall be obtained at the expense of the City. Obtaining these certifications allows the Firefighter to be promoted to 1th Class Firefighter upon completing his one year probationary period from the completion of the Academy.
 - 1. Firefighter 1
 - 2. CPR
 - 3. First Aid CPR
 - 4. Hazmat Operations
- B. A 1st Class Firefighter hired subsequent to January 1, 2000 shall become a certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and be certified as a Firefighter II prior to the expiration of his first year assignment to Fire Suppression/Rescue/EMS duties. The time limits may be waived if the appropriate courses are not available in a timely fashion.
- C. The City shall pay one hundred percent (100%) of the cost of certifications required in any manner whatsoever by the collective bargaining agreement. This includes in-house training as well as requirements needed for promotion. Where members are required to attend training by Civil Service or the City in order to maintain employment, all time required for travel and attendance shall be paid at the employee's regular hourly rate.

All other training outside of the Fire Department pursued by a Firefighter shall be completely at his/her own expense.

- D. Certification as a Hazmat Technician shall not be required of any Bargaining Unit Member. However, the City shall pay any Bargaining Unit Member a two hundred dollar (\$200.00) bonus each year when he/she maintains certification as a Haz-Mat Technician paid out as follows:

One hundred dollars (\$100.00) at the beginning of the year; and one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in December of said year if the Unit Member attends fifty percent (50%) of drills/training activities for the year; plus, the cost for Firefighters to attend training for the certification, provided the following terms are satisfied:

1. A bargaining Unit Member must not only possess a Haz-Mat Technician certification, but must also join and maintain membership on the Altoona Fire Department Hazardous Materials Response Team and comply with all legitimate terms and conditions for such membership. These forms include passing a hazardous material physical examination administered by a licensed physician.
2. A bargaining Unit Member shall be eligible to join the Haz-Mat Team upon completion of one (1) year of assignment to fire suppression duties. The Fire Chief may deny any bargaining Unit Member initial or continuing membership on the Haz-Mat Team for just cause only, or the bargaining Unit Member shall be entitled to the Haz-Mat certification bonus notwithstanding his/her lack of membership on the Haz-Mat Team. Claims by the Fire Department management that a bargaining Unit Member was denied initial or continuing membership on the Haz-Mat Team for just cause, and therefore is not entitled to the Haz-Mat certification bonus, are subject to appeal through the grievance and arbitration processes set forth in this agreement.

- E. The parties agree the Fire Chief or his designee shall have the authority to transfer bargaining Unit Members from one apparatus to another to ensure each apparatus in service is a QRS certified apparatus. In order to achieve this, the least senior members on the apparatus involved shall be transferred to satisfy the QRS certification.

SECTION 2: ENGINEER/OPERATION OF APPARATUS

- A. It shall not be required that members obtain the rank of Engineer prior to being promoted to Captain.
- B. The Fire Chief shall issue a copy of a list of bargaining Unit Members certified to operate Fire Department apparatus to each fire station. The member must demonstrate to the Fire Chief or his designee a thorough knowledge of streets and addresses in the City of Altoona.
- C. A member may NOT drive on emergency responses until off probation.

- D. If a member wishes to drive on emergency response, he/she must take and pass the Aerial course as well as Pump Operator I, Pump Operator II, and Driver Operator courses.
- E. In addition to the above restrictions, such new hires shall not be permitted to “act” out of grade as Captains doing Fire/Rescue or EMS assignments for a period of five (5) years following their initial assignment to perform the herein above described duties. Any Firefighters hired before January 1, 2026 are permitted to continue to “act” out of grade as Captains doing Fire/Rescue or EMS assignments for a period of two (2) years following their initial assignment to perform the herein above described duties.
- F. The Fire Chief, by virtue of the authority granted him under Title 75 of the Pennsylvania consolidated statutes (Motor Vehicle Code) Section 1606, will issue a certificate of authorization to any present and future members covered by the terms of this Collective Bargaining Agreement. The purpose of said certificate of authorization is to comply with the statutes as written as well as any case law pertaining to the same. Furthermore, it will allow newly hired bargaining Unit Members permission, under the applicable statutes, to operate any and all apparatus (vehicles) of the Fire Department in order to demonstrate his/her proficiency as a Fire Department apparatus/vehicle operator. The Chief may personally request a demonstration of said proficiency at any time. Additionally, a list of authorized Fire Department vehicle operators will be maintained in the fire administration files to maintain a constantly current list.
- G. Officers in charge of any piece of equipment may request proof of a valid authorization certificate from the member, or if not available, request in writing from the Chief proof that the member is in fact authorized to operate the apparatus.
- H. Officers in charge of any piece of Fire Apparatus may request proof of a valid authorization certificate from the apparatus operator. Should the operator fail to have his certificate in his possession the company officer in charge may request verbal notification by the Chief or his designee that said bargaining Unit Member in question is on the Fire Department authorization list.
- I. A collective Bargaining Unit Member who cannot demonstrate proficiency at operating the apparatus shall not be issued an authorization card nor shall he be required to drive/operate the apparatus.

ARTICLE VI - UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

SECTION 1: UNIFORMS

- A. Specific types and quantities of uniform equipment will be determined by the City. The City shall bear all costs involved in purchasing and providing uniforms and equipment for all CBA members. At no time shall a member be required to pay for any uniforms or equipment required for use during the course of his/her duties. Uniforms and other equipment shall be replaced at the expense of the City as needed due to damage or normal wear and tear.

- B. The City agrees to the use of the old Altoona Fire Department logo, which includes the IAFF Local 299, where applicable.

SECTION 2: EQUIPMENT

The City agrees to budget a one-time total payment of \$40,000.00 in 2026 to provide updates in alignment with the Union’s cost analysis to replace gym equipment as follows: Station 1 & 2 - \$9,000 each; Station 3 - \$15,000; and Station 4 - \$7,000.

ARTICLE VII - HOLIDAY PAY IN LIEU OF HOLIDAYS

SECTION 1: PAID HOLIDAYS

The City shall provide each bargaining unit Firefighter twelve (12) days of pay in lieu of any and all holidays in addition to his/her regular annual rates in and for each calendar year of the parties’ agreement provisions. Such payments shall be made on the first City business day in November each such year on a separate check from the regular pay.

SECTION 2: HOLIDAY PAY AFTER SEPARATION

In the event of the retirement, resignation, or death of any bargaining unit Firefighter, all holiday pay he/she has accrued to the date thereof shall be paid to him/her widow(er) or, if none, to his/her estate.

ARTICLE VIII - VACATION

Table 4. Vacation Matrix – applicable to employees hired before 1/1/2014:

Years of Service	Total Vacation Days	Total Random Days
25 years and over	26	6
20 years and over	24	4
15-19 years	22	6
11-14 years	20	4
1-10 years	16	4

Table 5. Vacation Matrix – applicable to employees hired on or after 1/1/2014:

Years of Service	Total Vacation Days	Total Random Days
20 years and over	24	4
15-19 years	22	6
11-14 years	20	4
6-10 years	16	4
1-5 years	12	4

SECTION 1: VACATION DAYS

- A. Firefighters who are eligible to select random vacation days may pick them outside of their regularly chosen vacation periods selected, sometime prior to January 31st of the vacation period for that year. Said selection of the regular vacation selection shall be in accordance with the Non-Tactical Vacation SOP. Selection shall comply with the language of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Selection of the random vacation days shall be in accordance with the language herein, which is agreed upon by the Union and the City. Any future changes in the methodology or language in future vacation selection procedures shall be negotiated between the City and the Union and shall be subject to the grievance procedure contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- B. All members of the collective bargaining unit shall choose their vacation in accordance with the language contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Vacation selection procedures shall not be changed or modified from the methods directed to be carried out by the Chief choosing vacations, unless a negotiated change is agreed upon by the Union and the City.
- C. The Chief (City) agrees to allow two (2) Firefighters off on vacation on any platoon/trick for an entire tour subject to the seniority language of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- D. In addition to C above, the Chief (City) agrees to allow an additional Firefighter to be on vacation by using randomly selected vacation days. Said random days may be chosen before January 31st of the vacation year by the seniority selection process and may not be rescheduled unless a third (3rd) vacation spot within the Firefighters’ platoon/trick is vacant subject to E below. In addition, if a vacation slot as referenced in section C above is not selected, it shall be available for a Firefighter to use as a random vacation day.
- E. Firefighters who do not select their random vacation days by January 31st of the current vacation year, may select their days at random subject to a twenty-four (24) hour notice to the Assistant Chief on duty. Said random selection of the open third (3rd) position on a platoon/trick shall be granted regardless of the impact on overtime just as if the Firefighter had or was entitled to have personal days in lieu of these random vacation days. Firefighters who elect to choose their random days in this manner shall be granted

their request on a first come first served basis. Firefighters who do not use any granted Random Vacation days prior to the end of the calendar year forfeit said day(s) with no compensation due from the city, unless the Firefighter was unable to use the days due to injury in accordance with Section 6 of this Article.

SECTION 2: SELECTION OF VACATION DATES

Selection of vacation dates shall continue to be permitted on the basis of seniority, within each platoon, from January 1 through December 31, subject to the discretion of the Chief, depending upon the needs of the Department so that the Department can be run in an orderly and efficient manner.

SECTION 3: VACATION PERIOD REASSIGNMENT

Should any scheduled vacation periods of any Firefighter become available for reassignment within a platoon due to his/her retirement, death, transfer, or other reasons, said period of vacation weeks shall be subject to seniority picks by other employees in the same platoon subject to the discretion of the Chief and based on the needs of the Department at the time.

SECTION 4: PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF VACATION

In the event of the retirement, resignation, furlough, or death of a Firefighter, all vacation time accrued and any overtime pay earned to the time of retirement, resignation, furlough, or death of said Firefighter shall be paid to him/her or his/her widow(er), or if none to the Firefighter's estate.

SECTION 5: PAY IN LIEU OF VACATION UPON FURLOUGH

In addition to paid vacation earned in the preceding calendar year, but not yet used in the then current calendar year, upon furlough a Firefighter shall be paid the equivalent of the total number of working days which represents vacation leave earned in the then current calendar year. Upon return from furlough, the Firefighter shall not be entitled to receive vacation leave until the calendar year following his/her return from furlough. Payment due hereunder shall be made to the furloughed Firefighter the next payday immediately following the date of furlough.

SECTION 6: RIGHT TO RESCHEDULE VACATIONS WHEN INJURED ON DUTY

The right to reschedule vacation will occur when the employee is injured as a result of an on-duty work-related injury that occurs previous to a scheduled vacation. In the event of such an occurrence, a subsequent vacation period shall be granted at the discretion of the Fire Chief, but will not, under any circumstances, extend beyond the calendar year; and any vacation not used prior to year end will not be compensated for unless the employee was injured in the performance of his duties and by reason thereof is temporarily incapacitated from performing his duties or has been receiving benefits under Heart and Lung Act during the vacation period selected and cannot be returned to duty to use his/her accrued vacation time in that calendar year. This is to maintain an uninterrupted flow of benefits due the injured employee and to ensure payment for unused vacation benefits due to said employee.

ARTICLE IX - BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

SECTION 1: BEREAVEMENT LEAVE FOR IMMEDIATE FAMILY

A Firefighter shall be entitled to bereavement leave of four (4) working days; available to use, when needed, up to six (6) months from the date of death in the event of the death of the following:

Father	Father-in-law
Mother	Mother-in-law
Brother	Son-in-law
Sister	Daughter-in-law
Son	Husband
Daughter	Wife
Guardian	Any person living in the same household sharing a common roof or common table

If time beyond the six (6) month window is needed, Firefighters are to contact the Human Resources Department for approval.

SECTION 2: BEREAVEMENT LEAVE FOR EXTENDED FAMILY

A Firefighter shall be entitled to bereavement leave of one (1) working day in the event of the death of a near relative, not a member of his household. However, in no event shall a Firefighter be entitled to bereavement leave beyond one (1) calendar day.

Table 6. Bereavement Leave of One (1) Working Day

<u>Relative of Firefighter</u>	<u>Relative of Firefighter's Spouse</u>
Grandfather	Grandfather
Grandmother	Grandmother
Grandchild	Niece
Brother-in-law	Nephew
Sister-in-law	
Uncle	
Aunt	
Niece	
Nephew	

ARTICLE X - SICK LEAVE

SECTION 1: SICK LEAVE APPLICATION

- A. Beginning January 1, 2014, all Firefighters will earn 1.25 days per month for a total of fifteen (15) sick days per year; earned on a monthly basis. Firefighters out on compensatory leave will not be penalized from earning sick leave accruals. Each Firefighter shall be allowed to accumulate a total of one hundred seventy-five (175) days of sick leave. Once a Firefighter has accumulated a total of one hundred seventy-five (175) days of sick leave as of the end of the preceding calendar year, the Firefighter shall be entitled to use his/her annual sick leave of fifteen (15) days for the current year prior to any deduction being made from any sick leave that said Firefighter has previously accumulated. In addition, thereto, any unused accumulated days of sick leave shall be paid to a Firefighter, his/her widow, or if none, to his/her estate at the time of retirement, resignation, or death in the amount equal to forty percent (40%) of their daily salary for each day of accumulated sick leave. Any Firefighter that has an accumulation of more than one hundred seventy-five (175) days as of December 31, 2013 shall be entitled to maintain a maximum accumulation of the total number of days accumulated as of December 31, 2013, not to exceed two hundred three (203) days.
- B. Upon Normal Retirement, a Firefighter who is a Union member may elect to take his/her accumulated sick leave in cash payout in accordance with the current contractual provisions, or in the alternative, he may elect to waive that requirement and in its stead, the City shall provide the Firefighter and his/her spouse with the same choices of hospitalization, major medical, and prescription plans provided to current employees in the bargaining unit, which shall change from time-to-time and the Firefighter shall be required to pay the same amount as current employees pay for such coverage, which shall change from time-to-time. Coverage will continue until the Firefighter is eligible for Medicare.
- C. Effective January 1, 2005, bargaining Unit Members shall work at least five (5) hours of their shift to gain credit for a full day of work. Anything less than five (5) hours of a shift shall result in the bargaining Unit Member being charged a sick day.

SECTION 2: SICK LEAVE TRADE – IN FOR RETIREES HOSPITALIZATION COVERAGE AND DEFERRALS

- A. The option to elect medical coverage shall only be available to Union members who have accumulated one hundred two (102) sick days on the date of his/her retirement, and at the election must be eligible for a Normal Retirement. Bargaining Unit Members hired on or after January 1, 2005 shall not be eligible for Post Retirement Health Care Coverage.
- B. However, in the case of a line of duty disability pension, the extension of medical coverage, identical to that afforded to active members, shall be provided to the member, his spouse, and dependents regardless of age, service, or amount of sick leave accumulation attained at the time said disability pension is awarded.

- C. Retirees who opt to trade-in sick leave for hospitalization shall receive the same plan as provided to current employees in the bargaining unit, which shall change from time-to-time, and shall be responsible for payment of the same amount as current employees who pay for such coverage, which shall change from time-to-time. Furthermore, any retiree may purchase any of the ancillary coverage programs not herein completely or partially provided for by the City, for him/herself, his/her spouse, or his/her dependents at the existing active group plan rate at his/her sole expense.
- D. Prescriptions Drugs are provided through the Qualified High Deductible Health Plan.
- E. Retirees who trade-in their sick leave for hospitalization coverage shall be permitted to defer or opt out of their coverage until a later date, provided they enroll the first day of the month following a qualifying event, or during the City's annual open enrollment period. Said choice shall be subject to a thirty (30) day certified letter notification by the retiree to the City to begin/reinstate his/her coverage.
- F. A retiree who opts out of coverage or defers their coverage may opt back into hospitalization coverage by requesting his/her coverage be re-instated upon submitting a to the City's Human Resources Department and be eligible for coverage the first day of the month following a qualifying event, or during the City's open enrollment period, provided all supporting documentation of said Qualifying Life Event are submitted.
- G. In the event a Firefighter should elect to obtain or defer the health insurance benefit upon retirement as set forth above; such Firefighter shall nonetheless be entitled to receive upon Normal Retirement, the then-prevailing value of twenty percent (20%) of all accumulated sick leave days in excess of one hundred and two (102) days to the maximum number of accumulated sick days provided herein.

SECTION 3: SICK LEAVE ACCRUAL

All first year members of the Altoona City Fire Department shall, at the date of their employment, earn one and one-fourth (1 ¼th) sick days per month. After one (1) full year of employment, he/she shall continue to earn one and one-fourth (1 ¼th) sick days per month until December 31st of that year. At that time, his sick days will be rounded off to the nearest whole number and then he/she shall be accorded sick leave as described herein above.

SECTION 4: SICK LEAVE ABUSE

- A. In those instances, in which sick leave exceeds four (4) consecutively scheduled work days, it shall be necessary for the employee to present evidence to the Chief showing either injury, hospitalization, physical, or mental illness attended to by a licensed/certified physician or a licensed/certified practitioner of the healing arts.
- B. The Standard Operating Procedures of the department set forth a policy, in writing, clearly defining the actions, which are cause for the Chief to suspect sick leave abuse. In those instances when the Chief suspects sick leave abuse, the City, at the sole

expense of the employee, may require the employee to present written Medical certification to the City showing treatment attended to by a physician/or practitioner of the healing arts or hospitalization for injury or physical or mental illness, regardless of the number of days absent. Should the employee desire to report to duty prior to obtaining a medical certification, he shall not diminish his sick leave any further from his date of reporting for duty as is stated herein below. Employees who are deemed to be in violation of the said written sick leave abuse policy are subject to reprimand, suspension, and or dismissal, as the case may be, in conformity with State Laws, Civil Service Laws, and City Ordinances pertaining to the same.

SECTION 5: EXTENDED SICK LEAVE

- A. If the City decides an employee on extended sick leave should be examined by a licensed/certified Physician or a licensed/certified practitioner of the healing arts who is not on a City designated list of panel providers to verify the employee's physical condition to perform the duties of a Firefighter, said examination shall be paid for by the City.
- B. "Extended sick leave" for purposes of this Section shall mean sixteen (16) or more consecutive (shifts) of duty missed due to non-work related illness or injury. In the event the employee is determined by the City designated physician or practitioner of the healing arts not to be physically or mentally able to return to work, the employee may continue to use his accrued sick leave to the extent available until such time that he is determined able to return to work. Said decision of the City designated licensed/certified physician or licensed/certified practitioner of the healing arts is subject to the grievance procedure contained herein.
- C. In the event the employee is determined able to return to work, any sick leave days used from the date he was determined eligible for work by his personal physician, until he was released by the City's physician or practitioner of the healing arts shall be returned to his accumulated sick leave. In the event the employee did not have sufficient sick leave to cover said period, he shall be paid for those periods he would have worked and was prevented from work until examined by the City's licensed/certified physician or certified licensed Practitioner of the healing arts. In order to be entitled to the above, the employee must provide the City with a ten-day (10) notice of sick leave exhaustion.

ARTICLE XI - ADJUSTMENT OF GRIEVANCE/PROBLEMS

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF GRIEVANCE PROCESS

- A. A grievance committee shall be appointed by the Local Union President. The committee is to consist of three (3) Union members. The Local Union President aforesaid shall be permitted to attend all grievance hearings and/or be entitled to fill any temporary vacancies on said grievance committee.
- B. Should differences arise between the City and the Union as to the meaning and application of the provisions of this Agreement or with regard to everyday working

conditions, every effort shall be made to settle such differences immediately in the manner hereinafter set forth.

- C. The procedural steps set forth hereinafter shall constitute a general standard, and nothing herein shall diminish or nullify the rights and benefits granted to Firefighters under the Civil Services laws, arbitration laws, or any provision of the Third Class City Code or amendments thereto, or any other laws of the Commonwealth.
- D. All grievances and responses under this Article shall be in writing. Bargaining Unit Members may elect to have processed as a grievance discipline, including suspensions and or terminations, which also can be heard by the Civil Service Commission. The election to have such discipline processed as a grievance shall be irrevocable and constitute a waiver of the right to file an action under the City's Civil Service Ordinance involving the same discipline. Conversely the election to proceed under the Civil Service Ordinance shall constitute a waiver of the right to process the matter as a grievance.

SECTION 2: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

STEP 1 - If a Firefighter believes he has been grieved, in any manner whatsoever, he/she shall submit it verbally and in writing to the Union's grievance committee within thirty (30) days from the time he knew or should reasonably have known he had been grieved. The grievance shall be dated and contain the date and actions giving rise to the grievance/complaint. The committee shall contact the Fire Chief and arrange for a meet and discuss fact-finding session to determine the merits of the member's complaint/grievance. Subsequent to that meet and discuss session the grievance committee shall have thirty (30) days to initiate a formal grievance in writing to the Fire Chief. Failure to move the grievance forward, without obtaining a waiver of the time limits, shall void the grievance.

STEP 2 - In the event the grievance is not settled at Step 1, and the Firefighter is so notified, verbally and in writing, and wishes to appeal said decision, he shall reduce the same to writing within five (5) days after Step 1 has been completed, present the same to his Union Grievance Committee, who shall present same to the Fire Chief within the thirty (30) day time frame subsequent to the meet and discuss session in a sincere effort to resolve the grievance. The Chief shall answer the grievance within the ten (10) days after he has received said grievance. Any reasonable request for additional time to process a grievance or respond thereto shall not be unreasonably withheld by the other party and the parties will be excused from delays when there is reasonable justification. Failure of the Fire Chief to respond shall automatically move the grievance to Step 3.

STEP 3 - If the grievance cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, and the Fire Chief has complied with the time frame for an answer, then he shall arrange a meeting within ten (10) days or as soon as is reasonably possible, after his prompt reply at STEP 2 with the City Manager and the Grievance Committee and the grieved party, for the purpose of reaching a solution.

STEP 4 - If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties within ten (10) days of its presentation to the City Manager at Step 3, either the City or the Union may appeal to arbitration. A request for arbitration shall be initiated within twenty (20) days after presentation of the grievance to the City manager by serving upon the other party a notice in writing of intent to proceed to arbitration. The notice shall identify the agreement provision in dispute or the issue(s) to be determined, and the employee(s) involved. Upon receipt of a notice requesting arbitration, the parties shall meet and select an arbitrator. If the parties cannot agree upon an arbitrator, within ten (10) days, they shall notify the American Arbitration Association. The American Arbitration Association shall then conduct the case in accordance with its' Voluntary Labor Arbitration Rules.

In order to facilitate an amicable resolution to the complaint/grievance either party may request a waiver or extension of the time parameters as set forth herein above.

- A. The arbitrator shall have no power or authority to add to, subtract from, or modify the provisions of this agreement in arriving at a decision of the issue(s) presented and shall confine his decision solely to the application and interpretation of this agreement. The decision or award shall be final and binding.
- B. The cost of arbitration shall be shared equally by the City and the Union. Each party shall bear the cost of preparing and presenting its own case.

SECTION 3: ACTING IN BAD FAITH

In the event that the Arbitrator shall determine that either party acted in bad faith with regard to the facts underlying the issues or with regard to the conduct of the proceedings, the Arbitrator is empowered to assess all or a portion of the fees and expenses incurred in the presentation of the case and reasonable attorneys' fees as an element of damage. Furthermore, should the Arbitrator direct a financial remedy, such remedy shall commence to run from the date of violation and shall bear an interest rate from that date equal to the six (6) month United States Treasury bill rate, adjusted for each calendar quarter that such remedy is payable, as was in effect from the date that the violation occurred to the date that payment made.

ARTICLE XII - UNION BUSINESS

SECTION 1: UNION DAYS

- A. The City will allocate a total twenty (20) days per year to be utilized as paid absence for the purpose of carrying out official duties by any of the following:
 - 1. I.A.F.F., Local No. 299 Union Officials
 - 2. I.A.F.F., Local No. 299 Official Union Designated and Delegates
 - 3. I.A.F.F., Local No. 299 Executive Board

- B. Provided that it does not interfere with the operation of the Fire Department, the City shall continue to permit the Union to conduct Union meetings and official business at such time and at such Fire Stations, as the Union shall designate.
- C. The allocation of days among the aforesaid shall be at the sole discretion of the Officers of the I.A.F.F., Local No. 299.
- D. The Officers of the I.A.F.F., Local 299, agree to notify in advance the Chief or his designee when days pursuant to this Article need to be scheduled in order to provide sufficient time for replacements.

ARTICLE XIII - HOURS OF SERVICE, OVERTIME, LONGEVITY, AND EXCHANGE OF DUTY

SECTION 1: SHIFT SCHEDULE AND STAFFING

- A. The hours of work during the term of this agreement shall remain the same. That is a four (4) platoon system with each platoon working four (4) consecutive days consisting of two (2), ten (10) hour days; and two (2), fourteen (14) hour nights. Daylight hours are 0700-1700 and night hours are 1700-0700.
- B. The City agrees that the total compliment of Firefighters shall be sixty (60) full-time Firefighters with the provision that the City will have a reasonable period to achieve the total compliment via hiring and training program availability; and for maintaining the total compliment arising from attrition due to retirements, voluntary resignations, terminations and injuries.

SECTION 2: OVERTIME DIFFERENTIAL

- A. Each Firefighter will work a pre-established work cycle, which shall average forty-two (42) hours per workweek, without built-in overtime for the two (2) hours above forty (40) hours worked. Nothing whatsoever shall diminish the forty-two (42) hour workweek. The City shall not institute an eight (8) hour workday during the term of this agreement.
- B. During the term of this CBA, time and one half (1 ½) the hourly rate shall be paid where the seven (7) day workweek exceeds forty-two (42) hours).
- C. The above paragraphs apply to routine call out in overtime status. The Memorandum of Record, dated December 4, 2014, and Non Tactical SOP regarding Emergency Overtime is incorporated herein as Attachment "B".
- D. Any Firefighters temporarily assigned to a higher job classification upon being in overtime status, shall be paid at the hourly overtime rate attributable to said higher classification and tier for such time as he continues to serve in a higher classification in overtime status.

- E. Any Firefighter temporarily assigned to a lower job classification upon being in overtime status, shall continue to be paid at the hourly overtime rate attributable to the higher salary of his prior job assignment(s).
- F. In the event of a call out in overtime status, the actual overtime rate for hours worked, shall be paid at the rate attributable to the classification and tier assignment of, and assigned to, said Firefighter, subject to the provisions of Article IV, Sections 1 and 2, whichever is applicable. The City agrees to a minimum payment of four (4) hours for call-outs for second alarms and HAZMAT emergencies.
- G. Any employee who is subpoenaed to court during his/her regular off duty hours in connection with cases involving his/her status as a City of Altoona Firefighter, shall be paid at the rate of time and one half (1 ½) of his regular hourly pay rate for the time actually spent in court, or a minimum of four (4) hours straight time; whichever is greater.
- H. Straight time rates shall be paid for time on-call at home for all the hours, which are determined by the District Attorney's Office to be "on call" time.
- I. Employees subpoenaed to court in connection with cases involving his/her status as a City of Altoona Firefighter while on vacation time shall be paid straight time (as if he/she was working) for the time spent in court with that vacation time rescheduled, as nearly as possible, to a different time of their choice.
- J. Provided, however, that in any event any Firefighter who is subpoenaed to court as a witness in conformity with this Article is paid any court monies, the said witness fee monies shall be returned to the City of Altoona, excluding travel and meal money.
- K. The calculation of hours for purposes of determining overtime eligibility shall include only hours actually worked, paid vacation leave, paid holidays, paid personal leave, paid bereavement leave, and paid jury duty. (For example, sick leave and compensatory time will not be included in the calculation of hours for determining overtime eligibility.)

SECTION 3: SHIFT EXCHANGE

- A. The Chief, Deputy Chief, and/or Assistant Fire Chief, or in the event of their unavailability, their designee, may grant the request of any two (2) Firefighters to exchange days off in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. A Firefighter may owe other Firefighters up to eight (8) days, and also at the same time, the same Firefighter may have up to eight (8) days owed to him. At no time shall a Firefighter be allowed to have more than sixteen (16) consecutive working days of exchange.
- B. If this request is denied, said Firefighters shall receive a reason for denial, in writing, within twenty-four (24) hours upon request.

ARTICLE XIV - FRINGE BENEFITS

SECTION 1: HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

- A. Effective January 1, 2026, the base plan of insurance shall be the Qualified High Deductible Plan. During the term of this Collective Bargaining Agreement, the City shall continue the same dental and vision healthcare plans. Throughout the term of this agreement, the City agrees to provide the bargaining Unit Members and their dependents with the Qualified High Deductible Plan, or an equivalent or better plan, in conjunction with a Health Savings Account (HSA) for eligible employees. Equivalent in this context shall not mean exactly the same but rather shall mean a plan which, when considered as a whole, offers benefits that are comparable to the plan in effect. Any proposed change from the current carrier will require the City to meet, discuss and agree upon said change with the IAFF Local 299 Executive Board.
- B. Each eligible employee shall establish a Health Savings Account (HSA) in conjunction with the Qualified High Deductible Health Plan whereby the deductible amounts shall be \$1,750 for individual coverage and \$3,500 for family coverage where family coverage shall be defined as coverage that includes any category other than individual coverage. The City shall pay \$1,100 annually towards the health insurance deductible for individual coverage and \$2,200 annually for family coverage. Any bargaining Unit Member who is ineligible to contribute to a Health Savings Account in any year of this agreement shall receive the City's contribution for the year paid in a separate check in January of each year of ineligibility.
- C. Effective January 1, 2026 and after, all bargaining Unit Members must pay a monthly premium payment to maintain health care coverage. Dental and vision coverage is provided by the City at no cost to the Unit member. In addition, employees will be responsible for cost sharing increases for their monthly health insurance contributions as follows:
1. Employees will contribute ten and three-quarters (10.75%) percent of the total healthcare cost (healthcare premium plus the City's HSA contribution) cost per year.
 2. For any increases effective January 1, 2027, employees will contribute eleven and one-half (11.5%) percent of the total healthcare cost (healthcare premium plus the City's HSA contribution) cost per year.
 3. For any increases effective January 1, 2028, employees will contribute twelve and one-quarter (12.25%) percent of the total healthcare cost (healthcare premium plus the City's HSA contribution) cost per year.
 4. For any increases effective January 1, 2029, employees will contribute thirteen (13%) percent of the total healthcare cost (healthcare premiums plus the City's HSA contribution) cost per year.
 5. For any increases effective January 1, 2030, employees will contribute thirteen and three-quarters (13.75%) percent of the total healthcare cost (healthcare premium plus the City's HSA contribution) cost per year.

The parties are free to meet in an effort to negotiate changes to the carrier, plan, and/or plan design to reduce the amount of any increase in City health insurance costs with the understanding that the formula set forth above will be applicable in determining the sharing of any costs over the prior year.

D. Dental and Vision Coverage

As of January 1, 2026, the City shall maintain and pay for the United Concordia platinum plan, or a comparable dental program currently in effect for Unit Members and their dependents, the same of which shall include coverage for routine, prosthetics, periodontics and orthodontic care. Any employee enrolling in dental coverage for a dependent(s) over the age of eighteen (18) years old must ensure that the dependent(s) is enrolled as a full-time student in a secondary training program to qualify for coverage. The employee will be required to submit a Dependent Certification, proof of full-time enrollment status, and must be under the age of twenty six (26) to be eligible for dental coverage.

As of January 1, 2026, the City shall maintain and pay for the Vision Care coverage in effect for Unit Members and their dependents, which is currently the same vision coverage offered to the City employees.

- E. An employee who waives health insurance coverage shall receive twenty (20%) percent of the savings enjoyed by the City by reason of the waiver. Where both an employee and his/her spouse is employed by the City, each shall receive ten (10%) percent of the savings if each elect's individual coverage rather than husband and wife coverage. There shall continue to be no waiver applicable where both a husband and wife are employed by the City and one elects coverage that is applicable to both.

It is the intent of the parties that this opt out arrangement will qualify as an "eligible opt-out arrangement" and that the Affordable Care Act and related regulations will not require opt out payments to be counted as an employee contribution for the purposes of determining whether an offer of coverage is affordable. It is likewise the intent of the parties that opt out payments shall not render the City's offer of coverage to any employee "unaffordable" as defined by the Affordable Care Act and related regulations. Should the amount of a potential opt out payment to an employee render the City's offer coverage to that employee or any other employee unaffordable as defined by the Affordable Care Act and related regulations, then the amount of the opt out payment shall be reduced by the amount necessary to ensure that the City's offer of coverage to that employee or any other employee is affordable.

- F. All bargaining Unit Members hired on or after January 1, 2005 shall not receive postretirement health insurance coverage. (See Article X, Section 2A.)

SECTION 2: LIFE INSURANCE

The City shall provide, at its expense, a term life insurance policy in the face amount of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) or an amount equivalent to that afforded members of the Altoona Police Department, which shall include double indemnity/accidental death and dismemberment

for each Firefighter. Bargaining Unit Members shall be permitted to purchase additional amounts at their own expense through notification to the City and subsequently through payroll deduction with pre-tax dollars if legal. Upon retirement the retiree is permitted to pay for the amount of coverage selected. Said coverage chosen shall reduce in face value by fifty percent (50%) of the original coverage over the first five (5) years of retirement in 10% increments each year; e.g. seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) the first year; sixty-seven thousand five-hundred dollars coverage (\$67,500) the second year and so on until the face value of the policy is reduced to fifty percent (50%) or thirty-seven thousand five-hundred dollars (\$37,500). The retiree shall pay the premium annually in January of each year he elects the coverage to remain in place.

SECTION 3: LIABILITY INSURANCE

The City shall continue to provide full liability protection for each Firefighter as required by the Pennsylvania Political Subdivision Tort Claims Act, 42 Pa. C.S.A. Section 8541, et seq., when Firefighters are performing work assignments required by the City.

SECTION 4: LINE OF DUTY DEATH HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

- A. In the event that any bargaining Unit Member is killed in the line of duty, the City shall continue to provide, or commence providing; healthcare benefits consistent with the benefits provided in the Agreement for Active Full-time Firefighters, which shall change from time-to-time, to the deceased Firefighter's surviving spouse and children. Such coverage shall continue until they meet the requirements/specifications listed herein:
1. Coverage for the deceased Firefighters' children shall terminate when they reach the age of nineteen (19) or terminate their status as full time students, whichever comes later.
 2. Coverage for the deceased Firefighter's spouse shall terminate when the spouse becomes eligible for Medicare.

SECTION 5: CANCERN SCREENINGS

The City agrees to reimburse current, active, Firefighters for the full cost of \$325.00 per member for annual cancer screenings.

ARTICLE XV - MILITARY LEAVE

SECTION 1: MILITARY SERVICE ACTIVATION

Those members of any branch of the armed forces who may be required to report to active duty shall continue to receive his/her full wage and benefits, including seniority and credit for length of service, under and pursuant to this contract (less any earnings paid by the military services) for the duration of that service. In addition to the 15 days afforded by statute for military leave with full pay, the Firefighter may be paid an additional 15 days without reduction when the Firefighter is called for federal active duty overseas in support of contingency operations.

SECTION 2: MILITARY SHIFT EXCHANGE

Collective Bargaining Unit Members shall be permitted to trade time to attend work, drills, meetings etc., regardless of monetary gains realized by such a trade.

SECTION 3: MODIFICATION OF AGREEMENT

All existing conditions and past practices not specifically amended under this article shall be deemed to be continuing and in full force and effect for the duration of the agreement or until modified by the parties to the agreement.

ARTICLE XVI – PENSIONS

SECTION 1: PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

- A. Upon implementation of this contract, the City shall “pick up” and pay the member’s future contributions to the Firefighters’ Pension Fund. The member’s gross salary shall be reduced by the full amount of said contribution. The member’s contributions which are “picked up” by the City shall be treated in the same manner as contributions made by a member prior to the commencement of the “pick up” program and shall, therefore, be included in “compensation” for the purposes of the Pension Fund’s benefit calculation and for the purposes of the parties in fixing salaries and compensation of members as set forth in this contract. The City’s contributions to the Firefighters’ Pension Fund will be calculated on the full salary of members as set forth in the definitions, i.e., salary, longevity, holiday pay, and all additional overtime and straight time monies before the “pick up” is deducted from the gross salaries afforded by this contract.
- B. However, should the method of calculating benefits due under the plan or the present definition of compensation for those benefit calculations be changed by the parties to this agreement for whatsoever reason, the Union shall have the option of severing this implementation.

SECTION 2: LONG-TERM DISABILITY PENSION

- A. Any Firefighter who has less than ten (10) years of service and who is totally disabled due to illness, injuries, or mental incapacity not received in the line of duty, and is unable to perform the duties of a Firefighter, shall be entitled to a pension of twenty five percent (25%) of his annual compensation. For illness, injuries, or mental incapacity not received in the line of duty after ten (10) years of service, the compensation shall be fifty percent (50%) of his annual compensation.
- B. The disability pension shall be payable to the Firefighter during his lifetime and if he/she shall die, the pension payment that he/she was receiving shall be continued to be paid to his/her spouse if she/he survives or if she/he subsequently dies, then the child

or children under the age of 19 years or until such children shall have terminated their status as full time students whichever is later.

SECTION 3: PENSION DEATH BENEFIT INCLUSIONS

The applicable disability language contained in Section 2 above does not include a death benefit nor is it offset by any other type of compensation the Firefighter may receive from any other source whatsoever. Furthermore, the language does not preclude existing or future federal, state, or local statutory benefits payable on account of Firefighter disabilities or death.

SECTION 4: PENSION BY LAWS

- A. The current City of Altoona Paid Firemen's Pension Fund Bylaws as of January 1, 1990, shall be amended to reflect the changes adopted in the party's agreement for the contract term 2014-16 and shall be incorporated herein by reference thereto and remain in effect for the duration of this or any other previous agreement unless a negotiated change is agreed upon or awarded to the parties of this agreement.
- B. The parties agree that Section 1.01, Board of managers, of said Pension Bylaws shall be changed to provide that a regular designee of the mayor may attend meetings in the absence of the Mayor. The Mayor's designee shall have full voice and vote in the Mayor's absence.

SECTION 5: PENSION SERVICE INCREMENT

- A. Each Firefighter who retires shall receive a service increment for years of service beyond the minimum required for retirement by increasing the figure currently utilized in accordance with the current act recently passed by the General Assembly. Said amount is five-hundred (\$500) dollars. Furthermore, said amount shall be earned in the same time frame as was the increment contained in the previous Act of the General Assembly applying to Cities of the third class providing that such increment does not exceed five hundred (\$500) dollars per month. Employees hired before January 1, 2014 shall contribute an additional five (\$5.00) dollar per month pension contribution toward the cost of this service increment. This benefit shall not be available to any employee hired on or after January 1, 2014.
- B. The City, by and through the Altoona Paid Firemen's Pension Fund agrees to pay an additional one-hundred (\$100) dollars per month to any collective bargaining Unit Members who retires. Any and all portions of the service increment earned plus the one-hundred (\$100) dollars shall be paid by the Altoona Paid Firemen's Pension Fund. This benefit shall not be available to any employee hired on or after January 1, 2014.
- C. The salary computation used to determine pension benefits shall include overtime worked by the Firefighter. Pension benefits of the bargaining unit shall vest after twelve (12) years of service, effective January 1, 1997.

- D. Bargaining Unit Members hired before January 1, 2014 shall pay to the Altoona Paid Firemen's Pension Fund a five percent (5%) contribution on base salary, longevity, holiday pay, and overtime each calendar year earned. Bargaining Unit Members hired after January 1, 2014 shall contribute five percent (5%) of base pay only consistent with the provisions set forth below.

SECTION 6: COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS FOR RETIREES

- A. Effective January 1, 1996 collective bargaining Unit Members retiring subsequent to that date shall receive a cost of living adjustment in and for the first year and every subsequent January 1 until the initial rate of retirement benefits reaches seventy-five percent (75%) of the salary computations used to determine the rate of monthly benefits. Said Cost of Living Adjustments shall be based on the existing formula used or the CP-W National index measured from October 1, to October 1 of the previous year, whichever is greater. This benefit shall not apply to employees hired on or after January 1, 2014.
- B. Nothing contained in this Collective Bargaining Agreement shall prohibit The Mayor and City Council from awarding an increase to the entire membership or a designated part of the membership of the Altoona Paid Firemen's Pension Fund provided said increase is fair and equitable to the whole or designated part of said membership and is in accordance with applicable Statutes pertaining to those members. Furthermore, all parties to this agreement are prohibited from reducing any retiree benefit once that retiree has collected/received the same, subject to the conditions and limitations contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement at the time of retirement.

SECTION 7: ELIGIBILITY FOR PENSION RETIREMENT

- A. The City agrees, upon execution of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, it shall pass an ordinance amending the Altoona Paid Firemen's Pension Fund By laws, incorporated and referenced to herein, to provide that any Unit Member who has accumulated twenty (20) years of service with the Altoona Fire Dept. shall have the right to retiree regardless of the Unit Member's age upon reaching/accumulating twenty (20) years of service. This benefit shall not apply to employees hired on or after January 1, 2014.

SECTION 8: EARLY RETIREMENT – MILITARY BUYBACK

The City and Union agree to meet, discuss, and investigate the potential of enabling members vested in the pension plan the option to purchase up to sixty (60) months of pensionable service time in a manner similar to that afforded military veterans under third class city code. If, such action is determined to be illegal, then such action shall be null and void, with both parties held harmless and no other term or condition in this CBA shall be affected. In no event shall any member be allowed to purchase more than sixty (60) months of service, i.e. this provision shall not be combined with military time to exceed five (5) years of service. This provision may be combined with military time to reach five (5) years if the employee has less than five (5) years military time.

SECTION 9: PENSION BENEFITS FOR FIREFIGHTERS HIRED ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2014

The City shall have the right, upon receipt of an actuarial study conducted in accordance with Act 205, to amend the fire pension plan to establish a plan that provides, for employees hired on or after January 1, 2014, with base pension benefits that would include no service increment; no cost of living adjustment; a pension calculation of fifty (50%) percent of base wage; a minimum age requirement of fifty (50) years of age and a minimum service requirement of twenty (20) years of service. Pension contributions shall be established at five (5%) percent of the base salary for these employees.

ARTICLE XVII - HEART & LUNG ACT BENEFITS AND MODIFIED LIGHT DUTY

SECTION 1: HEART & LUNG BENEFITS

In the event that any member of the bargaining unit should become temporarily incapacitated as a result of a work related injury or illness, such individual shall continue to receive his full salary and benefits provided by this agreement for the duration of that incapacitation.

SECTION 2: ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT WHILE INJURED

The parties agree bargaining Unit Members in Heart & Lung or Workers' Compensation status due to work related injuries or illnesses shall not be permitted to work at other paid employment during any hours when, absent their injuries or illnesses, they would have been scheduled to work at their City Fire Department employment on their regularly scheduled shifts/hours of duty.

SECTION 3: MODIFIED DUTY

The policy outlined in this section shall apply to all injuries or illnesses incurred by member of the bargaining unit, regardless of whether those injuries or illnesses are work related.

- A. An employee is temporarily unable to perform, without restriction or limitation, all duties and responsibilities of his/her position may be required to perform "modified duty" employment responsibilities in strict accordance with the terms of this policy.
- B. As used in this Policy, the term "modified duty" shall mean the temporary or part time employment duties and responsibilities of a lesser degree and/or nature than those historically performed by the temporarily disabled employee, but are only of the scope and nature traditionally performed by fully capable members of the bargaining unit. Such duties shall be performed without requiring the wearing of a uniform shall be non-confrontational in nature, shall be on the same shift as the Firefighter was working at the time of his injury and shall be consistent with the rank of the injured bargaining Unit Member. Under no circumstances shall "modified duty" include, in whole or in part, employment duties that are demeaning to the disabled employee, that are unnecessary to the operation of the Fire Department or the City, or that are intended solely for the purpose of "make work" tasks. The City and the Union shall meet, discuss

and agree on specific modified duty activities to be assigned that may be outside the employment duties historically performed by the bargaining unit.

- C. The determination of whether, and to the extent to which (if at all), a disabled employee may perform “modified duty” work shall in the first instance be made in writing by the employee’s certified/licensed treating physician. If a difference of opinion on that issue exists between the employee’s treating physician and a certified/licensed Physician designated by the City, the employee shall submit to an examination by a third certified/licensed physician, the fee of which shall be paid by the City, agreed upon by the parties who will render an opinion as to whether, and the extent to which (if at all), a disabled employee may perform “modified duty” work within the meaning of this Policy. If the parties cannot reach agreement on the identity of the third certified/licensed physician, the certified/licensed treating physician and that physician designated by the City shall be requested to designate a third certified/licensed physician. The decision of the third certified/licensed physician shall be final and binding on all concerned.
- D. The City shall identify and describe in any proposed “modified duty” work which it proposes to assign an injured bargaining Unit Member, including all duties and responsibilities thereof, the hours of work (within the Firefighter’s assigned shift) and any other salient characteristics thereof. Such descriptions shall be the sole reference utilized by a physician in reaching a determination as to the circumstances, if any, that an employee is eligible for assignment to “modified duty” under this policy.
- E. An employee who is performing “modified duty” assignments under this Policy shall, upon prior notice to the Department, be permitted, without loss of pay or benefits, reasonable time during the workday to attend a medical or rehabilitation appointment. Employees who are performing “modified duty” as a result of a non-work related injury or illness shall make every reasonable effort to schedule appointment outside of his/her normal working day shift.
- F. The employee shall be required to provide the City with periodic reports from the certified/licensed attending physician describing the extent and anticipated duration of his recuperation and /or rehabilitation.
- G. The employee shall never be required or permitted to perform “modified duty” where either the nature of the duties or the physical limitations of the disabled employee would in any manner or degree expose either that employee or any other member of the bargaining unit to danger, or threat of same, of any nature, or where such duties are performed, or the performance of same, by the disabled employee would violate the contractual rights of any other member of the bargaining unit.
- H. Nothing in this Policy shall serve to diminish or in any manner waive the affected employees’ rights under any applicable law.

- I. Employees who are performing modified duty as a result of a disability incurred in the performance of their duties shall continue for the purposes of taxation to be carried as receiving Heart & Lung Act benefits for the duration of the disability.
- J. After an employee has performed “modified duty” for a period of six (6) consecutive months, the City shall have the option of removing him/her from “modified duty. “Modified duty positions are intended to provide a transition period for an employee who is sick (ill) or injured to gradually return to full duties, and not to create permanent positions consisting of only portions of the duties of established bargaining unit positions.

ARTICLE XVIII - PROMOTIONS AND FILLING OF VACANCIES

The eligibility for promotion and merit positions will be determined and conducted under the provisions of the Third Class City Code, as amended, which govern the Firefighter promotions.

ARTICLE XIX - EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL FILES

SECTION 1: RIGHTS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- A. Each bargaining unit employee shall be provided reasonable access to review any information contained in his/her personnel file, training file or personal injury file, as provided by Law. Furthermore, each member shall have the opportunity to enter a letter of rebuttal to any charges and remarks contained therein.

ARTICLE XX - FIRE INSPECTOR/ASSISTANT FIRE INSPECTOR WORK SCHEDULE

SECTION 1: TERM AND CONDITIONS OF FIRE INSPECTOR/ASSISTANT FIRE INSPECTOR

Specific terms and conditions governing the following classifications – Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector are as follows:

- A. That discounting of sick leave, vacation, and daily wage rates is calculated by the same formula as used by other members of the Fire Department (not by a twenty-one (21) day month).
- B. Any hours worked outside the prescribed normal work cycle will be paid accordingly to the agreed upon overtime policy in Article XIII, Section 2C, of this Agreement. The City shall retain the sole and exclusive right to determine the work schedule.
- C. Any and all existing conditions, remunerations and benefits at any time granted by agreement or awarded Firefighters through arbitration shall also apply to the above named positions.

- D. Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector work schedule: eight (8) uninterrupted hours per day between 07:00 - 17:00 hours, Monday through Friday.
- E. Provided, however, The Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector shall report to work each and every day and shall receive his holiday(s) pay as provided for other Firefighters under the terms of this Agreement; and further provided, the Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector will work a minimum of six (6) holidays during the calendar year. If the Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector request off of work on any of the six (6) required holidays, compensatory or vacation time would be used to cover the shift.
- F. The Fire Inspector/ Assistant Fire Inspector shall, subject to the sole discretion of the Fire Chief or his designee, have the right to take compensatory time in lieu of overtime. The rate shall be one and one half (1 ½) hours compensatory time for each hour of overtime worked at a time of his choosing.
- G. The Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector are bargaining unit positions outside the organizational chart of the fire suppression force and therefore do not have fire ground or operational command unless same is assigned to one of them by the Fire Chief or his designee. The Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector shall have no authority over members of the suppression units unless the same is assigned to one of them by the Fire Chief or his designee. Furthermore, the Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector shall not in any manner whatsoever be counted as or included in part of the minimum safety manning personnel assigned to an apparatus, shift, or platoon. Both the City and the Union agree to meet and discuss any approval for an Assistant Fire Inspector and the impact said position has on the minimum safety manning personnel assigned to an apparatus, shift or platoon.

ARTICLE XXI - FIREFIGHTER SAFETY

SECTION 1: SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

- A. There shall be established and maintained with the Fire Department a labor – management Safety and Health Committee. The Committee shall consist of up to six (6) members, three (3) of whom shall be appointed by the Union and three (3) of whom shall be appointed by the City, of whom one shall be the Chief of the Department.
- B. The Safety and Health Committee shall meet on a regular basis at the call of the Chairman, but in no case shall it meet less than once every three (3) months. Any two (2) members can call for a meeting, by notifying the Chairman in writing, and, the Chairman shall call said meeting within ten (10) working days.
- C. The Chairman of the committee shall be rotated on a yearly basis.
- D. The charge of the committee shall be to discuss and recommend improvement in tools, apparatus, equipment, operating procedures, and health and/or safety conditions affecting the members of the bargaining unit.

- E. Should any proposal made by the Union to the committee effecting employee health or safety not be implemented by the City Manager, the Union may at its option submit them to a hearing before the City Council as the last step.

SECTION 2: SAFETY MANNING

The City shall maintain eleven (11) Firefighters on duty at all times, one of whom shall be the Assistant Chief. The eleven (11) Firefighters on duty shall not include non-platoon personnel, non-suppression personnel (Fire Inspector/Assistant Fire Inspector) and personnel who are injured on duty and/or work in at light duty positions. The City shall utilize attrition of existing Firefighters to reach the total number of Firefighters it deems necessary to reduce the shift staffing from 13 to 11 and layoffs shall not be utilized for this purpose.

SECTION 3: TWO IN, TWO OUT

The City shall adopt a policy, which dispatches all apparatus and non-suppression bargaining Unit Members on duty to all alarms and/or reports of alarms; confirmed or unconfirmed structure fires, received in any manner whatsoever by any Fire Department personnel or the Blair county Emergency 911 center. The City and the Union agree to work toward implementing the recommended OSHA standard of stationing two (2) Firefighters outside a structure for every two (2) Firefighters inside a structure fighting a fire. Implementing the aforementioned policy moving toward the OSHA standards may not require the City to incur unnecessary overtime costs but is geared, at this time, to insure a minimum of two (2) Firefighters being immediately available in full PPE w/breathing apparatus, and not unnecessarily assigned to other tasks, for rescue of Firefighters working inside the structure.

ARTICLE XXII - MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

All inherent managerial rights, management functions and prerogatives, which the City has not expressly modified or restricted by a specific provision of the agreement, are retained and vested exclusively in the City.

ARTICLE XXIII - DURATION AND RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall remain in full force and effect from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2030, and shall continue in full force and effect, thereafter unless and until terminated, amended or changed as prescribed by Law, and shall be subject to all limitations prescribed by Law. The Agreement is subject to all of the provisions and limitations prescribed by Law governing said Municipality and union Officers and members of said Union.

ARTICLE XXIV - SICK LEAVE INCENTIVE

SECTION 1: ANNUAL SICK LEAVE INCENTIVE

- A. Bargaining Unit Members who utilize very low numbers of sick leave days in a calendar year shall be entitled to an additional bonus as follows:

Table 7. Sick Leave Incentive A

Sick Leave Days Utilized	Bonus Amount
0 or 1	\$250.00
2	\$170.00
3	\$87.50

- B. A Firefighter must have accumulated one hundred seventy five (175) days of sick leave by the first day of the year in order to be eligible for any sick leave incentive pay. Sick leave accumulated beyond one hundred seventy five (175) days, from January 1st through December 31st shall be paid the first pay date in February of the subsequent year according to the following schedule.

Table 8. Sick Leave Incentive B.

Unused Sick Leave	Incentive Payment
14-15 days	6 days of pay
12-13 days	5 days of pay
10-11 days	4 days of pay

- C. Bargaining Unit Members who retire prior to the required notification contained herein shall receive their sick leave incentive for very low sick leave use and all other monies due them in their termination pay (final check).
- D. Members are only eligible to receive incentive “A” or “B”, whichever is greater.

ARTICLE XXV - DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PLAN (DROP)

SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PLAN (DROP)

Effective April 1st, 2009, a Retirement Benefit distribution option is available to Members who qualify and voluntarily elect as provide in the Third Class City Code, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Altoona and the Altoona Firefighters Local 299 of the International Association of Firefighters. This option will be available for eligible bargaining Unit Members and shall not affect a Member’s eligibility for a City Pension. Additionally, participants in the DROP program are considered to be active Firefighters and will continue to be members of the collective bargaining unit, however if while in the DROP program, contractual benefits change which affect retirement, the member already entered into the DROP will abide by the contract language which was in effect at the time he/she entered the DROP. Otherwise, participants in the DROP program are subject to all rights and responsibilities provided by the collective bargaining

agreement until no longer performing the duties of Firefighter and terminate employment with the City of Altoona.

SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

A member must be eligible for Normal Retirement to be eligible for the DROP. Members eligible to participate in the DROP plan shall include all members hired subsequent to January 1, 2005 who do NOT have the option to buy the post-retirement health care coverage provided by the City with accrued sick leave. Furthermore, any member hired prior to January 1, 2005 may use their accrued sick leave to purchase either post-retirement health care OR buy into the DROP, but not both. In any case, buying into the DROP or post-retirement health care shall mean trading in eighty seven (87) sick days for the option chosen.

SECTION 3: SICK LEAVE

Any employee hired before January 1, 2005 must waive the requirement to be paid for accumulated sick leave, as referenced in Article X, Section 1(A), in order to participate in the DROP. Firefighters must have accumulated eighty-seven (87) sick days to participate in the DROP and be eligible for Normal Retirement as outlined in Article X, Section 2(A), and will be paid the value of twenty percent (20%) of all accumulated sick days in excess of eighty-seven (87) up to the maximum number as outlined in Article X, Section 2(G). For purposes of the DROP, retirement as referenced in Article X, Section 2(G) shall mean termination of service. Termination of service shall mean when the employee is no longer employed as a Firefighter for the City.

SECTION 4: ELECTION TO PARTICIPATE

- A. The Member shall make the election by using forms and procedures as prescribed by the Pension Board. Member participating in DROP must establish a date certain upon which the Member shall resign from service as a City Firefighter. This date certain must be prior to completion of the maximum participation period as set forth below. As a condition of participation in the DROP program, the individual Member acknowledges that the Union and the City shall have no responsibility for the financial impact and/or consequences of a Member's participation in DROP, including but not limited to, the investment of the contents of a Member's DROP account, the performance of any such investments, the Member decision to participate in DROP, or any tax consequences flowing from the DROP participation.
- B. Upon deciding to participate in the DROP, a member must submit, on forms provided by the City, all of the following: (a) a binding letter of resignation from regular employment with the City which discloses the member's intent to retire; and (b) a written election to participate in the DROP that details the member's rights and obligations under the DROP and includes an agreement to forgo:
 1. Active membership in the pension plan
 2. Any growth in the salary base used for calculating the regular retirement benefit

3. Any additional benefit accrual for retirement purposes

SECTION 5: DROP PENSION PAYMENTS

Upon entry into the DROP, a Member's pensionable service, as that term is defined and utilized in the collective bargaining agreement, and the average applicable compensation shall be frozen and his/her pension and retirement payments shall be calculated as if he/she actually retired on the date he/she entered the DROP. The monthly DROP pension payment, plus any applicable COLA, shall be paid to an individual DROP investment account managed by a mutually agreed upon provider who shall maintain the account, independent of the City of Altoona.

SECTION 6: INDIVIDUAL DROP INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

- A. Each Member shall upon electing to enter the DROP meet with a member of a mutually agreed upon provider and select the investment in his/her individual investment account from an array of options as offered by the mutually agreed upon provider. The mutually agreed upon provider will be the party responsible for all investment options and record keeping of all assets transferred to the member's mutually agreed upon provider from the Pension Fund. All investment and administrative costs incurred with the mutually agreed upon provider shall be charged against the individual DROP investment accounts of the participants.
- B. The City and Union agree to utilize Mission Square to administer the Individual Drop Accounts. If at any time Mission Square is unable to satisfactorily provide such administration, the City and Union agree to select a mutually agreed upon Third Party to administer the Individual DROP Accounts.

SECTION 7: EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS

Upon entry into the DROP, all City and Employee Contributions to the Firemen's Pension Fund shall cease, with no additional cost to the City.

SECTION 8: PARTICIPATION PERIOD

An eligible Member may participate in the DROP plan for no more than sixty (60) months. At any time up to sixty (60) months the member may terminate his or her employment and enact the payment options with their Individual DROP Account. Once the maximum participation has been achieved, the Member must terminate employment and separate from services.

SECTION 9: DISTRIBUTION OPTIONS

- A. Commensurate with DROP participation, a Member shall make an election, on forms designated by a mutually agreed upon provider, selecting the payout option(s) he/she wishes at the termination of the DROP period. This election may be changed at any time prior to termination. The distribution options are as follows:
 - 1. A full and lump sum distribution.

2. Rollover to another qualified retirement plan (as permitted by law) or to an IRA.
 3. Purchase of an annuity.
 4. Keep the monies in the individual DROP investment account. Monies kept in the individual DROP Investment Account may be withdrawn in any manner desired by the Member.
 5. Any other distribution provided by the Third Party Administrator or any manner permitted by law.
- B. As with the decision to participate in the DROP program, the City and the Union assume no responsibility for the consequences of the rollover election made by a participating Member, including tax consequences and issues of the legality of a rollover, of the manner of distribution which a Member selects for the distribution and the individual DROP participants agree to hold the City and the Union harmless for any consequences flowing from the Member's receipt of a full or partial distribution of the contents of the Member's DROP account.

SECTION 10: BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION

Commensurate with DROP participation, a Member shall make an election, on forms designated by the City, designating the beneficiary or beneficiaries he/she wishes to receive the monies in his/her individual DROP Investment Account in the event of his/her death before all monies have been distributed.

SECTION 11: DISABILITY

- A. A member who becomes permanently disabled during the DROP period shall be retired from service and, thereafter, shall revert to his/her normal pension retirement pension. He will directly receive those pension payments, which were being deposited into his/her DROP investment account. The participant will then have access to the distribution from his/her DROP investment account.
- B. If a Member becomes temporarily disabled during his/her participation in DROP, the time period while on disability counts toward the sixty (60) month participation limit. During such period of temporary disability, a Member shall receive disability pay in the same amounts as disabled Firefighters that are not participating in DROP. In no event shall a Member on temporary disability have the ability to draw from the DROP Account.
- C. However, notwithstanding any other provision in this Paragraph, if a Member is disabled and has not returned to work as of the date of his required retirement, then such retirement shall take precedence over all other provisions herein and said Member shall immediately resign.

SECTION 12: COST OF MANAGEMENT FOR DROP PROGRAM

The Firefighter, the Union and the City agree that any cost or fees associated with the management and/or Administration or the DROP accounts shall be paid directly from the Individual DROP Account and not by the City.

SECTION 13: MUNICIPAL PENSION COSTS

In expressing the normal cost and administrative expense requirements as a dollar amount under Section 202(b)(2) of Act 205, the City shall exclude the compensation of all DROP participants from the payroll of the active membership of the pension plan. For purposes of computing and reporting the applicable number of units under Section 402(e) of Act 205, a DROP participant shall not be reported to the Auditor General as an active employee.

SECTION 14: AMENDMENT

Any amendment to the DROP Plan shall be consistent with the provisions covering deferred retirement option plans set forth in any applicable collective bargaining agreement and shall be binding upon all future DROP participants and upon all DROP participants who have balances in their deferred retirement option accounts. The DROP Plan may only be amended upon a written instrument, not by any oral agreement or past practice. The Firefighters, the Union and the City recognize the possibility that the General Assembly (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania) may enact statutes containing definitions and/or requirements impacting the method and manner by which municipal DROP plans are maintained. The Firefighters, the Union and the City agree to act promptly and in good faith to amend this DROP plan to ensure compliance with Act 205 and any other applicable law.

SECTION 15: INTERPRETATION AND RIGHTS

The terms of the DROP shall be interpreted under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Participation in the DROP program does not create any separate entitlement to employment. In addition, nothing provided hereunder shall be construed as a change to the parties practice of calculating pensionable compensation, and except for the ability to establish a DROP Account and participate in the DROP Program, nothing herein is intended to create new pension benefits of any kind which did not exist as of December 31, 2007.

The establishment of the DROP through collective bargaining and/or any individuals election to participate in the DROP is not intended to change any existing procedure or practice between the Union and the City or individual Firefighters and the City and the current rights and obligations of all parties shall remain unchanged, except as modified by this Agreement for those individual Firefighters who elect to participate in the DROP program.

SECTION 16: AGREEMENT

The City of Altoona (the city) and the International Association of Firefighters Local No. 299 (the union), by signature of their respective representatives, do hereby agree to the terms and conditions herein outlined.

SIGNATURE SHEET

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have set their hands and seals

This 24th day of April 2026.

CITY OF ALTOONA



City Manager
Christopher McGuire



Human Resources Director
Christina Notarfrancesco



City Clerk
Linda Rickens

IAFF Local 299




President
Patrick N. Miller



Secretary/Treasurer
Steve Milliron



Vice President
Brad Rupert



Executive Board Member
Marshall Johnson



Executive Board Member
Shane Geis

Seal of the City of Altoona

**Seal of the International Association
of Firefighters Local #299**



