



## FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF COOK COUNTY RESIDENT WATCHMAN PROGRAM

### RESIDENT WATCHMAN PROGRAM

The District shall follow the process described below in the selection of Applicants as Resident Watchmen for houses located on property owned by the District and in the overall operation and management of the Resident Watchman Program. The selection, operation and management processes of the Resident Watchman Program shall not involve any consideration of Political Reasons or Factors (as defined in the FPDCC Employment Plan).

I. **Posting of Vacancy.** Notice of any opening to become a Resident Watchman for a specific residence vacancy shall be posted internally in highly visible areas at the District's General Headquarters and at District facilities, including division and regional locations throughout the District and additionally on the District intranet, for a minimum period of ten (10) business days using the attached Posting of Current Resident Watchman Vacancy form (Exhibit A).

A. Each vacancy posting shall include the following: (i) a description of the residence, including the address, location and H.B#; (ii) instructions on how to apply; (iii) the posting period and posting deadline; (iv) a description of the Resident Watchman duties and responsibilities; (v) minimum and preferred qualifications and certification requirements; (vi) a description of the Resident Watchman's geographic area of responsibility for the residence; (vii) the monthly fee and (viii) any additional specific duties associated with the property.

B. Additional information including a copy of the Resident Watchman Occupancy Agreement (the "Occupancy Agreement") (Exhibit B) shall be made available for inspection at each posting location during the posting period, and the posting will include a statement advising Applicants where and how they may obtain such information and a copy of the Agreement.

C. The posting shall also contain a statement that training needed for certifications required to be a Resident Watchman shall be made available to all Applicants and that the District does not select Resident Watchmen based on Political Reasons or Factors.

II. **Minimum Qualifications.** Applicants must meet the following minimum qualifications to become a Resident Watchman:

- A. Applicant must be actively employed in a non-seasonal, full-time position and able to perform Resident Watchman duties at the time of application. Applicants who are on an approved leave of absence with a scheduled return date of no more than thirty (30) days following the date of application will also be considered eligible, provided they will be able to perform essential job-related duties as well as Resident Watchman duties.
- B. Applicant must be in possession of a current Certificate of Burn Training. (Minimum certification of S130/S190 or be a Chicago Wilderness Midwest Ecological Prescription Burn Crew Member).
- C. Applicant must be in possession of a valid Chain Saw Operator (CSO) or Chain Saw Operator Assistant (CSOA) Certificate,
- D. Applicant must possess a valid State issued driver's license and must be in compliance with the State of Illinois insurance requirements.
- E. Applicant must submit an acceptable Supervisory Certification Form (Exhibit C) completed by his/her immediate supervisor who has knowledge of his/her work history and qualifications to serve as a Resident Watchman.
- F. Applicant must not have been subject to disciplinary action in the form of a suspension without pay for five (5) or more days within the twelve (12) month period prior to the date of application.
- G. Applicants who do not submit a completed application and certification form or who do not submit all documents or information required by Section IV, by the posting closing date will not be considered eligible.

III. **Preferred Qualifications.**

Preferred qualifications shall include the following:

- A. Experience in fire suppression as part of the Applicant's current or prior job duties with the District or another employer.
- B. Experience in the operation of a chain saw as part of the Applicant's current or prior job duties with the District or another employer.
- C. Experience in snow plow operation and snow removal as part of the Applicant's current or prior job duties with the District or another employer.

IV. **Application Process.** Applicants must complete individual applications for each Resident Watchman vacancy posting for which they wish to apply. Applicants must submit the application along with a Supervisory Certification Form from their immediate supervisor and all other required documents, including copies of required certifications and licenses, to the Housing

Committee Chair on or before the posting closing date using the attached Resident Watchman Application (Exhibit D) and Supervisory Certification Form (Exhibit C). The following additional documents must be submitted, if applicable:

A. Applicants must provide a list of the names of any additional proposed occupant(s) whom the Applicant expects will reside with him or her at the District residence for a period of thirty (30) or more consecutive days at any time during the term of the Agreement. Occupancy by any such proposed occupant(s) is subject to the prior written approval of the District. In addition to the name, the list must also include the proposed occupant's relationship to the Applicant, date(s) of birth, Social Security Number(s) and driver's license number(s).

B. Applicants and each proposed occupant eighteen (18) years of age or older must execute and submit a written waiver granting consent to the District to conduct background checks prior to notice of selection as a Resident Watchman. Completed waiver forms must be attached to the application.

V. **Housing Committee Evaluation and Selection Process.**

A. The Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee shall:

1. Conduct the initial review of all application packets and confirm that all required documents have been submitted and are complete and include: (i) the application; (ii) supervisory certification form; (iii) copies of certifications and licenses; (iv) waiver(s); and (v) proposed occupant lists;

2. Compare the information provided on the application with the documents in the application packets and determine whether they confirm that the Applicant meets the minimum qualifications listed in Section II;

3. Contact the Director of the Human Resources (the "HRD") to determine if the Applicant has been subject to the imposition of discipline within the previous twelve (12) months and obtain documentation of any such disciplinary action for inclusion in the Applicant's application packet;

4. Make a determination whether the Applicant meets the minimum requirements listed in Section II and prepare a written Chair Report documenting the disposition (eligible or not eligible) of each Applicant and the reason(s) any Applicant was deemed ineligible. The Chair Report shall include a No Political Considerations Certification ("NPCC"). A copy of the Chair Report and all application packets shall be sent to the Director of Compliance.

B. Copies of the Chair Report and the application packets of all Applicants deemed eligible pursuant to Section V.A. shall be distributed to all members of the Housing Committee for review. After review, each member of the Committee shall complete an Evaluation Form (Exhibit E), which shall contain a NPCC. All completed Evaluation Forms shall be sent to the Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee within five (5) days of their receipt by the Committee members. Copies of the each of the completed

Evaluation Forms shall also be sent to each Committee member and the Director of Compliance.

C. The Housing Committee will meet to select the successful Applicant for each Resident Watchman vacancy posted no later than thirty (30) days after the closing date of the posting. There must be a quorum of at least four (4) of the six (6) members in attendance at the meeting. The Director of Compliance will receive notice of the meeting at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance and may attend in person or by telephone.

D. At this meeting, the Housing Committee shall review and consider the Evaluation Forms of all Committee members and the application packets of all Applicants deemed eligible. Members shall also include the following criteria in making their selection:

1. Applicant's ability and willingness to perform all of the duties and responsibilities of a Resident Watchman as set forth in the Occupancy Agreement and this Resident Watchman Program;
2. Applicant's possession of all or some of the preferred qualifications set forth in Section III;
3. Applicant's receipt of disciplinary action within the preceding twelve (12) months, not rising to the level of a suspension, but which is related to his or her suitability to be a Resident Watchman, including but not limited to problems with attendance;
4. Applicant's assigned Department and/or work location and its proximity to the residence; and
5. If two (2) or more Applicants possess the minimum and preferred qualifications and meet the criteria described in Sections V.D. 1, 2, and 3, the Committee may give preference to the Applicant whose work location is in closest proximity to the residence.

E. At the conclusion of deliberations, each Committee member shall complete a Selection Ballot containing the name of the Applicant he/she has selected for each Resident Watchman vacancy posted. The Selection Ballot shall contain a NPCC and be tallied by the Chair of the Housing Committee or his or her designee together with the Director of Compliance. The Applicant who receives a majority of votes of the Housing Committee members participating will be selected as the Resident Watchman for the specific residence. In the event no Applicant receives a majority of the votes, the vote of the Chair of the Housing Committee will be determinative.

F. The Chair of the Housing Committee or his/her designee shall complete a Resident Watchman Selection Form (Exhibit F) which shall include the vote tally of the Housing Committee, a written explanation as to the justification of the selection of the successful Applicant, the signatures of the Housing Committee members and Chair and a NPCC. Copies of the Resident Watchman Selection Form and Selection Ballots shall be sent to the OIIG and the Director of Compliance.

G. Background checks of the selected Applicant(s) and all proposed occupants shall be performed by the District Police Department. Background checks shall be completed after selection by the Committee and prior to notification to the selected Applicant. If a background check performed on an Applicant or any proposed occupant reveals that he/she has been convicted of a felony that, in the opinion of the Chair of the Housing Committee or his/her designee after consultation with the District's Chief Attorney, could negatively impact the Applicant's suitability to serve as a Resident Watchman or a proposed occupant's suitability to reside on District property or which could jeopardize the safety or security of the public or the District's property, the Housing Committee shall hold a second meeting pursuant to Section V.D. and select another Applicant from those considered eligible in the Chair Report to fill the vacancy with written notice provided to the Director of Compliance. If no such Applicant is eligible or accepts, the vacancy shall be reposted.

H. Within fourteen (14) days following the completion of the selection meeting described in Section V.D. or the receipt of acceptable background check information described in Section V.G. (whichever is later), the selected Applicant will be contacted by letter, which will set a date and time for him/her and all proposed occupants to participate in an informational and orientation session with the Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee to review the District's policies regarding the Resident Watchman Program and to fill out and sign required documents, including the Occupancy Agreement, payroll deduction forms, and waiver and release of liability forms.

VI. **Termination of Occupancy Agreement.**

A. Resident Watchman's use and occupancy of the residence may be terminated by the District at any time, for any reason or no reason, in its sole discretion provided that no termination shall be based on any Political Reasons or Factors.

B. Resident Watchmen are required to perform all duties and responsibilities described in this Resident Watchman Program and the Occupancy Agreement. Such duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to: site security, fire watch, fallen tree and limb removal, emergency response, public assistance, maintenance of the Residence and surrounding areas in good order, inspection of geographic area and other related tasks and duties as may be designated from time to time by the Housing Committee.

C. The Resident Watchman must maintain all minimum qualifications and perform all applicable duties and responsibilities, and his/her performance shall be monitored and reviewed no less frequently than quarterly during the term of the Occupancy Agreement by the Chair of the Housing Committee or his/her designee. The Chair of the Housing Committee or his/her designee shall complete a Quarterly Report Form (Exhibit G), a copy of which shall be included in the Applicant's file. A copy will be made available for review by the Director of Compliance. The Director of HRD shall contact the Chair of the Housing Committee or his/her designee immediately if any Resident Watchman is terminated from employment or is subject to a disciplinary suspension of five (5) or more days.

D. In the event a Resident Watchman becomes unable to perform his/her Resident Watchman duties for any reason for period in excess of thirty (30) continuous days during the term of the Occupancy Agreement, the Housing Committee may elect to increase the monthly occupancy fee by twenty (20%) percent in accordance with the terms of the Occupancy Agreement for each month until such time as the Resident Watchman is able to perform his/her Resident Watchman duties,

E. Failure to maintain the minimum qualifications listed in Section II.A. through F. or failure to adhere to the terms of the Occupancy Agreement shall result in termination of the Occupancy Agreement and the requirement that the Resident Watchman and all authorized occupants vacate the property as set forth in this Section E. The following shall apply in the event the Chair of the Housing Committee or his/her designee becomes aware of a Resident Watchman's loss of any minimum qualification or violation of the Occupancy Agreement:

1. Within ten (10) days of his/her receipt of notice, the Chair of the Housing Committee shall prepare a written report of the loss or violation and notice of his/her determination to terminate the Occupancy Agreement and send a copy of the report and all relevant documentation to the Director of Compliance and the OIIG for review. The Director of Compliance and the OIIG may contact the Chair of the Housing Committee for further detail and explanation.

2. If the Director of Compliance disagrees with the decision of the Chair of the Housing Committee or the OIIG finds that Political Reasons or Factors entered into the decision of the Chair, either or both shall notify the Chair of the Housing Committee in writing within ten (10) days of receipt of the report and advise the Chair of his/her objection. A copy of the report will also be sent to the General Superintendent, who shall meet with the Chair of the Housing Committee and the Director of Compliance and the OIIG to resolve the matter. If agreement is not reached, the decision of the General Superintendent shall govern and the Director of Compliance and OIIG reports shall be posted on the District's website.

3. If the Chair of the Housing Committee does not receive an objection from the OIIG or the Director of Compliance to termination of the Occupancy Agreement within ten (10) days after receipt of the report, the Occupancy Agreement shall be terminated pursuant to Section VID. and the Resident Watchman shall be required to vacate the residence.

4. If the Chair of the Housing Committee determines that the loss of any minimum qualification or violation of the Occupancy Agreement creates an unacceptable actual or potential danger to the public or to District property, he/she may elect to require the Resident Watchman and any occupants to vacate the property immediately pending review by the OIIG and Director of Compliance.

F. The Occupancy Agreement will be automatically terminated upon: (1) termination of a Resident Watchman's employment with the District for any reason,

including but not limited to retirement, layoff, resignation and involuntary termination; (2) failure to maintain all minimum qualifications described in Section II.A, through F.; (3) the inability of the Resident Watchman to perform his or her essential job duties and/or the duties and responsibilities of a Resident Watchman for a period of ninety (90) or more days in any twelve (12) month period during the term of the Occupancy Agreement; or (4) a determination of violation or potential violation of the Occupancy Agreement pursuant to Section VI.C., and the Resident Watchman and anyone residing on the District property will be required to vacate the property as set forth herein and in the Occupancy Agreement and in accordance with the following:

1. Resident Watchmen who: (a) are involuntarily terminated from employment with the District for any reason, (b) fail to maintain all minimum qualifications described in Section II. A. through F., or (c) violate the Occupancy Agreement and all occupants shall vacate the premises within thirty (30) days after their last day of employment or thirty (30) days after written notice, as applicable, unless they have been required to vacate immediately pursuant to Section VI.C.4. They shall be responsible for paying all required fees through the date of termination of occupancy. They shall not be responsible for providing services as a Resident Watchman during such time.
2. Resident Watchmen who retire or resign from employment with the District or who are laid off by the District and all occupants shall vacate the premises within sixty (60) days after their last day of employment and upon approval by the Housing Committee. They shall be responsible for paying all required fees through the date of termination and vacating of occupancy of the premises. They shall not be responsible for providing services as a Resident Watchman during such time.
3. Resident Watchmen who are unable to perform the essential job duties and/or the responsibilities of a Resident Watchman for a period of ninety (90) or more days in any twelve (12) month period during the term of the Occupancy Agreement and all occupants shall vacate the premises within forty-five (45) days after their receipt of notification to vacate and upon approval by the Housing Committee. They shall be responsible for paying all required fees through the date of termination and vacating of occupancy of the premises. They shall not be responsible for providing services as a Resident Watchman during such time.
4. Widows/widowers of Resident Watchmen who die while employed and all occupants shall be required to vacate the premises within three (3) months after the Resident Watchman's death or until such date as approved by the Housing Committee. Widows/widowers shall be responsible for paying all required fees through the date of termination and vacating of occupancy of the premises. They shall not be responsible for providing services as a Resident Watchman during such time.

## VII. **Renewal of Occupancy Agreement.**

A. Any Resident Watchman wishing to renew his or her Occupancy Agreement and continue to act as a Resident Watchman must submit a Resident Watchman Housing Renewal Form (Exhibit H), and a Resident Watchman Application Form (Exhibit D), to the Chair of the Housing Committee or his or her designee no later than October 1st of the year of expiration of the current Occupancy Agreement. He or she must also submit documentation verifying that all required licenses and certifications are current. A Resident Watchman will not be considered eligible for renewal if he or she fails to submit a complete Housing Renewal Form and all required documentation in a timely manner, and he or she will be required to reapply and submit a new application in order to continue to participate in the Resident Watchman Program.

B. The Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee shall:

1. Conduct the initial review of all renewal packets and confirm that all required documents have been submitted and are complete and include (i) the Renewal Form and Application and (ii) copies of current certifications and licenses;

2. Compare the information provided on the Housing Renewal Form and Application with the documents submitted and confirm that the Resident Watchman continues to meet the minimum qualifications listed in Section II.C. through F.;

3. Contact the Director of HRD to determine if there has been any discipline imposed upon the Resident Watchman during the term of the previous Occupancy Agreement and obtain documentation of any such disciplinary action for inclusion in the Resident Watchman's renewal application packet; and

4. Make a determination as to whether the Resident Watchman meets the minimum requirements listed in Section II and prepare a written Chair Report documenting the disposition (eligible or not eligible) of each Resident Watchman and the reason(s) any he/she was deemed ineligible. The Chair Report shall include a No Political Considerations Certification ("NPCC"). A copy of the Chair Report, current certifications and licenses, quarterly reports, performance evaluations, and disciplinary records (if applicable) shall be made available for review by the OIIG, the Director of Compliance and the DCA, while acting.

C. The Housing Committee will meet no later than October 15th to review and consider renewal requests of all Resident Watchmen deemed eligible pursuant to Section VII.B. There must be a quorum of at least four (4) of the six (6) members in attendance at the meeting. The Director of Compliance and the OIIG shall be sent notice of the meeting and copies of all Housing Renewal Forms and documentation at least two (2) days in advance of the meeting, and they may attend.

The Committee shall consider the following criteria (in addition to those provided in the Occupancy Agreement) prior to deciding whether to renew the Occupancy Agreement for any Resident Watchman:

1. Resident Watchman's past performance of the duties and responsibilities set forth in the Occupancy Agreement during the current term of the Agreement.
2. Resident Watchman's continued ability and willingness to perform all of the duties and responsibilities set forth in this Resident Watchman Program and the Occupancy Agreement;
3. Resident Watchman's acquisition of all or some of the preferred qualifications set forth in Section III above;
4. Resident Watchman's receipt of disciplinary action not rising to the level of a suspension, but which is related to his or her suitability to continue to be a Resident Watchman, including but not limited to problems with attendance during the term of the Occupancy Agreement; and
5. The results of the quarterly reviews conducted pursuant to Section VI.B. and the condition of the District property during District inspections conducted pursuant to Sections VIII.C and D.

D. Each Resident Watchman seeking renewal of his/her Occupancy Agreement must receive a majority vote of the Housing Committee members present and voting. In the event of a tie, the vote of the Housing Committee Chair shall be determinative.

E. The Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee shall complete a Resident Watchman Renewal Selection Form (Exhibit 1), which shall include (a) the vote tally of the Housing Committee; (b) a written explanation as to the justification for the renewal or non-renewal of each Resident Watchman; (c) the signatures of the Housing Committee members in attendance and Chair; and (d) a NPCC. Copies of the Resident Watchman Renewal Selection Form will be provided to the Director of Compliance and the OIIG.

F. Resident Watchmen whose Occupancy Agreements are renewed will be contacted by letter, which will set a date and time for an informational session with the Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee to review the District Housing policies and fill out and sign the appropriate documents, including the new Occupancy Agreement, payroll deduction forms, waivers and liability release forms.

G. Resident Watchmen whose Occupancy Agreements are not renewed will be contacted by letter and advised of such non-renewal within fifteen (15) days of the Committee's decision. Such notice shall cite the specific factors on which the decision is based. A copy of such notification and the Resident Watchman Renewal Selection Form and any relevant documents shall be sent to the OIIG and the Director of Compliance.

#### VIII. **Responsibilities of the Housing Committee and Chair.**

A. The Housing Committee and Chair shall be appointed by the General Superintendent.

B. The Housing Committee shall review and retain copies of all bi-weekly activity reports submitted by Resident Watchmen and shall make copies available for review upon request by the Director of Compliance, the OIIG and the DCA, while acting, on a monthly basis. Any and all reports of failure to perform any of the duties and responsibilities of a Resident Watchman shall be immediately forwarded to the Chair of the Housing Committee, with a copy to the Director of Compliance, for further action in accordance with this Resident Watchman Program and the Occupancy Agreement. The Director of Compliance may conduct periodic audits of the bi-weekly activity reports

C. The Chair of the Housing Committee or his/her designee shall conduct no less than one inspection of each residence annually, and such inspection will take place no later than October 1st of each calendar year. The Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee shall write and maintain a report of the current condition of each residence. Such written report of each inspection shall document the current condition of the residence, necessary repairs, and a recommendation as to whether the Resident Watchman should be eligible for renewal of the current Occupancy Agreement based on his/her care for the property. Copies of such annual reports shall be sent to the Chair of the Housing Committee or his or her designee no later than October 15th of each year and considered by the Housing Committee during the renewal application process described in Section VII.

D. Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee may conduct random inspections of each residence in the Resident Watchman Program as deemed necessary to maintain the integrity of the Program, protect and maintain public safety and the District's property, and assure compliance with the terms of the Occupancy Agreement.

E. The Housing Committee shall meet no less than twice a year or at the call of the Housing Committee Chair or his/her designee. Minutes of each Housing Committee meeting shall be maintained by the Housing Committee Chair and a copy shall be provided to the Director of Compliance and the OIIG.

F. In accordance with the provisions of Section 1-9-3.B.9 and 14 of the FPDCC Code, the General Superintendent shall provide to the Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners the Annual Report of the Housing Program by the March Board meeting. The Annual Report shall include a listing of the names of Resident Watchmen occupying District residences, job titles and salaries. Copies of the Annual Report of the Housing Program shall be posted on the District's website and provided to the Director of Compliance and to the OIIG within five (5) business days of the March Board meeting.

G. The Housing Committee shall maintain a general file for each residence and each Resident Watchman participating in the Resident Watchman Program, and all related documents as identified herein shall be maintained therein. The general files shall be available for inspection and review by the Director of Compliance and the OIIG at any time.

## **LIST OF EXHIBITS**

1. Exhibit A — Sample Posting of Current Resident Watchman Vacancy
2. Exhibit B — Resident Watchman Occupancy Agreement
3. Exhibit C — Resident Watchman Application Form
4. Exhibit D — Supervisory Certification Form
5. Exhibit E — Applicant Evaluation Form
6. Exhibit F — Resident Watchman Form
7. Exhibit G — Quarterly Report Form
8. Exhibit H — Resident Watchman Renewal Form
9. Exhibit I — Resident Watchman Renewal Selection Form