

**EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN**

**THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE**

**AND**

**FIREFIGHTERS MUTUAL BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION  
LOCAL 96**

**January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2025**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>PREAMBLE</b>		<b>4</b>
<b>Article 1</b>	<b>Recognition and Scope of Agreement</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Article 2</b>	<b>Collective Bargaining Procedure</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Article 3</b>	<b>Conducting Union Business on Employer's Time</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Article 4</b>	<b>Discrimination and Coercion</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Article 5</b>	<b>Maternity Leave</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Article 6</b>	<b>Severance Pay</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Article 7</b>	<b>Hours of Employment</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Article 8</b>	<b>Compensation for Overtime</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Article 9</b>	<b>Salary Guide and Steps</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Article 10</b>	<b>Dues Deductions</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Article 11</b>	<b>Holidays and Snow Days</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Article 12</b>	<b>Bereavement Leave</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Article 13</b>	<b>Pensions</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Article 14</b>	<b>Vacation Leave</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Article 15</b>	<b>Sick Leave</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Article 16</b>	<b>Uniform Allowances</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Article 17</b>	<b>Longevity</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Article 18</b>	<b>Health and Retirement Benefits</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Article 19</b>	<b>Educational Benefits</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Article 20</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Article 21</b>	<b>Grievance Procedure</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Article 22</b>	<b>Strikes and Other Job Actions</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Article 23</b>	<b>Management Rights</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Article 24</b>	<b>Separability and Savings</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Article 25</b>	<b>Personal Leave</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Article 26</b>	<b>Property Damage</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Article 27</b>	<b>Travel Expenses</b>	<b>43</b>

<b>Article 28</b>	<b>Safety Committee</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Article 29</b>	<b>Survivor's Benefit Clauses</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Article 30</b>	<b>Leaves of Absence</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Article 31</b>	<b>Seniority and Department Seniority</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Article 32</b>	<b>Access to Personnel Files</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Article 33</b>	<b>Jury Duty</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Article 34</b>	<b>Duration, Term and Renewal</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Health Benefits Contribution</b>	<b>51</b>

## PREAMBLE

---

This Agreement made and entered into this day of 12 September, 2022 by and between the TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE, in the County of Mercer, a Municipal Corporation in the State of New Jersey (hereinafter referred to as the "Township"), and FMBA Local 96, (hereinafter referred to as the "Union"), represents the complete and final understanding on all bargainable issues between the Township and the Union and is designed to maintain and promote a harmonious relationship between the Township and its employees who are covered by this agreement, in order that more efficient and progressive public service may be rendered. This Agreement will expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December 2025.

**ARTICLE 1**  
**RECOGNITION AND SCOPE OF AGREEMENT**

---

**Section 1.1**

The Township hereby recognizes the Union as the sole and exclusive representative of all employees in the bargaining unit as defined in Article 1 Section 1.2, herein for the purpose of collective bargaining, settlement of grievances and all activities and processes relative thereto.

**Section 1.2**

The bargaining unit shall consist of all employees whose titles are Fire Fighter and Fire Lieutenant of the Township of Lawrence, New Jersey now employed or hereafter employed, excluding the Safety Officer, Fire Marshall, any confidential employees and all employees not engaged in fire suppression within the Township of Lawrence.

**Section 1.3**

This Agreement shall govern all wages, hours and all other conditions of employment as hereafter set forth. No member of the FMBA Local 96 shall receive salary and benefits less than those provided to the general membership and listed in the contract.

**Section 1.4**

This Agreement shall be binding upon the parties hereto and their successors, as permitted by law.

**ARTICLE 2**  
**COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROCEDURE**

---

**Section 2.1**

Collective bargaining with respect to rates of pay, hours of work or other conditions of employment shall be conducted by the duly authorized bargaining agent of each of the parties. Unless otherwise designated, the Municipal Manager of the Township or his designee or designees, and the Committee of the Union or its designees, shall be the respective bargaining agents for the parties. No representatives of the Township shall meet with any member of the Union other than the authorized representatives of FMBA Local 96 for the purpose of discussing wages, hours, or conditions of employment or any other matters which are subjects of collective bargaining.

**Section 2.2**

Collective bargaining meetings shall be held at times mutually convenient at the request of either party.

**Section 2.3**

Employees of the Township, not greater than two (2), who may be designated by the Union to participate in collective bargaining meetings called for the purpose of the negotiation of a Collective Bargaining Agreement, will be excused from their work assignments.

**ARTICLE 3**  
**CONDUCTING UNION BUSINESS ON EMPLOYER'S TIME**

---

**Section 3.1**

- A. The Township agrees to grant the necessary time off without loss of pay to a representative of the Union selected as a delegate to attend any state convention of the FMBA.
- B. The Township further agrees to grant the necessary time off without loss of pay to the member of the Union selected as the FMBA representative in order to enable said delegate to attend all monthly and special meetings of the FMBA and to attend to such other business as may be required subject to available manpower and advance approval of the Municipal Manager, provided however, said time off does not exceed twelve (12) days per calendar year.

**Section 3.2**

The Union President or other Union officials shall have reasonable time during work hours to type letters, make telephone calls and conduct Union business without loss of pay. Union officials shall also be permitted to utilize a desk, telephone and computer to conduct Union business. No personal business is to be conducted while utilizing the aforementioned facilities. If a grievance, or potential grievance is the subject of such business, employees who are the subject of a grievance shall likewise have reasonable time without loss of pay during working hours to confer with the President or his authorized representative, upon approval the employee's supervisor.

**Section 3.3**

The Union shall have the sole use of a designated Union bulletin board or portion of a bulletin board in each station for the sole purpose of posting notices relating only to matters of official business of all fire organizations and other employee related matters. Only material authorized by the signature of a Union Representative or the President shall be permitted to be posted on said bulletin board. The Township may require the Union to remove from the bulletin board any material which does not conform with the intent of the above provisions of this Article. Said material will be kept on file with the Union.



**ARTICLE 4**  
**DISCRIMINATION AND COERCION**

---

**Section 4.1**

There shall be no discrimination, interference, or coercion by the Township or any of its agents against the employees represented by the Union because of membership or activity in the Union.

**Section 4.2**

Neither the Township nor the Union shall discriminate against any employee because of race, color, creed, sex or national origin. The Union shall not intimidate or coerce employees into membership

**ARTICLE 5**  
**MATERNITY LEAVE**

---

**Section 5.1**

Maternity Leave shall be granted in accordance with the New Jersey Family Leave Act and Federal Leave Act. An employee may be granted additional Maternity Leave by the Municipal Manager or his designee provided the request is made in writing one month prior to the effective date of the leave, but in no circumstances shall Maternity Leave exceed an aggregate of six (6) months. The additional leave, if granted, shall be without pay and no accrual of paid time off. Request for Maternity Leave under this section shall not be unreasonable denied.

**ARTICLE 6**  
**SEVERANCE PAY**

---

**Section 6.1**

Upon retirement of any employee, in accordance with applicable State statutes and Township regulations, said employees shall be entitled to a lump sum cash payment in an amount equal to fifty (50%) percent of the employee's accumulated sick leave, provided however that said payment shall in no event exceed the sum of fifteen-thousand dollars (\$15,000). Upon retirement employees hired on or after January 1, 2014 in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations shall not be entitled to any payment toward or for accumulated sick leave. The amounts specified above based on the hiring date of the employee shall not exceed the established maximum amounts but shall be reduced if required by Statute. Full-time employees shall be entitled to terminal leave payment upon retirement provided that the employee shall furnish proof of retirement to the Township. The form of this proof shall be in the form of a copy of the employee's first retirement check or electronic funds transfer from the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS) or Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) to the account of the employee.

**ARTICLE 7**  
**HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT**

---

**Section 7.1**

The normal work week will be forty (40) hours, Monday through Friday, inclusive of a one hour meal period per day, with the normal work day consisting of eight (8) consecutive hours.

**Section 7.2**

Whenever an employee may be recalled to duty, the employee shall be entitled to compensation at overtime rate for all hours worked, with a minimum compensation of two (2) hours at the overtime rate except in such cases as the hours worked are continuous with the employee's regularly scheduled work day, in which case compensation shall be for the hours worked only. In the event that an employee is recalled to duty between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m., the employee shall be entitled to a minimum compensation of four (4) hours at the overtime rate.

**Section 7.3**

For purposes of calculating overtime, the employee's hourly rate will be based on a thirty-five (35) hour work week.

**ARTICLE 8**  
**COMPENSATION FOR OVERTIME**

---

**Section 8.1**

Whenever a member shall be required, directed or authorized to work for any period in excess of the normal hours of employment as defined in Article 7, Section 7.1 herein, the employee shall be paid at a rate of time and one-half (1½) of their regular pay rate. For each overtime hour worked by an employee, the employee shall have the choice of compensatory time off or money. Compensatory time will equal the overtime rate of one and one half (1½) times the hours worked. No employee may accrue compensatory time in excess of eighty (80) hours. No employee shall carry over compensatory time in excess of eighty (80) hours from a prior year. No employee will receive a cash payment or payout of compensatory time upon retirement or resignation from their position. Employees that have accrued compensatory time will receive a cash payment if the employee is subject to a layoff.

**Section 8.2**

Overtime wages shall be paid at the next immediate two (2) week pay period after such overtime is recorded, as provided in Section 7.3 and Section 8.1.

**ARTICLE 9**  
**SALARY GUIDE AND STEPS**

---

**Section 9.1**

A. Salary increases shall be as follows:

1. Effective January 1, 2022 each employee shall receive a 0% increase to their base salary; this is because salary steps were each increased by \$10,000 in 2022.
2. Effective January 1, 2023 each employee shall receive a 2.25% increase to their base salary.
3. Effective January 1, 2024 each employee shall receive a 2.25% increase to their base salary.
4. Effective January 1, 2025 each employee shall receive a 2.25% increase to their base salary.

**Section 9.2**

A. For employees hired prior to January 1, 2010, the salary guide shall be as follows:

		FMBA Local 96					
		Hired before 1/1/2010		2022	2023	2024	2025
Grade 1	Firefighter	Step	1	54,275			
		Step	2	58,328			
		Step	3	62,388			
		Step	4	66,433			
		Step	5	70,483			
		Step	6	74,515			

B. For employees hired after January 1, 2010, the salary guide shall be as follows:

FMBA Local 96							
Hired after 1/1/2010				2022	2023	2024	2025
Grade 2	Firefighter	Step	1	53,188			
		Step	2	59,141			
		Step	3	65,094			
		Step	4	71,046			
		Step	5	76,999			
		Step	6	82,947	84,812	86,721	88,672

FMBA Local 96							
Hired on or after 1/1/2014				2022	2023	2024	2025
Grade 4	Firefighter	Step	0	44,342	45,340	46,360	47,403
		Step	0.5	48,921	50,022	51,147	52,298
		Step	1	53,189	54,386	55,609	56,860
		Step	2	59,141	60,472	61,833	63,224
		Step	3	65,094	66,559	68,056	69,588
		Step	4	71,047	72,645	74,280	75,951
		Step	5	76,999	78,732	80,503	82,315
		Step	6	82,947	84,812	86,721	88,672

FMBA Local 96							
Hired on or after 1/1/2022				2022	2023	2024	2025
Grade 5	Firefighter	Step	0	44,342	45,340	46,360	47,403
		Step	0.5	48,921	50,022	51,147	52,298
		Step	1	53,189	54,386	55,609	56,860
		Step	2	56,909	58,189	59,499	60,837
		Step	3	60,629	61,993	63,388	64,814
		Step	4	64,349	65,797	67,277	68,791
		Step	5	68,069	69,601	71,167	72,768
		Step	6	71,789	73,404	75,056	76,745
		Step	7	75,509	77,208	78,945	80,721
		Step	8	79,229	81,012	82,834	84,698
Step	9	82,946	84,812	86,721	88,672		

FMBA Local 96							
				2022	2023	2024	2025
Grade 3	Fire Lieutenant	Step	1	88,960	90,961	93,008	95,101

- C. All employees will move one step on the guide each year effective on the employee's anniversary date.
- D. Increase the number of steps on the guide to eight (8) for employees hired on or after January 2, 2014.
- E. Increase the number of steps on the guide to eleven (11) for employees hired on or after January 1, 2022.
- F. Any employee subject to the provisions of this Agreement in a single workday that performs the duties of Lieutenant, other than the Lieutenant, shall qualify for out of title compensation and shall be compensated for all time actually worked in the title of Lieutenant.
- G. Steps 0 and 0.5 are applicable only to Grades 4 and 5.
  - a) Step 0 is a temporary step for newly-hired employees who do not already possess New Jersey State Firefighter 1 certification. Immediately upon obtaining Firefighter 1 certification, the employee advances to Step 0.5.
  - b) Step 0.5 is a three (3) month probationary step for new hires who already have State Firefighter 1 certification, or for previously hired employees who, having completed their fire academy training, have earned Firefighter 1 certification. At the end of this three (3) month probationary step, the employee advances to Step 1 or the remainder of his/her first year of employment.



**ARTICLE 10**  
**DUES DEDUCTIONS**

---

**Section 10.1**

The Township shall, upon receipt of written authorization from a member of the Union, deduct the regular monthly dues of such member from the employee's pay and remit such deduction by the succeeding month to be the official designated by the Union to receive such deduction. The Union will notify the Township in writing of the exact amount of such regular membership dues to be deducted by the member. This authorization shall indemnify, defend and save the Township harmless against any and all claims, demands, suites or other forms of liability that shall rise out of reliance upon dues deduction authorization forms submitted.

**ARTICLE 11**  
**HOLIDAYS AND SNOW DAYS**

---

**Section 11.1**

The Township hereby agrees to grant fifteen (15) holidays per annum to each employee. The following days will be recognized paid holidays as per this Agreement:

1	New Year's Day	9	Labor Day
2	Martin Luther King Day	10	Columbus Day
3	Lincoln's Birthday	11	General Election Day
4	President's Day	12	Veterans' Day
5	Good Friday	13	Thanksgiving Day
6	Memorial Day	14	Day after Thanksgiving
7	Juneteenth Day	15	Christmas Day
8	Independence Day		

**Section 11.2**

When a recognized holiday falls on a Saturday, it shall be observed on the preceding Friday. When a recognized holiday falls on a Sunday, it shall be observed on the following Monday. Whenever a holiday falls during a time that an employee is on a paid sick leave or family leave, that day shall not be considered as sick leave or family leave. If a holiday should fall within an employee's vacation period, he shall not be charged for a vacation day. Employees who are on a leave of absence without pay will not be eligible for holiday pay. In order to be eligible for holiday pay, an employee shall be on the active payroll of the Township and must have worked his full regularly scheduled workday before and after the holiday, unless such absence is authorized with prior approval.

**Section 11.3**

Employees shall receive time off in a manner commensurate with other Township employees for snow days, provided the employee was actively on duty.

**ARTICLE 12**  
**BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

---

**Section 12.1**

In the event of death in the employee's immediate family, the employee shall be granted time off without loss of pay from the date of death or the day of the funeral, but in no event shall said leave exceed four (4) consecutive working days per incident, except in a case where the funeral is more than four (4) consecutive working days after the day of death, in which case the day of the funeral shall be granted with pay, or in the case of spouse or child, in which case said leave shall not exceed fifteen (15) consecutive working days per incident.

**Section 12.2**

The term "immediate family" includes wife, husband, daughter, son, father, mother, brother, sister, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law or a relative who is regularly living in the employee's household.

**Section 12.3**

In the event of the death of an employee's grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle or cousin, the day of the funeral will be granted as time off without loss of compensation unless the relative permanently resided in the employee's household.

**Section 12.4**

Notwithstanding the content of the foregoing subparagraph, the Municipal Manager in his sole discretion may grant special consideration in those situations which are not covered by the above circumstances.

**Section 12.5**

The Township may require verification of death.

**Section 12.6**

In the event an employee is killed in the line of duty on behalf of the Township, the TOWNSHIP shall pay without delay the sum of six thousand (\$6,000) dollars toward funeral and related expenses to the employee's surviving spouse and/or dependents regardless of the amounts paid for such expenses from other sources.

**ARTICLE 13**

**PENSIONS**

---

**Section 13.1**

The Township shall provide and maintain pension and retirement benefits in accordance with the provisions and statues of the New Jersey Police and Fire Pension System and the New Jersey Public Employee Retirement System to all qualified.

**ARTICLE 14**  
**VACATION LEAVE**

---

**Section 14.1**

The following vacation schedule shall apply:

<u>Employment Period</u>	<u>VACATION</u>
From date of appointment to December 31 <sup>st</sup> of the year of appointment	1 Day per month
For each succeeding year up to and including the fifth year of employment	12 Work days per calendar year
From the sixth through and including the tenth year of employment	15 Work days per calendar year
From the eleventh through and including the fifteenth year of employment	20 Work days per calendar year
Employees hired before 1/1/08 from the sixteenth year and each year thereafter	25 Work days per calendar year
Employees hired after 1/1/08 beginning from the sixteenth year and each year thereafter	23 Work days per calendar year
New employees hired after 1/1/14 beginning From the sixteenth year and each year thereafter	20 work days per calendar year

**Section 14.2**

If an employee is called back to work while on vacation, the employee shall be paid at the rate of twice the Employee's regular rate of pay for all hours worked and shall not lose vacation time.

**Section 14.3**

Unused vacation may be accumulated one (1) year beyond the calendar year in which it is earned, subject to the approval of the Municipal Manager. This approval will not be unreasonably denied.

**Section 14.4**

An employee who is retiring or who has otherwise separated shall be entitled to the vacation allowance of the current year pro-rated upon the number of months worked in the calendar year.

**Section 14.5**

Whenever an employee dies, there shall be calculated and paid to the employee's estate a sum of money equal to the compensation calculated at the employee's salary rate at the time of death. The above shall be paid to the employee's survivor(s) within thirty (30) days but no later than sixty (60) days from the date of death of said employee.

**Section 14.6**

Vacation leave credits shall continue to accrue while an employee is on leave with pay. Credits shall not accrue while an employee is on leave without pay.

**Section 14.7**

Any employee that is charged for vacation leave hours in excess of the hours that the employee is entitled shall have the excess hours automatically charged first to available compensatory time, then to personal leave hours per Article 25 of this Agreement.

## ARTICLE 15

### SICK LEAVE

---

#### **Section 15.1**

- a) All full time permanent, full time temporary or full time provisional employees shall be entitled to sick leave with pay based upon their aggregate years of service.
- b) Sick leave may be utilized by employees in accordance with NJSA 4A:6-13g.
- c) The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and/or The New Jersey Family Leave Act provisions will govern as applicable.

#### **Section 15.2**

The minimum sick leave with pay shall accrue to any full time employee on the basis of one working day per month during the remainder of the first calendar year of employment and fifteen (15) working days in every calendar year thereafter. Any amount of sick leave allowance not used in a calendar year shall accumulate to the employee's credit from year to year to be used if and when needed for such purpose.

#### **Section 15.3**

If an employee is absent for reasons that entitle him to sick leave, his supervisor shall be notified prior to the employee's starting time or in conformance with department regulations.

#### **Section 15.4**

- A. An employee who shall be absent on sick leave for five (5) or more consecutive working days may be required to submit reasonably acceptable medical evidence substantiating the illness. Any certification of illness or injury requested by the Administration or any notification of intent to use sick leave due to illness or injury shall comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).



- B. An employee who has been absent on sick leave for periods totaling more than fifteen (15) days in one calendar year consisting of periods less than five (5) consecutive days, may on demand of the employer, submit reasonably acceptable medical evidence for any additional sick leave in that year, unless such illness is of a chronic or recurring nature requiring recurring absences of one (1) day or less, in which case only one (1) certificate shall be necessary for a period of six (6) months.
- C. The Township may require proof of illness of an employee on sick leave, whereas such requirement appears reasonable and warranted under the circumstances. Abuse of sick leave requirements under this Agreement may be cause for disciplinary action.
- D. In case of a leave of absence due to exposure to contagious disease, a certificate from the Department of Health may be required upon demand of the employer.
- E. The Township may require an employee who has been absent because of a personal illness, as a condition of his/her return to duty, to be examined, at the expense of the Township, by a physician designated by the Township. Such examination shall establish whether the employee is capable of performing his/her normal duties and that his/her return will not jeopardize the health of the other employees. This examination is to be performed by a medical doctor licensed under New Jersey law. The firefighter is to remain on paid sick leave pending examination and authorization to return to work by an assigned Township physician.

### **Section 15.5**

Any employee that is charged for sick leave hours in excess of the hours that the employee is entitled shall have the excess hours automatically charged to available compensatory time, then to personal leave hours available per Article 24 of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE 16**  
**UNIFORM ALLOWANCE**

---

**Section 16.1**

The Township agrees to provide employee one-thousand six hundred (\$1,600.00) annually which shall be paid as additional income to the employee in a January pay period. For new hires, in addition to the uniform allowance payment, the Township shall pay up to six hundred fifty dollars (\$650.00) for a Class A uniform by purchase order upon employee submitting an invoice from the uniform vendor.

**Section 16.2**

In the event of a change in uniforms, the Township shall purchase any new items at no cost to the employee.

**Section 16.3**

The Township agrees to replace at no cost to the employee all issued uniform items and structural firefighting protective gear that is damaged in the line of duty.

**ARTICLE 17**

**LONGEVITY**

---

**Section 17.1**

Each employee hired before December 31, 2013, and covered by this Agreement shall in addition to his/her regular wages and benefits, be paid longevity based upon years of service as of December 31, 2013, with the Township in accordance with the following amounts. Said amounts to be paid to an employee shall not be adjusted beyond the longevity amount being received by an eligible employee as of December 31, 2013. Longevity shall be pensionable and included as part of the employee's regular pay.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Length of Service</b>	<b>Amount per Annum</b>
A	Beginning in year 8 through year 11	\$800.00
B	12 through 15	\$1,100.00
C	16 through 19	\$1,400.00
D	20 through 23	\$1,700.00
E	24 through 27	\$2,000.00
F	28 and beyond	\$2,300.00

**Section 17.2**

Any employee hired on or after January 1, 2014, and subject to this Agreement shall not be entitled to longevity pay.

**Section 17.3**

The Township shall establish a deferred compensation plan for members of this bargaining unit.

**ARTICLE 18**  
**HEALTH AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

---

**Section 18.1**

The Township agrees to provide health insurance for all employees and their families.

- A. All employees that receive Township provided health benefits shall contribute to the cost of the said health benefit premium for medical and prescription coverage as required by law, specifically Chapter 78, P.L. 2011. Said contribution rates shall be the base amount upon reaching the final level of contribution toward health and prescription premiums by the employee. All employees hired on or after January 1, 2014, shall contribute based upon the "Year 4" rates specified by said law and attached to this Agreement as Appendix A. Said rate of contribution shall become the base amount.

The Township is presently a participant in the New Jersey State Health Benefits Plan ("SHBP"). The Township may not force employees into particular plans within the SHBP absent negotiations with the consent of the FMBA. Benefit changes made to the individual SHBP are not subject to negotiation nor the responsibility of Lawrence Township.

Should an employee choose to opt out of the health and prescription coverage pursuant to the policies and procedures established by the Township and this Collective Bargaining Agreement, the employee shall not be responsible or required to contribute toward the health and prescription coverage premium.

- B. All employees and all retirees, that retire on or after December 31, 2014, that choose an employer sponsored health plan which premium triggers an excise tax on a plan in accordance with the Affordable Care Act, then the cost of the excise tax will be the responsibility of the employee requiring a contribution in the amount of the excise tax in addition to the contribution required by Chapter 78 for all employees and retirees or for contributions required by retirees in accordance with the terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

All contributions are in addition to the required excise tax contributions required by the Affordable Health Care Act language in 17.1 A.

**Section 18.2**

Married employees where both parties are employees or retirees of the Township of Lawrence shall be covered for health benefits under one policy. No duplicate coverage.

**Section 18.3**

The Township agrees to provide a drug prescription plan, at least the equal to the present program for employees and their families, and reserves the right to choose the insurance carrier for these programs. Employees will be required to contribute to the cost of prescription coverage premiums as provided in Section 17.1 of this Agreement.

**Section 18.4**

An employee who elects not to enroll in any health benefit plan and/or prescription drug plan and provides documentation of comparable coverage from another source (e.g., a spouse's employer) shall be entitled to receive a cash payment which shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the amount saved by the Township because of the employee's waiver of coverage, and , for a waiver filed on or after the effective date of P.L. 2010, c.2 which shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) or five thousand dollars (\$5,000), whichever is less, of the amount saved by the Township because of the employee's waiver of coverage. This shall be applicable to health benefits and/or prescription coverage's. Such payment will be made semi-annually within thirty (30) days of the mid-point and the end of the enrollment period. Employees will be eligible to re-enroll during the year under special circumstances as outlined in the State Health Benefits Plan.

**Section 18.5**

The Township will pay fifty percent (50%) of an approved dental plan for employees and their families. The Township reserves the right to choose the insurance carrier for these programs. Employees shall have an option to participate in the program.

### **Section 18.6**

The Township will pay two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) per employee for the purpose of a physical/eye exam, eyeglasses or contact lenses per year, as long as dual coverage is not in effect. Should the employee elect not to use this coverage, one member of the employee's family (spouse or children) may be reimbursed (Proof to be submitted to the Township) up to \$250 for a physical eye exam/eyeglasses or contact lenses per year.

### **Section 18.7**

Employees will have the option of having the physical exam performed by a physician designated by the Township. Should the employee choose this option, the Township will pay for the cost of said exam. However, in either case, the employee must agree to allow the physician to release to the Township a statement, the contents of which shall be limited to the following:

- The employee is in good health, or
- The employee should seek further advice from his/her personal physician.

Should the employee not agree to release this statement, the Township will not bear the cost of said exam or will not reimburse the employee for the cost depending on the option chosen. These statements shall be confidential and will only be authorized for release to the Municipal Manager.

### **Section 18.8**

The Township will pay for a life insurance policy in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for a natural death and will increase to twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) in the event of an accidental death. The Township reserves the right to choose the insurance carrier to this program.

### **Section 18.9**

The Township agrees to provide retirement benefits in accordance with applicable New Jersey statutes that would apply to eligible retired employees.

Members that retire after December 1, 2013, shall contribute one percent (1%) of their pensionable benefit towards the cost of their selected health and prescription coverage, unless

a statutory contribution requires an amount in excess of one percent (1%). The higher amount will be the rate of contribution for health and prescription coverage. Any employee that is eligible for post-retirement health and prescription benefits that retires on or after February 2, 2015 shall contribute no less than two percent (2%) of their pensionable benefit toward the cost of said post-retirement benefits. Any employee that is eligible for post-retirement health and prescription benefits that retires on or after February 2, 2016, shall contribute no less than two and one-half percent (2.5%) of their pensionable benefit toward the cost of said post-retirement benefits. The applicable amount will be paid on a monthly basis to the Township by the retiree. Each retiree shall supply proof of pension benefits.

Any employee that has not obtained twenty (20) years of credited pension service as of June 28, 2011 shall contribute through the withholding of the contribution from the monthly retirement allowance, or make a direct payment to Lawrence Township if the New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits is not able to withhold a contribution toward the cost of health care benefits coverage for the employee in retirement and dependent coverage. The retirement allowance and any future cost of living adjustments thereto shall be used to identify the percentage of the cost of coverage. Contribution rates/percentages shall be in accordance with Appendix "A-1", "A-2" and "A-3".

#### **Section 18.10**

Post-retirement health benefits will be provided. Retirees qualify under the following conditions:

- A. Disability retirement.
- B. Service retirement with at least twenty-five (25) years of service in a state approved pension system and at least ten (10) years with Lawrence Township.
- C. Service retirement at age 62 or older with at least fifteen (15) years of service with Lawrence Township.

**Section 18.11**

The limit of post-retirement coverage is as follows:

- A. Retirement under age 55, Township pays for coverage for ten years from date of retirement for retiree and dependents.
- B. Retirement between ages 55 and 60, Township pays for coverage until age 65 for retiree and dependents.
- C. Retirement between the ages of 60 and 65, Township pays for coverage until age 65 for retiree and dependents and pays for coverage for only the retiree for a period of five (5) years from the date of retirement. (Example: employee retires on 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday, Township pays coverage cost for retiree and dependent to age 65 and pays coverage cost for retiree only until 68<sup>th</sup> birthday.)
- D. Retirement at age 65 or older, Township pays for coverage for five (5) years from date of retirement for retiree only.
- E. The amount of payment by the Township for post-retirement health coverage will be the net amount due after the applicable contribution by the retiree in accordance with Section 17.9.



**ARTICLE 19**  
**EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS**

---

**Section 19.1**

The Township agrees in the event that an employee is required to attend educational courses as a job requirement, the Township will reimburse said employee for the amount required. The limit of reimbursement shall be one thousand five-hundred dollars (\$1,500) as an annual aggregate limit for all firefighters. All courses must be job related and attendance must be authorized by the Emergency Management Coordinator. Course attendance may not create a need for overtime. In the event a training course is necessary and a "per-diem" firefighters must be hired as a replacement, the cost of the "per-diem" shall reduce the available individual training allotment for the individual firefighter that attends the course that caused the need for the "per-diem" replacement.

**Section 19.2**

The Township agrees to reimburse any employee the fee for any license (except driver's license) which is a requirement of the employment position.

**Section 19.3**

The Township agrees that in the event an employee is required to attend educational or training courses for job related certification the Township shall assume the costs of said courses. Requests for training shall be made in writing not less than two weeks in advance.

**Section 19.4**

The Township agrees to provide compensatory time on an hour for hour basis for attendance of any mandatory training course that cannot be taken during normal working hours. Said compensation time shall be the course time plus reasonable travel time to and from. Elective training courses taken after normal working hours is not subject to payment of any overtime.

**Section 19.5**

All training is to be pre-approved by the Township.

## ARTICLE 20

### TRAINING

---

#### **Section 20.1**

Employees may receive schooling and training which enhance their employment service and job responsibilities at no cost to the employee and according to the sole discretion of the employer.

#### **Section 20.2**

Training and education related to the performance of duties shall be provided, at the sole discretion of the employer and at no cost to the employee.

**ARTICLE 21**  
**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

---

**Section 21.1**

**A. Purpose**

1. The purpose of the procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, an equitable solution to the problems which may arise affecting the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
2. Nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the right of any employee having a grievance to discuss the matter informally with any appropriate member of the Union.
3. Nothing herein shall be deemed to deny the employees of their statutory or other legal rights concerning discipline. Nothing herein shall be deemed to deny employees their rights to pursue any other statutory or legal remedies in lieu of resorting of the grievance procedure.

**Section 21.2**

**B. Definition**

The term "grievance" as used herein means any controversy arising over the interpretation, application or alleged violation of policies, procedures, contractual Agreements, and administrative decisions affecting the terms and conditions of employment, and shall be raised by the FMBA on behalf of an individual or group of individuals.

**Section 21.3**

**C. Steps of the Grievance Procedure**

In order to resolve grievances covered by this Agreement between the parties, this procedure shall be followed unless any step is waived by mutual consent:

**Step One**

1. An aggrieved employee or employees shall institute action under the provisions hereof within fifteen (15) business days of the occurrence of the event giving rise to the grievance. Action is instituted by filing a grievance with the

FMBA Grievance Committee. Failure to act within said fifteen (15) business days shall be deemed to constitute an abandonment of the grievance.

2. Within fifteen (15) business days after the grievance has been filed and before an effort is made to settle the matter, the FMBA Grievance Committee shall screen and study the grievance to determine whether same has or lacks merit. Such processing of grievance shall take place without discrimination and irrespective of membership or affiliation with the FMBA. Upon finding of merit or non-merit, the FMBA Grievance Committee shall present written confirmation of such determination to the Employer designee with the request that the Employer Designee investigate and resolve same, if required. If the resolution of the grievance has not been reached within five (5) working days of the submission to the Employer designee, the grievance may proceed to Step Two.

#### **Step Two**

1. In the event a satisfactory settlement has not been reached at Step One, the FMBA may within ten (10) business days of the employer designee's decision, file the written grievance with the Municipal Manager. This presentation shall include copies of all previous correspondence relating to the matter in dispute.

2. The Municipal Manager shall review the decision of the Designee and, within ten (10) business days from receipt of the grievance, make a written determination.

#### **Step Three**

1. In the event the grievance has not been resolved in Step Two, the FMBA may, within thirty (30) business days of the Municipal Manager decision, request arbitration. The arbitrator shall be chosen in accordance with the rules of Public Employment Relations Commission (P.E.R.C.).

2. However, no arbitration hearing shall be scheduled sooner than thirty (30) business days after the final decision by the Municipal Manager. In the event that the aggrieved elects to pursue other remedies, the arbitration hearing shall be canceled and the matter withdrawn from arbitration. The FMBA shall pay whatever costs it may incur in processing the case to arbitration.

## **Section 21.4**

### **D. Arbitration**

1. The arbitrator shall be bound by the provisions of this Agreement and restricted to the application of the facts presented to them involved in the grievance. In formulating their decision, the arbitrator shall adhere to the statutory and case law of New Jersey and the United States where applicable. The arbitrator shall not have the authority to add to, modify, subtract from or alter in any way the provisions of this Agreement or any amendment or supplement thereto. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding.
2. The costs for the services of the arbitrator shall be borne equally by the Township and the FMBA. Any other expenses incurred, including by not limited to the presentation of witnesses, shall be paid by the party incurring the same.
3. The arbitrator shall set forth his findings of fact and reasons for making the award within thirty (30) business days after the conclusion of the arbitrator hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the parties.

## **Section 21.5**

Group grievances, which shall be defined as those affecting “substantially” all of the members of the FMBA shall be filed by the FMBA, and the FMBA only, at Step Two.

## **Section 21.6**

The time limits expressed herein shall be strictly adhered to. If any grievance has not been initiated within the time limits specified, the grievance shall be deemed to be conclusive. If any grievance procedure is not processed to the next succeeding Step in the grievance procedure within the time limits prescribed hereunder, then the disposition of the grievance at the last Step shall be deemed conclusive. Nothing herein shall prevent the parties from mutually agreeing to extend or shorten the time limits for processing the grievance at any Step in the grievance procedure.

**ARTICLE 22**  
**STRIKES AND OTHER JOB ACTIONS**

---

**Section 22.1**

The employees recognize and acknowledge the existing state of the law in the State of New Jersey relating to the rights of public employees to strike or to take any other concerted action designed to illegally obstruct or disable the proper functions of the Township of Lawrence and employees agree to be bound by all such laws, as they now exist, or as they may be modified or amended, from time to time.

**ARTICLE 23**  
**MANAGEMENT RIGHTS**

---

**Section 23.1**

The Employer retains and may exercise all rights, powers, duties, authority and responsibilities conferred upon and vested in it by the laws and Constitution of the State of New Jersey. Except as specifically abridged, limited or modified by the terms of this Agreement between the Employer and the Union, all such rights, powers, authority, prerogatives of management and responsibilities to promulgate and enforce reasonable and necessary rules and regulations governing the conduct and the activities of the employees are exclusively retained by the Employer.

**ARTICLE 24**  
**SEPARABILITY AND SAVINGS**

---

**Section 24.1**

If any provision of this Agreement or any application of this Agreement to any employee or group of employees is held to be contrary to law, then such provision or application shall not be deemed valid, except to the extent permitted by law, and that all other provisions or applications of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect for the duration of this Agreement. The provisions of this Agreement shall be subject to and subordinate to and shall not annul or modify existing provisions of State and local law.



**ARTICLE 25**  
**PERSONAL LEAVE**

---

**Section 25.1**

In regard to personal leave, the following regulations apply: All full time employees covered by this Agreement shall be eligible for three (3) days personal leave with pay.

**Section 25.2**

Personal leave time is to be used for personal matters concerning the employees as delineated below. Personal days are for the purposes of conducting personal affairs of a non-recreational nature or professional affairs which cannot be carried out after scheduled work hours.

**Section 25.3**

Personal leave shall not be accumulative from year to year. All employees shall be compensated for unused personal days at straight time pay, calculated on the calendar year December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Section 25.4**

Any employee who dies, retires or is laid off shall be entitled to payment for all unused personal days on a pro-rated basis dependent upon the employee's regular salary at the time of death, retirement or layoff and the number of the employee's employment during the calendar year in question.

**Section 25.5**

Any employee who has either utilized or had excess sick or excess vacation hours charged beyond their available personal leave hours shall have their pay docked for the amount of excess hours used or charged.

**ARTICLE 26**  
**PROPERTY DAMAGE**

---

**Section 26.1**

- A. Uniform clothing and personal items damaged while in the performance of duty shall be replaced on an item for item basis at current replacement costs.

**ARTICLE 27**  
**TRAVEL EXPENSES**

---

**Section 27.1**

Employees shall be reimbursed at the prevailing rate per mile when using their personal automobile when so ordered and required by the employer, and shall be reimbursed for all non-vehicular expenses in connection with their official duties. Any such expenses must be appropriately documented as a condition of reimbursement.

**ARTICLE 28**  
**SAFETY COMMITTEE**

---

**Section 28.1**

A standing safety committee shall be formed with representatives from FMBA and the Township administration to confer as needed to discuss modifications of rules and regulations, maintaining safety and equipment and working conditions. Members of the Union may make recommendations with regard to the aforementioned areas prior to formal adoption. Any changes effectuated by said committee shall be made known to the Union as soon as practical.

**ARTICLE 29**  
**SURVIVOR'S BENEFIT CLAUSE**

---

**Section 29.1**

In the event of the death of an emergency services employee, whether on or off-duty, his survivors will be paid for the employee's vacation days, personal days, compensatory time, salary and severance pay, etc. on a pro-rated basis. All the above shall be paid to the employee's survivor(s) within thirty days (30), but in no event later than sixty (60) days from the date of death of said employee.

**ARTICLE 30**  
**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

---

**Section 30.1**

**Military Leave**

Any full-time employee covered by this Agreement, who is a member of the National Guard or reserve components in the military or naval service of the United States, and is required to perform active duty for training periods shall be granted a leave of absence without pay for the periods of such training. When an employee, not on probation, has been called to active duty or drafted into the military or naval service of the United States, the employee shall automatically be granted an indefinite leave of absence without pay for the duration of such active military service. However, in order for that employee to be reinstated without loss of privileges or seniority, the employee must, report for duty with the Township within sixty (60) days following his honorable discharge from the military service or return from active duty.

**ARTICLE 31**  
**SENIORITY AND DEPARTMENT SENIORITY**

---

**Section 31.1**

Seniority is defined as an employee's continuous length of service with the Township beginning with the employee's date of hire as a full-time regular employee. Department Seniority is defined as an employee's continuous length of service with the Township beginning with the employee's date of appointment as a full-time regular Firefighter or Fire Lieutenant.

**Section 31.2**

Employees who are laid off and are recalled at a later date, subject to the provisions of above, shall retain all seniority accumulated prior to the time that the layoff occurred.

**Section 31.3**

In all applications of Department Seniority, where ability to perform work and physical fitness are equal, Department Seniority shall be given preference in promotions, demotions, layoffs, recall and vacation schedules, in accordance with the rules and regulations governing such matters as promulgated by Civil Service and applicable to municipalities.

**Section 31.4**

When transferring into the Fire Department as a full-time Firefighter, seniority will be used for determining salary, longevity and the accrument of vacation, sick and personal leave time.

**Section 31.5**

The Township shall maintain an accurate, up to date seniority roster showing each employee's date of hire, date of department transfer, classification, and pay rate and shall furnish copies of same to the Union upon reasonable request.

**ARTICLE 32**  
**ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES**

---

**Section 32.1**

An employee covered by this Agreement shall have the right to inspect and obtain copies of documentation from his personal history file maintained at Township Hall at any reasonable time after five (5) working days written notice to the custodian thereof. Whenever, derogatory material is placed in the employee's personal history file, the Township agrees to notify the employee in writing of that action. The contents of the employee's personal history file shall not be made public unless required in disciplinary proceedings or by court order or subpoena process in a judicial proceeding. An employee covered by this Agreement shall be allowed to place in such a file a response to anything contained therein.



**ARTICLE 33**  
**JURY DUTY**

---

**Section 33.1**

All employees will be granted time off with pay for jury duty.

ARTICLE 34

DURATION, TERM AND RENEWAL

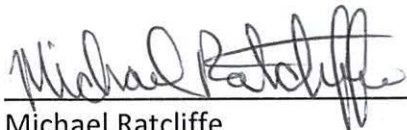
---

THIS AGREEMENT shall be effective and shall remain in full force and effect through December 31, 2025. It shall automatically be renewed from year to year, unless either party shall notify the other, in writing, before one hundred twenty (120) calendar days prior to the termination date that it desires to modify this Agreement. In the event such notice is given, negotiations shall begin no later than ninety (90) calendar days prior to the termination date. This Agreement shall remain full force and effect during the period of negotiations.

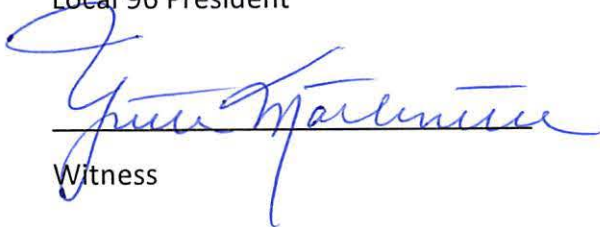
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have hereunto set their hands and seals.

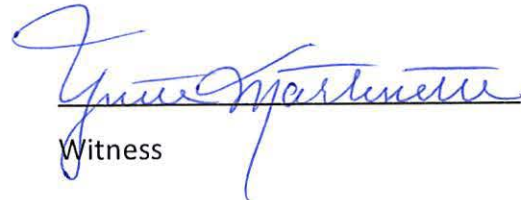
FMBA LOCAL 96

TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE  
COUNTY OF MERCER

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Ratcliffe  
Local 96 President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin P. Nerwinski, Esq.  
Municipal Manager/QPA

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

**APPENDIX**  
**HEALTH BENEFITS CONTRIBUTION**

---

**HEALTH BENEFITS CONTRIBUTION FOR FAMILY COVERAGE  
(PERCENTAGE OF PREMIUM)\*  
APPENDIX A-1**

<b>Pension Allowance or Salary Range</b>	<b>Year 4</b>
less than 25,000	3%
25,000 - 29,999.99	4%
30,000 - 34,999.99	5%
35,000 - 39,999.99	6%
40,000 - 44,999.99	7%
45,000 - 49,999.99	9%
50,000 - 54,999.99	12%
55,000 - 59,999.99	14%
60,000 - 64,999.99	17%
65,000 - 69,999.99	19%
70,000 - 74,999.99	22%
75,000 - 79,999.99	23%
80,000 - 84,999.99	24%
85,000 - 89,999.99	26%
90,000 - 94,999.99	28%
95,000 - 99,999.99	29%
100,000 - 109,999.99	32%
110,000 and over	35%

\*Member contribution is a minimum of 1.5% of base salary towards health benefits.

**HEALTH BENEFITS CONTRIBUTION FOR MEMBER/SPOUSE/PARTNER  
OR PARENT/CHILD COVERAGE  
(PERCENTAGE OF PREMIUM)\*  
APPENDIX A-2**

Pension Allowance or Salary Range	Year 4
less than 25,000	3.50%
25,000 - 9,999.99	4.50%
30,000 - 34,999.99	6.00%
35,000 - 39,999.99	7.00%
40,000 - 44,999.99	8.00%
45,000 - 49,999.99	10.00%
50,000 - 54,999.99	15.00%
55,000 - 59,999.99	17.00%
60,000 - 64,999.99	21.00%
65,000 - 69,999.99	23.00%
70,000 - 74,999.99	26.00%
75,000 - 79,999.99	27.00%
80,000 - 84,999.99	28.00%
85,000 - 99,999.99	30.00%
100,000 and over	35.00%

\*Member contribution is a minimum of 1.5% of base salary towards health benefits.

**HEALTH BENEFITS CONTRIBUTION FOR SINGLE COVERAGE  
(PERCENTAGE OF PREMIUM)\*  
APPENDIX A-3**

Pension Allowance or Salary Range	Year 4
less than 20,000	4.50%
20,000 - 24,999.99	5.50%
25,000 - 29,999.99	7.50%
30,000 - 34,999.99	10.00%
35,000 - 39,999.99	11.00%
40,000 - 44,999.99	12.00%
45,000 - 49,999.99	14.00%
50,000 - 54,999.99	20.00%
55,000 - 59,999.99	23.00%
60,000 - 64,999.99	27.00%
65,000 - 69,999.99	29.00%
70,000 - 74,999.99	32.00%
75,000 - 79,999.99	33.00%
80,000 - 94,999.99	34.00%
95,000 and over	35.00%

\*Member contribution is a minimum of 1.5% of base salary towards health benefits.