

Michael Scott, Town Manager  
Greg Siler, Finance Director  
Tim Kerigan, Human Resources/PIO  
Shannan Parrish, Town Clerk



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October 14, 2022

Ronald L. Johnson  
Clayton, NC 27520

**COPY**

**Re: Notice of Termination of Employment**

Dear Mr. Johnson:

On Wednesday, October 5, 2022, you met with Police Chief Robert K. Powell and Town Human Resources Director Tim Kerigan. During this meeting, you were informed that Chief Powell would be recommending your termination to me based on violations of Town Handbook Section 37(b) and Police Departmental General Orders Section 201 regarding standards of conduct. You were also informed regarding a personal matter in which you obtained a 50C no contact order when you knew, or should have known based on your years of experience, that the correct order was a 50B no contact order.

Prior to your meeting on October 5, 2022, you previously met with Chief Powell and HR Director Kerigan on September 30, 2022. During that meeting, you were further informed about the information identified above, that violations of these policies could lead to dismissal, and allowed time to provide information that you wished for them to consider. At that time, you provided additional documentation that was reviewed by Chief Powell prior to making his recommendation.

On October 6, 2022, a news article in the JoCo Report was published regarding allegations that you sent inappropriate texts of a sexual nature about a female school employee. The article referenced that you had been censured by the Johnston County Public School Board. Included with the article was an Affidavit from you. In that Affidavit, you admitted to sending the text messages at issue in the article. Following that article, on October 7, 2022, I informed you that I believed that this conduct could rise to a level of Detrimental Personal Conduct, Article IX, Section 101 and 102 of the Smithfield Employee Handbook, and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from your position with the Smithfield Police Department and the Town of Smithfield. I also requested an opportunity to meet with you to discuss these new allegations and allow you the opportunity to respond.

On October 12, 2022, you and I met for an extended meeting discussing the recent allegations and you were afforded the opportunity to respond. During this meeting, you provided additional information and documentation and were further advised that this recent conduct appeared to represent Detrimental Personal Conduct. We also discussed at length information that you stated you had not been able to provide to Chief Powell prior to his October 5 recommendation. You specifically told me that you had conversations with another Detective regarding communications with the individual involved in the 50C

A handwritten signature, possibly "MKJ", is written in black ink and enclosed within a hand-drawn circle in the bottom right corner of the page.

no contact order. During this meeting, we again discussed at length your request to obtain a 50C no contact order as opposed to a 50B no contact order and the Town's emphasis on truthfulness. We also discussed the use of Police Department equipment for non-police matters, including the usage of your Police computer.

After our meeting, I reviewed the additional information that you provided and also spoke with the Detective that you had referenced.

Based on my review of the relevant information, including the recommendation of Chief Powell, the documents that you provided to Chief Powell and myself, and the recent news articles, this letter serves as notification that you are being terminated from your Police Department position with the Town of Smithfield effective immediately on Friday, October 14, 2022. The decision to terminate your employment has been made due to the reasons set forth in the first paragraph of this letter as well as for Detrimental Personal Conduct due to the recent allegations reported on October 6 and further discussed with you during our October 12 meeting.

You will receive pay through today, October 14, 2022. If you are currently participating in any of the Town's employee benefit plans, any relevant procedures or documentation for continuation of medical benefits through COBRA, distribution options for retirement plans, or other relevant documentation will be mailed to you at your home address with instructions for completing and returning the paperwork.

You may appeal this decision in accordance with Article X of the Town's Handbook, which has been previously provided. In addition, the Town will provide you with a name clearing hearing related to the termination of your employment. I have enclosed a document regarding Frequently Asked Questions regarding Name Clearing Hearings. Please let me know by October 21, 2022 if you would like to proceed with a name clearing hearing.

Sincerely,  
TOWN OF SMITHFIELD



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Michael Scott  
Town Manager