ICMA provides resources for people at all stages of their local government career, but first-time administrators have unique challenges as well as new opportunities. The first thing first-time administrator should do is read the First-Time Administrators Handbook that is linked below: *https://icma.org/blog-posts/icma-resources-first-time-administrators*

In addition to this resource provided by ICMA, GovHR has prepared the list below to help first-time administrators get off to the right start and be successful in their careers.

Policies/Plans to Review:

- Personnel Handbook
- Purchasing/Financial Policies
- Code of Ordinances (specific authorities related to appointment and firing)
- Zoning Code
- Comprehensive Plan
- Strategic Plan
- Past Three Audits—Review MD&A, identify trends and poor financial practices (interfund transfers, etc.), management letters.
- Past Three Budgets

Administration:

- Ensure you are getting copied on all agenda items and packets.
- Understand who is responsible for agenda material preparation and the process.
- Understand how attorneys and consultants are used.
- Review all Executive Session agendas and minutes from the last year or two.
- Ask for a complete contact list that includes all phone numbers and emails for all staff members, consultants, attorneys, elected officials, etc.
- Create a floor plan/layout of where everyone sits and put names on it so you can become familiar with everyone and greet people by name. Try to find out and understand what each position does.
- Ask each department to prepare a project update for you; both big projects and big policy matters—this will help you understand what the long-standing challenges and concerns are.
- Understand who is responsible for IT issues and community with the community (i.e. customer service, newsletters, social media, etc.).
- Make sure you have access to the computer and software systems, and make sure you are trained on how to use them and understand the kind of security that is in place.
- Meet with the Finance Department to become knowledgeable on the banking protocols – if you are signer for certain funds, figure out what will need to be transitioned and what forms will need to be completed.
- Ensure there is a list of all bond issues, debt schedules, etc.
- Arrange for a meeting with the attorney – understand what their payment arrangement is and what issues they see on the horizon.

- Understand the budget process – review revenues and expenditures for the current year, see if they are in line with the budget and if there are any red flags.
- Set up a one-on-one meeting with each department head.
- Schedule meetings with employee groups – get to know each department and share your management style.
- Schedule a lunch or on-on-one meeting with each elected official; establish how you will communicate with them based on their preferences.
- When meeting with employees, department heads and elected officials, ask them for specific names of key stakeholders in the community that you should meet with in the first 60 days.
- Identify the hiring process and how it has worked in the past – do you approve hiring or do you have to run it past the council/board.
- Listen a lot and never be afraid to ask why or who or what a lot!
- Determine how you will balance work and home (this is a lifetime effort).
- Listen and ask why or who or what a lot.
- Think about your weekly schedule – set aside time at the beginning/end of each week to prepare your week.
- Determine how much time you will want to spend on agenda prep with staff, updating and getting to know elected officials, etc.
- Contact the council of governments, state representative/senators and introduce yourself to them and share contact information.