



COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

The Board of County Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium, 372 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida 32055. All agenda items are due in the Board's office one week prior to the meeting date.

Today's Date: 8/9/2018 Meeting Date: 8/16/2018

Name: Lisa Roberts Department: Human Resources

Division Manager's Signature:

Ben Scott

1. Nature and purpose of agenda item:

Revised Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual

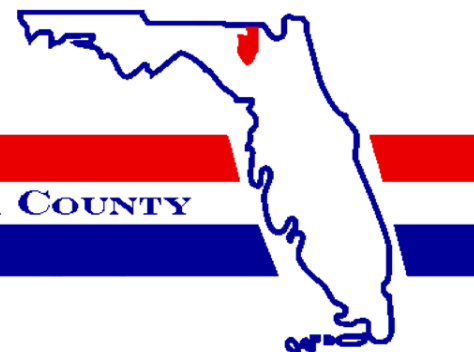
2. Recommended Motion/Action:

There is no recommended motion or action.

3. Fiscal impact on current budget.

This item has no effect on the current budget.

District No. 1 - Ronald Williams
District No. 2 - Rusty DePratter
District No. 3 - Bucky Nash
District No. 4 - Everett Phillips
District No. 5 - Tim Murphy



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS • COLUMBIA COUNTY

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Ben Scott, County Manager

FR: Lisa K.B. Roberts, Human Resources Director

DATE: August 7, 2018

RE: Columbia County Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual Revision

Please be advised the County requested The Krizner Group through the Florida Association of Counties Trust to review the Counties Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual for legality and liability purposes. The following is a summary of the suggested revisions:

Chapter 2-Equal Employment Opportunity – Section A - Added language, “veteran status” and “pregnancy” to the EEO statement of policy which would prohibit discrimination based upon the stated additional protected characteristics by law.

Chapter 4- Sexual and Other Harassment –

Section B – Corrected typographical error.

Section C - Added language, “pregnancy” and “veterans status” to the protected category prohibiting any type of harassment.

Section F-2-A – Formal Procedure - revised grammar

Section F-2-D – Language was revised to stipulate complaints and investigations of harassment will be handled with “discretion” and “Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Chapter 10 – Standards of Conduct/Code of Ethics- Section 4- Number 4 -Added language regarding awareness of employees use of fragrances and fragrance sensitivity in the workplace and providing reasonable accommodation in accordance with the ADA.

Revised numbering of paragraphs.

Section 4-Number 11 – Added language to stipulate the possession or use of medical marijuana is not allowed on County premises. If an applicant or employee with a legal referral for

BOARD MEETS FIRST AND THIRD THURSDAY AT 5:30 P.M.

P.O. BOX 1529

LAKE CITY, FLORIDA 32056-1529

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MEMORANDUM

Ben Scott, County Manager

August 7, 2018

Page Two

marijuana (for the treatment of a medical condition) tests positive based on the substance limits for the drug test, it will be reported by the lab as a “positive drug test” and will be treated in accordance with all other positive drug tests.

Chapter 20- Sick Leave –

Section B-2 – Revised language to remove employees immediate family by listing individually, (i.e.- spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, or in-laws) and added language “see definition of immediate family below”.

Section B-3 – Added language which defines immediate family to include domestic partners residing in the same household. “Immediate family” is defined as the employee’s spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, in-laws and domestic partner residing in the same household.

Section D-2 – Removed language in which employees eligible for payment of unused sick leave earned before October 1, 1981 will be paid at the rate of 100% for sick leave earned prior to October 1, 1981, at the September 30, 1981 rate of pay. The County no longer has employee’s in which this applies.

Chapter 23-Miscellaneous Leaves of Absence with Pay – Section B. – Added language to include

domestic partner residing in the same household as eligible for bereavement leave.

Chapter 28- Sick Leave Transfer – Section A-1 – Added language to include domestic partner residing in the same household.

Chapter 42 – Workplace Violence-Section D – Revised heading to correct a typographical error.

Chapter 48- Personnel Records – New policy restricting access to employee personnel records and copying of personnel records only to management personnel who have a legitimate reason to review, except through a public records request under the terms of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

Approval of the revised Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual as stipulated is requested for Board consideration.

If you have any questions regarding the revisions, please contact me at (386) 758-1006.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
MANUAL
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COLUMBIA COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

PREFACE

This manual reflects the policies and procedures of the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners. The manual is intended to provide useful guidelines about county employment to all employees.

Nothing in this Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (PPPM) is intended to form or add to an express or implied contract or promise to any employee, or to create any property or procedural right for any employee, unless a provision is clearly labeled as a right of an employee. Employment with the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners (Board/County) is employment at will. This means that an employee can quit or be terminated at any time for any reason, as long as the reason is not illegal (e.g. race, sex, disability, etc.). No statements to the contrary, written or oral, made before or during an individual's employment can change this.

The Board reserves the right to add, revoke or modify policies at any time, with or without prior notice.

Approved Columbia County Board of County Commissioners,
~~November 15, 2012~~
[August 16, 2018](#)

CHAPTER 1 - ADMINISTRATION

The Columbia County Board of County Commissioners establishes this Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual (PPPM) and authorizes the County Manager to administer the manual within the limits established by the Board.

The PPPM, as adopted, will apply to all employees who fall under the jurisdiction of the Board, unless otherwise noted. Employees who are covered under a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the County will also be subject to the PPPM. In the event of a direct conflict with any provision of the PPPM and any part of a CBA, the provisions of the CBA will control for any employee subject to that CBA.

CHAPTER 2 - EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO)

A. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Board is dedicated to providing a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, national origin, disability, veteran status, pregnancy or any other characteristics protected by law, including such conduct from vendors, customers or others who enter the workplace. Discrimination based on genetic information is prohibited. The Board does not collect or maintain genetic information on any employee or dependent.

Discrimination against any person in recruitment, examination, appointment, training, promotion or any other employment action because of political or religious opinions or affiliations or because of race, color, age, sex, marital status, national origin, disability, veteran status, pregnancy or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law is prohibited.

Veterans' Preference will be given to eligible veterans in accordance with Florida law.

B. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Unlawful discrimination and retaliation are forms of employee misconduct that undermine the integrity of the employment relationship. These types of misconduct are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Violators of the County's prohibition against unlawful discrimination and retaliation will be subject to prompt, appropriate disciplinary action.

C. EEO COMPLAINT PROCESS

Employees, and applicants for employment, must file a complaint of discrimination with the Human Resources Office within 30 days of the alleged discriminatory act, or complainant's (person filing complaint) knowledge of the alleged discriminatory act. The complainant and the respondent may provide a list of witnesses in support or denial of the charges, and submit any documents related or pertinent to the allegations. For complaints of harassment, employees must use the County's harassment policy (see Chapter 4 of the PPPM).

An investigation of the charges will be conducted, which may include an informal hearing of the persons involved and/or on-site interviews of potential witnesses. This hearing will not be bound by formal rules of evidence. Within 60 working days of receiving a formal complaint, the Human Resources Director will submit a final investigative report directly to the County Manager. In extenuating circumstances, the County Manager may grant an extension for the submission of the final investigative report.

Within 15 working days of receiving the final investigative report, the County Manager will issue a written response to both the complainant and the respondent. The County Manager's response will either offer a remedy or relief, or dismiss the charges.

Complaints, investigations and reports shall be kept confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

D. RETALIATION

Retaliation against any person for bringing a good faith allegation forward, filing a complaint, or participating in an investigation of alleged unlawful discrimination, is strictly prohibited. Under no circumstances will an employee be penalized for reporting unlawful or improper conduct prohibited by these policies. Any employee who believes that he or she is being retaliated against for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation must report the retaliation to the Human Resources Director immediately.

E. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN (AAP)

It is the responsibility of all employees to be aware of, and comply with, the County's adopted voluntary Affirmative Action Plan. The plan is intended to promote equal employment opportunity through non-discriminatory practices by:

1. Recruiting, hiring, training and making promotion or discipline decisions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, age, disability, or other protected characteristics; and
2. Ensuring that employment benefits and programs are administered in accordance with local, state and federal equal employment opportunity laws.

CHAPTER 3 - AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

A. STATEMENT OF POLICY

A Policy of the Board providing guidelines to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, in matters regarding the employment of disabled persons and providing access for disabled persons to the services offered and administered by the Board. To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such impairment, or a person regarded as having such impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered and not everyone with a medical condition is protected by the law.

B. EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of the Board of County Commissioners to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and any revisions to the Act. The law forbids discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other terms or conditions of employment.

Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation in the application and/or interview process should notify a representative of the Human Resources Department. The County will not use qualification standards, employment tests, or other selection criteria that screen out, or tend to screen out, individuals with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities, on the basis of disability.

Job vacancy announcements will be advertised in one or more of the following forms for wide-ranging accessibility (Notices distributed through these outlets will include a number for a telephone equipped with a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) and volume control for the speech and hearing impaired):

1. Publish as a legal notice in a local paper;
2. Provide job announcements over the radio;
3. Post notices on bulletin boards;
4. Post notices on the County's website;
5. Publish on the local public television channel, if available;
6. Provide job announcement notices to local organizations serving disabled individuals.

C. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work environment (or in the way things are usually done) to help a person with a disability apply for a job, perform the duties of a job, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment. Employees who believe they may need a reasonable accommodation should contact the Human Resources Department.

CHAPTER 4 - SEXUAL AND OTHER HARASSMENT

A. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Board is committed to a work environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Employees have the right to work in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including sexual and other forms of harassment. Therefore, the Board expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace be businesslike and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the Board maintains a strict policy prohibiting harassment of staff members in any form in the workplace from other staff members, vendors, contractors, or guests.

B. DEFINITIONS

Sexual Harassment - Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal and state laws. Sexual harassment as defined in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Guideline is the definition in use in this policy and includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same gender or different genders. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances; subtle or overt pressure for sexual favors; sexual jokes; innuendoes; advances or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic commentary about an individual's body; sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling, touching, pinching, assault, coerced sexual acts, or suggestive, insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexual suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. This type of behavior is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace such as during business trips and business related social events.

It is also essential to understand that consenting romantic and intimate relationships between managers or supervisors and less-senior or lower-level staff members, or between co-workers, may lead to unforeseen complications. The respect and trust accorded a more senior/supervisory person by a lower-level staff member, as well as the responsibility of the senior/supervisory person for evaluating or otherwise supervising the lower-level person, could diminish the extent to which the lower-level staff member feels free to choose. While it's not the Board's intention to legislate social behavior, the Board does recognize that developing close social relationships with staff members makes any supervisor's job more difficult. Consequently, supervisors should refrain from dating or developing close social relationships with staff members under their supervision. Should a dating or close social relationship develop between a

supervisor and staff member under his or her supervision, the supervisor must immediately report the relationship to Human Resources.

C. OTHER HARASSMENT

Board policy equally prohibits ~~any~~ other type of harassment involving a protected category under federal, state, or local law (for example, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, marital status, pregnancy, age, veteran status and/or disability). Unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or any form of threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, or disability.

D. INDIVIDUALS COVERED UNDER THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all applicants and staff members whether involving conduct engaged in by fellow staff members, supervisors, managers, or someone not directly connected to the Board (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant, client).

E. REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF HARASSMENT

Employees must report all perceived incidents of harassment, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Employees who believe they have been the victim of harassment must follow at least one of the following complaint procedures.

F. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

1. Informal Procedure

- a. The Board encourages employees who believe they are being harassed to promptly notify the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome. If, for any reason, an employee does not want to confront the offender directly or such a confrontation does not successfully end the harassment, the employee must notify his or her immediate supervisor, Department Head, or the Human Resources Director.
- b. An employee reporting harassment should be aware that the Board may decide it is necessary to take action to address the harassment beyond an informal discussion. This decision will be discussed with the reporting employee. The best course of action in any case will depend on many factors and, therefore, the informal procedure will remain flexible. Moreover, the informal procedure is not a required first step for the reporting employee.

2. Formal Procedure

- a. Notification of Appropriate Staff - As noted above, employees who believe they have been the victim of harassment ~~must~~, or ~~who~~ believe they have witnessed harassment ~~should~~must discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, Department Head, or the Human Resources Director. Supervisors who receive information regarding sexual harassment are

required to report the information to their Department Head and the Human Resources Director.

- b. Timeliness in Reporting Harassment - The Board encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken before relationships become strained. While no fixed reporting period has been established, early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment.
- c. Investigatory Process - All reported allegations of harassment will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have relevant knowledge.
- d. Confidentiality - The complaint and investigation will be handled with sensitivity, and ~~confidentiality-discretion~~ will be maintained throughout the investigatory process, to the extent legally permissible by law, practical and appropriate under the circumstances. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- e. Protection Against Retaliation - Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or assisting in providing information relevant to a claim of harassment is a serious violation of this policy and will be treated with the same strict discipline as harassment itself. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be investigated promptly.
- f. Responsive Action - Misconduct constituting harassment will be dealt with appropriately. Responsive action may include, for example, training, referral to counseling, and disciplinary actions such as warnings, reprimands, withholding of a promotion or pay increase, reassignment, temporary suspension without pay, compensation adjustments, or termination, as the County determines is appropriate under the circumstances.
- g. Record of Complaint and Investigation - The County will maintain a written record of each complaint, the investigation, and the resolution. Written records will be maintained in confidence to the extent legally permissible by law, practical and appropriate. Written records will normally be maintained for the time specified in the State of Florida's retention schedule.
- h. Appeals Process - If the party to a complaint does not agree with the resolution of the complaint, the party may file written comments with the Human Resources Director; the Assistant County Manager; the County Manager or the County Manager's designee.
- i. False and Malicious Accusations - False and malicious complaints of harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

CHAPTER 5 - CLASSIFICATION PLAN

A. PURPOSE

The Classification Plan provides a systematic arrangement and inventory of Board positions. The plan groups the various positions of the County into classes reflective of the range of duties, responsibilities, and level of work performed. Class titles standardize the meaning, allocation, and usage of the plan based upon the similarity of work and duties performed. Each classification will have a job title, a position description, and a salary pay grade.

B. USE OF THE PLAN

The Classification Plan will be used as follows:

1. As a guide for recruiting and examining candidates for employment.
2. To determine career paths and to develop employee training programs.
3. To determine appropriate salary pay grades.
4. To aid in establishing and maintaining organizational structure.

C. ADMINISTRATION OF THE CLASSIFICATION PLAN

The addition of new classes, deletion of existing classes, or reclassifying of positions will be the responsibility of the County Manager or his/her designee.

D. MAINTENANCE OF THE CLASSIFICATION PLAN

The County Manager, in cooperation with the Human Resources Department, will be responsible for maintaining the Classification Plan. This will include:

1. Placing new or proposed positions in the proper class according to the duties and responsibilities of the position.
2. If permanent changes in the duties and responsibilities of an established position change, reclassifying the position to another classification.
3. Reviewing and analyzing the classification each time a vacancy occurs, for instance upon resignation, retirement, or dismissal of an incumbent.

E. CONTENT OF THE PLAN

1. A grouping of positions into classes.
2. A class specification containing a title, essential functions, listing of knowledge, skills, and abilities; work environment, physical demands, minimum qualifications and licenses required.
3. A description for each job within a class, listing the type of work, the scope of duties and responsibilities, and supervisory responsibilities if required.

F. CLASSIFICATION ACTIONS

1. When a new position is established, or there are substantial changes in the duties of an existing position, a new or revised position description will be prepared.
2. The position description will be prepared in the format approved by the Board. It will be prepared by the Department Head and submitted to the Human Resources Department.
3. The position description will be reviewed by the County Manager and the Human Resources Director. With Board approval, the position will be allocated to the appropriate class in the Classification Plan.
4. The County Manager will be authorized to assign the number of positions in a classification provided the authorizations do not exceed budgetary constraints.

G. RECLASSIFICATION OF POSITIONS

County positions may be reclassified from a higher grade (up), the same pay grade (lateral) or to a lower pay (down) grade. When reclassifications occur, these guidelines apply:

1. When a vacant position is reclassified to a higher pay grade/up, the same pay grade/lateral, or to a lower pay grade/down, it will be filled in the appropriate manner.
2. If an occupied position is reclassified to a higher grade/up, the incumbent employee will receive a corresponding change in pay grade and the change will be considered a promotion.
3. If an occupied position is reclassified but remains in the same pay grade/lateral, the incumbent employee will receive a title change but no change in pay grade.
4. If an occupied position is reclassified to a lower pay grade/down, the incumbent employee may be offered a transfer to a vacancy, if one exists, in the original classification in the same or another department. In the absence of a vacancy, the incumbent employee may be permitted to continue at present rate of pay during the incumbency.

H. APPEALS OF POSITION RECLASSIFICATION

Employees who are affected by reclassification, and who believe that the position has been allocated incorrectly, may appeal the reclassification to the County Manager.

I. WORK PERFORMED OUTSIDE JOB DESCRIPTION

County employees may be required to perform work outside of the job description.

CHAPTER 6 – PAY PLAN

A. PURPOSE OF THE PAY PLAN

The Pay Plan is directly related to the Classification Plan and it provides the basis of compensation for County employees. The Pay Plan will be constructed by considering the following factors:

1. The relative difficulty and responsibility existing among the various classes of work (internal equity).
2. Prevailing rates of pay for similar types of work in private and public employment (external equity).
3. The availability of candidates in the workforce for the various classes of work.
4. Area economic conditions.
5. The financial policies of the Board.

B. COMPOSITION OF THE PAY PLAN

The Pay Plan will include:

1. A table of basic salary schedules as adopted by the County.
2. The salary schedules will indicate salary ranges, including minimum and maximum rates of pay, for each title/position.

C. AMENDMENT AND ADOPTION OF THE PAY PLAN

Amendments to the Pay Plan will be considered when changes in responsibilities of work or classes, the cost of living, the labor force, prevailing rates of pay, the county's financial condition and policies, or other pertinent consideration warrant such action. The County Manager may, as a result of an external salary survey or an internal equity study, recommend amendments of the Pay Plan to the Board for approval and adoption.

D. NEW EMPLOYEES

1. Generally, new employees will be paid the minimum rate of pay for the classification. The County Manager may make an exception when it is in the interest of the County to do so.
2. Appointments above the minimum salary within the range, subject to the request of the employing Department Head, may be authorized by the County Manager if the applicant's training, experience, or other qualifications are substantially above those for the position.
3. Employees who are within the new hire orientation will not receive a cost of living adjustment (COLA) until orientation is completed satisfactorily. The COLA will be effective upon successful completion of orientation and will not be applied retroactively.

E. PROMOTION

Employees may be considered for promotions to job classifications with higher rates of pay when they meet all the requirements for the promotion. Attendance, promptness, flexibility, merit, qualifications, reliability, and work record are important considerations for advancement. When opportunities arise, an effort will be made to move staff to more responsible positions as these openings occur. Employees who take additional courses or training to increase present knowledge or to learn a new skill should provide supporting documentation to Human Resources for inclusion in the personnel file. Budgetary impacts and constraints must be considered when making compensation decisions. The Department Head will recommend the promotional increase and it must be approved by the County Manager. Promotions may have the following effects:

1. When promoted, an employee may be granted a salary increase to the minimum salary for the new class or up to 10% above the employee's salary prior to promotion. The salary will not be increased to above the maximum for the new class.
2. Upon promotion, employees will begin a new six (6) month orientation period.

F. DEMOTION OR REASSIGNMENT

1. Demotion or reassignment is a change in status resulting from assignment to a position at a lower salary grade which involves a lower level of responsibility or requires lower qualifications. Demotion or reassignment is not a guarantee but may be recommended if a position for which the employee is qualified is vacant and funded. Budgetary impacts and constraints must be considered when making compensation decisions.
2. Reasons for Demotion – If the change in status results from unsuitable performance or as a disciplinary action, the action is considered a demotion. If the change results from a mutual agreement between the employee and the County (e.g., choice of the employee; organizational needs such as reorganization or reduction in force; or other mutually agreed upon arrangement), the action is considered a reassignment.
3. Effect of Demotion or Reassignment on Pay
 - a. The pay of an employee demoted or reassigned to a lower pay grade classification than the current classification will be adjusted according to these guidelines:
 - (1) Demotion or reassignment will not result in a pay increase.
 - (2) Employees demoted or reassigned to a lower classification which was held immediately prior (one year or less) to being upgraded will revert to the salary paid before the promotion plus any increases that would have been given had the change not occurred, but not to exceed the maximum for the range.
 - (3) Employees demoted or reassigned to a lower classification not held immediately prior (one year or more) to being upgraded may have their salary reduced to any salary in the lower range.

- (4) Demoted or reassigned employees will be returned to the employee status held prior to being upgraded. If an employee has only served in one classification and is demoted or reassigned with less than six (6) months service, he/she must serve a new six (6) month orientation period in the new classification.
- (5) Demoted employees must complete one year of service following the demotion before being eligible for a pay increase, including cost of living adjustments.

G. TRANSFERS

Employees, regardless of status, may be transferred with the approval of the department head and the County Manager in accordance with the following:

1. An employee may be transferred to another department with the same job classification and the transfer will not affect the employee's pay grade or anniversary date. However, the employee must serve a six (6) month orientation period in the new department.

H. OTHER PAY ADJUSTMENTS

The most common form of salary adjustment in County employment is the cost of living adjustment (COLA). A COLA is not mandatory or guaranteed but will depend upon the financial condition of the County. COLA increases are usually effective at the beginning of the fiscal year and are across-the-board for non-collective bargaining unit covered employees (unless a restriction applies: see NEW EMPLOYEES/DEMOTION above). Collective bargaining units will negotiate for any pay increases. In the event an employee receives a merit and a COLA increase, the COLA is calculated first and then merit is applied.

Bonus payments may be made to County employees upon recommendation of the County Manager and approval of the Board. Bonuses are non-recurring and retirement contributions are not made on bonuses.

I. OVERTIME

All employees are hired with the understanding that they will work overtime hours as scheduled. Overtime work, including work on weekends and holidays, is required even if the County is unable to give advance notice. All overtime will be approved in advance by the Department Head or designee. Employees are never to "work off the clock" and may not work overtime without authorization. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

It is the policy of the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). County employees are categorized as either "exempt" or "nonexempt." "Exempt" employees are individuals who are exempted from the minimum wage and/or overtime requirements imposed under the FLSA. "Exempt" employees typically are paid on a salary basis and their salary generally covers all

hours worked. Exempt classifications may include administrative, executive, and professional staff; and certain highly skilled computer professionals.

“Exempt” employees will not normally receive overtime pay or compensatory time off for working additional hours. For example, if an exempt employee works more than eight (8) hours in a single day or forty (40) hours in a workweek, this does not qualify them for overtime/compensatory time. However, it shall be the policy of the Board, during a declared local state of emergency, to pay overtime to all employees for those activities specifically related to emergency protective actions, and response and recovery activities.

“Nonexempt” employees are paid at least the minimum wage and overtime pay for excess hours worked (usually more than forty (40) hours in a work week). Certain exceptions apply for firefighters and other personnel. “Nonexempt” employees may also be compensated by being given compensatory time off (equal to time and one-half for hours worked) in lieu of overtime pay. Only hours **actually worked** are considered for the purposes of overtime and compensatory time off. Compensatory time must be used within a reasonable time frame. Flex time may be used in the same workweek to eliminate or reduce compensatory or overtime for hourly staff.

The “exempt” or “nonexempt” classification is found on the County’s pay grade schedule and on the job description.

J. DEDUCTIONS

Applicable federal income taxes, as well as federal Social Security and Medicare taxes, are withheld from each paycheck. The County will obey all laws that pertain to paychecks, including wage garnishments, and make every effort to ensure our employees are paid correctly. Occasionally, however, inadvertent mistakes can happen. Please review your pay stub when you receive it to make sure it is correct. If you believe a mistake has occurred, including a mistake with respect to a deduction that was taken from your pay, please contact Human Resources. Reports of improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, you will be promptly reimbursed.

K. PAY GRADE SCHEDULES

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GENERAL PAY GRADE SCHEDULE
Revised & Approved 09/15/16

POSITION TITLE	EXEMPT STATUS	PAY GRADE	MINIMUM	MIDPOINT	MAXIMUM
LABORER	N	101	10.00	12.10	14.35
MOSQUITO CONTROL OPERATOR	N	101	20,800.00	25,168.00	29,848.00
MAINTENANCE WORKER - LANDSCAPE & PARKS	N	101			
RECREATION AIDE	N	101			
		102	10.06	12.17	14.44
			20,924.80	25,319.01	30,027.09
ASSISTANT FACILITY FIELD SUPERVISOR	N	103	10.45	12.64	15.00
			21,736.00	26,300.56	31,191.16
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST	N	105	10.51	12.71	15.08
VETERANS COUNSELOR	N	105	21,860.80	26,436.80	31,370.25
SECRETARY I	N	106	10.58	12.80	15.18
			22,000.00	26,627.74	31,579.18
4-H PROGRAM ASSISTANT P/T	N	108	10.98	13.29	15.76
MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN - LANDSCAPE & PARKS	N	108	22,838.40	27,634.46	32,773.10
SECRETARY II	N	109	11.48	13.89	16.47
			23,878.40	28,892.86	34,265.50
SECRETARY SPECIALIST	N	112	12.50	15.13	17.94
			26,000.00	31,460.00	37,310.00
CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER I	N	113	12.55	15.19	18.01
CONSTRUCTION HELPER	N	113	26,104.00	31,585.84	37,459.24
COUNTY COURT SECRETARY	N	113			
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY	N	114	12.98	15.71	18.63
			27,000.00	32,668.06	38,742.70

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FLEET/PROCUREMENT COORDINATOR	N	115	13.12	15.88	18.83
			27,289.60	33,020.42	39,160.58
CREW LEADER - LANDSCAPE & PARKS	N	116	13.46	16.29	19.32
			28,000.00	33,876.13	40,175.41
EMERGENCY MANAGER. COORDINATOR	N	117	13.72	16.60	19.69
			28,537.60	34,530.50	40,951.46
OFFICE MANAGER	N	119	14.35	17.36	20.59
			29,848.00	36,116.08	42,831.88
CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER II	N	120	14.42	17.45	20.69
			30,000.00	36,292.26	43,040.82
		121	15.01	18.16	21.54
			31,220.80	37,777.17	44,801.85
TOURIST PROJECT MARKETING MANAGER	N	122	15.38	18.61	22.07
			32,000.00	38,708.38	45,906.22
CARPENTER FOREMAN	N	123	15.63	18.91	22.43
			32,500.00	39,337.58	46,652.42
ELECTRICIAN	N	124	15.71	19.01	22.54
HVAC ENERGY SPECIALIST	N	124	32,680.00	39,538.93	46,891.21
IT DESKTOP SUPPORT SPECIALIST	N	124			
VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER	EA	124			
MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR- LANDSCAPE & PARKS	N	125	15.87	19.20	22.77
PAINTER/MAINTENANCE	N	125	33,000.00	39,941.62	47,368.78
MECHANIC SHOP FOREMAN	EA	127	16.44	19.89	23.59
			34,195.20	41,376.19	49,070.11
ASSISTANT SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR/OPS MANAGER	EA	128	17.21	20.82	24.70
PLANNING TECHNICIAN	N	128	35,800.00	43,314.13	51,368.41
BUILDING OFFICIAL I - 1 & 2 FAMILY DWELLING INSPECTOR *	N	129	17.79	21.53	25.53
			37,000.00	44,773.87	53,099.59
BUILDING OFFICIAL II*	N	130	18.02	21.80	25.86
PERMITS APPLICATION COORDINATOR	N	130	37,481.60	45,352.74	53,786.10

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PLANS EXAMINER	N	130	18.02	21.80	25.86
			37,481.60	45,352.74	53,786.10
		131	18.87	22.83	27.08
			39,249.60	47,492.02	56,323.18
911 ADDRESSING TECHNICIAN	N	132	19.23	23.27	27.60
			40,000.00	48,398.06	57,397.70
PUBLIC WORKS ROAD SUPERINTENDENT	EA	133	19.76	23.91	28.36
DATABASE APPLICATION/WEB DESIGNER	N	133	41,100.80	49,731.97	58,979.65
NETWORKING SPECIALIST	N	133			
FOREMAN/FOREMAN DRAINAGE/FOREMAN STORMWATER	EA	133			
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR	EA	134	20.70	25.05	29.70
9 1 1 ADDRESSING/GIS COORDINATOR	EA	134	43,056.00	52,097.76	61,785.36
MAINTENANCE FIELD SUPERVISOR	N	134			
PURCHASING DIRECTOR	EE	135	21.68	26.23	31.11
SAFETY DIRECTOR	EA	135	45,094.40	54,564.22	64,710.46
ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR	N	136	23.31	28.21	33.45
ASSISTANT ROAD CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR	N	136	48,484.80	58,666.61	69,575.69
PROJECTS SUPERINTENDENT	EA	136			
UTILITIES/DRAINAGE SUPERINTENDENT	N	136			
ASSISTANT BUILDING & ZONING COORDINATOR	EA	137	24.04	29.09	34.50
			50,000.00	60,503.87	71,754.59
DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	EA	138	24.45	29.58	35.09
ROAD CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR	N	138	50,856.00	61,535.76	72,978.36
DIRECTOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	EA	139	24.52	29.67	35.19
			51,000.00	61,711.94	73,187.30
		140	26.12	31.61	37.48
			54,329.60	65,738.82	77,962.98
RECREATION DIRECTOR	EE	141	26.44	31.99	37.94
			55,000.00	66,544.19	78,918.11

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COUNTY PLANNER	EA	142	27.37	33.12	39.28
RADIO/COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST	N	142	56,932.80	68,884.82	81,693.98
SENIOR STAFF ASSISTANT	EA	142			
DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES MAINTENANCE	EE	143	27.40	33.15	39.32
			57,000.00	68,960.32	81,783.52
BUILDING & ZONING COORDINATOR	EE	144	27.88	33.73	40.001
			58,000.00	70,168.38	83,216.22
ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER	EE	145	28.21	34.13	40.48
			58,676.80	70,998.93	84,201.21
DIRECTOR HR/COMMUNITY SERVICES	EA	146	28.85	34.91	41.40
DIRECTOR LANDSCAPING AND PARKS DEPARTMENT	EE	146	60,000.00	72,609.68	86,111.48
OPERATIONS SUPERINTENDENT	EA	146			
RISK MANAGER	EA	146			
SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR	EE	146			
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	EA	146			
COUNTY ENGINEER	EP	147	33.04	39.98	47.41
			68,723.20	83,155.07	98,617.79
SPORTS MARKETING DIRECTOR	EA		NEGOTIABLE		
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR	EE		NEGOTIABLE		
DIRECTOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	EA		NEGOTIABLE		
OPERATIONS MANAGER	EE		NEGOTIABLE		
ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER	EA		NEGOTIABLE		
COUNTY MANAGER	EE		NEGOTIABLE		

Revisions Board Approved ~~09/15/2016, 08/17/2017, 09/21/2017~~

SUPPLEMENTS:

FIXED ASSET MANAGER	\$1500 ANNUALLY
MOWING CONTRACTOR SUPERVISOR	\$2500 ANNUALLY
TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING	\$1500 ANNUALLY

*BUILDING OFFICIAL I - 1 & 2 FAMILY DWELLING INSPECTOR INCENTIVE INCREASE 5% FOR EACH RESIDENTIAL STANDARD CERTIFICATION OBTAINED. BASE PAY GRADE 129 - RESIDENTIAL BUILDING INSPECTOR 5%. RESIDENTIAL MECHANICAL INSPECTOR 5%. RESIDENTIAL ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR 5%. RESIDENTIAL PLUMBING INSPECTOR 5%. A STANDARD CERTIFICATION IS A PRE-REQUISITE TO OBTAIN INCENTIVE PAY FOR EACH OF THESE CATEGORIES. HOWEVER IF THE APPLICANT POSSESSES A STANDARD CERTIFICATE IN ALL RESIDENTIAL 1 & 2 FAMILY DWELLING INSPECTOR CATEGORIES, THE RATE OF PAY WILL START AT \$44,400.00. NO COST OF LIVING INCREASE WILL BE GIVEN UNTIL STANDARD CERTIFICATION IS OBTAINED IN ALL FOUR CATEGORIES.

*BUILDING OFFICIAL II - INCENTIVE INCREASE 5% FOR EACH STANDARD CERTIFICATE OBTAINED. BASE PAY GRADE 130 - STANDARD BUILDING CERTIFICATE 5%. STANDARD ELECTRICAL CERTIFICATE 5%. STANDARD MECHANICAL CERTIFICATE 5%. STANDARD PLUMBING CERTIFICATE - 5%. A STANDARD CERTIFICATION IS A PRE-REQUISITE TO OBTAIN INCENTIVE PAY FOR EACH OF THESE CATEGORIES. HOWEVER IF THE APPLICANT POSSESSES A STANDARD CERTIFICATE IN ALL CATEGORIES AND HOLDS A STANDARD CERTIFICATE IN ANY CATEGORY OF PLANS EXAMINER THE RATE OF PAY WILL START AT \$44,977.92.

NO COST OF LIVING INCREASE WILL BE GIVEN UNTIL STANDARD CERTIFICATION IS OBTAINED IN ALL CATEGORIES.

VERIFICATION OF LICENSING WILL BE CONDUCTED VIA FLORIDA D.B.P.R. WEB SITE OR HAND CARD LICENSES

BCC Approved 08/02/2006

EXEMPT STATUS: N=NONEXEMPT; EA=EXEMPT ADMINISTRATIVE; EP=EXEMPT PROFESSIONAL; EE=EXEMPT EXECUTIVE

Revisions Board Approved 09/15/2016

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PAY GRADE SCHEDULE

POSITION TITLE	EXEMPT STATUS	NEW PAY GRADE	MINIMUM		MIDPOINT	MAXIMUM
MAINTENANCE WORKER I	N	101	10.00		12.10	14.35
SIGN SHOP TECHNICIAN I	N	101	20,800.00		25,168.00	29,848.00
CUSTODIAN MAINT/PUBLIC LIBRARY	N	101				
GENERAL LABORER PUBLIC WORKS	N	101				
LANDFILL SPOTTER	N	101				
BRUSH CHIPPER OPERATOR PUBLIC WORKS	N	102	10.06		12.17	14.44
MAINTENANCE WORKER II	N	102	20,924.80		25,319.01	30,027.09
STOCKROOM CLERK	N	102				
		105	10.51		12.72	15.08
			21,864.00		26,451.57	31,370.25
SECRETARY I LANDFILL	N	106	10.58		12.80	15.18
			22,000.00		26,627.74	31,579.18
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR I LANDFILL & PUBLIC WORKS	N	107	10.82		13.09	15.53
			22,500.00		27,231.78	32,295.54
MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN	N	108	10.98		13.29	15.76
MECHANIC HELPER PUBLIC WORKS	N	108	22,838.40		27,634.46	32,773.10
TIRE REPAIRMAN PUBLIC WORKS	N	108				
TRACTOR & MOWER OPERATOR PUBLIC WORKS	N	108				
WASH RACK OPERATOR/SERVICE TECHNICIAN PUBLIC WORKS	N	108				
LITTER CONTROL OPERATOR LANDFILL	N	108				
SECRETARY II LANDFILL & PUBLIC WORKS	N	109	11.48	13.89	16.47	
			23,878.40	28,892.86	34,265.50	
SIGN SHOP TECHNICIAN II	N	110	11.54	13.96	16.56	
SMALL EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	N	110	24,000.00	29,043.87	34,444.59	
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR II LANDFILL & PUBLIC WORKS	N	110				

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CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE I PUBLIC WORKS	N	111	12.00	14.52	17.22
TRACTOR MOUNTED BRUSHCUTTER OPR	N	111	24,960.00	30,201.60	35,817.60
TREE TRIMMER BUCKET TRUCK OPERATOR PUBLIC WORKS	N	111			
SECRETARY SPECIALIST	N	112	12.50	15.13	17.94
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR III LANDFILL & PUBLIC WORKS	N	112	26,000.00	31,460.00	37,310.00
MOTOR GRADER OPERATOR PUBLIC WORKS	N	112			
CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE II PUBLIC WORKS	N	113	12.55	15.19	18.01
FIELD SERVICE MECHANIC	N	113	26,104.00	31,585.84	37,459.24
FINISH MOTOR GRADER OPERATOR	N	113			
FLEET PROCUREMENT	N	115	13.12	15.88	18.83
			27,289.60	32,668.06	38,742.70
CREW LEADER PUBLIC WORKS	N	116	13.46	16.29	19.32
MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN III	N	116	28,000.00	33,876.13	40,175.41
MECHANIC II LANDFILL & PUBLIC WORKS	N	116			
		117	13.72	16.60	19.69
			28,540.80	34,530.50	40,951.46
MECHANIC CL	N	118	13.94	16.87	20.00
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR IV LANDFILL & PUBLIC WORKS	N	118	29,000.00	35,084.19	41,608.11
MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR	N	121	15.01	18.16	21.79
			31,220.80	37,777.17	44,801.85
TRAFFIC SIGNAL TECHNICIAN PUBLIC WORKS	N	124	15.71	19.01	22.54
SIGN SHOP FOREMAN	N	124	32,676.80	39,538.93	46,891.21
WELDER	N	126	16.35	19.78	23.46
			34,000.00	41,149.68	48,801.48

BCC Approved 10/19/2006

Revisions Board Approved 09/15/2016, 08/17/2017, 09/21/2017

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Public Library Pay Grade Schedule

POSITION TITLE	EXEMPT STATUS	NEW PAY GRADE	MINIMUM	MIDPOINT	MAXIMUM
LIBRARY SHELVER P/T	N	101	10.00	12.10	14.35
LIBRARY CLERK I	N	101	20,800.00	25,168.00	29,848.00
CUSTODIAN	N	101			
CUSTODIAN II	N	102	10.06	12.37	14.60
LIBRARY CLERK II	N	102	20,924.80	25,737.50	30,370.25
LIBRARY SECRETARY II	N	102			
LIBRARY ASSISTANT I	N	104	10.48	12.68	15.04
			21,800.00	26,376.06	31,280.70
LIBRARY ASSISTANT II	N	108	10.98	13.29	15.76
			22,838.40	27,634.46	32,773.10
LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY/STAFF ASSISTANT	N	109	11.48	13.89	16.47
			23,878.40	28,892.86	34,265.50
LIBRARY ASSISTANT III	N	111	12.00	14.52	17.22
LIBRARY PROG TECH	N	111	24,960.00	30,201.60	35,817.60
LIBRARY SERVICES SUPERVISOR	N	116	13.46	16.29	19.32
			28,000.00	33,876.13	40,175.41
LIBRARIAN I	EA	117	13.72	16.60	19.69
LIBRARY BRANCH MANAGER I	EA	117	28,537.60	34,530.50	40,951.46
LITERACY COORDINATOR	EA	117			
PROGRAM SPECIALIST	EA	117			
LIBRARY OFFICE MANAGER	EA	119	14.35	17.36	20.59
LIBRARIAN II	N	119	29,848.00	36,116.08	42,831.88
LIBRARY BRANCH MANAGER II	EA	119			
LIBRARIAN III	EA	127	16.44	19.89	23.59
BRANCH MANAGER III	EA	127	34,195.20	41,376.19	49,070.11

Revisions Board Approved 09/15/2016

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	EA	133	19.76	23.91	28.36
NETWORKING SPEC	N	133	41,100.80	49,731.97	58,979.65
LIBRARY DIRECTOR	EE	144	27.88	33.73	40.01
			58,000.00	70,168.38	83,216.22

BCC Approved 08/02/2006

EXEMPT STATUS: N=NONEXEMPT; EA=EXEMPT ADMINISTRATIVE; EP=EXEMPT PROFESSIONAL; EE=EXEMPT EXECUTIVE

Revisions Board Approved 09/15/2016

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FIRE DEPARTMENT PAY GRADE SCHEDULE

POSITION TITLE	EXEMPT STATUS	PAY GRADE	MINIMUM / OVERTIME	MAXIMUM / OVERTIME
PRN FIREFIGHTER	N	2	12.77	
		15	10.45/15.675	15.89/23.835
			31,590.00	48,035.00
FIREFIGHTER	N	16	10.76 /16.14	15.44/23.16
			32,527.00	46,675.12
FIRE DRIVER/ENGINEER	N	17	12.05/18.08	16.98/25.47
			35,000.00	51,330.00
	N	18	13.35/20.02	18.80/28.20
			41,264.00	57,739.00
LIEUTENANT	N	19	13.7285/20.59	19.70/29.55
			41,500.00	52,553.10
SHIFT COMMANDER	N	20	15.17/22.755	21.34/32.01
			45,858.00	64,511.00
HOURLY RATES FOR PAY GRADES 15, 16, 17 & 18 CALCULATED ON 2666 REGULAR HOURS AND 238 OVERTIME HOURS ANNUALLY				
OFFICE MANAGER	EA	119	14.35	21.04
			29,848.00	43,763.00
FLEET MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR	N	F21	18.27	24.52
			38,000.00	51,000.00
DIVISION CHIEF/INSPECTIONS/PIO	N	21	43,000.00	61,705.00
ASSISTANT CHIEF	EA	22	55,000.00	75,000.00
CHIEF	EE	23	64,000.00	89,000.00
SUPPLEMENTS	HAZMAT (Division of State Fire Marshall Bureau of Fire Standards & Training Certificate of Competency Required		EMT State of Florida Department of Health Division of Medical Quality Assurance Certification Required	
Employee will only be eligible for supplements at the time, and not prior to, the County Board of County Commissioners Human Resources Department receiving required State certifications as stipulated. It is the employee's responsibility to provide the required state certifications. No retro-activity pay will be paid relative to the payment of supplements.				
(ANNUAL/HOURLY)	750.00/.25		750.00/.25	
STIPENDS:	ALS REPORTING OFFICER:		2,000.00 ANNUALLY/.68	
	PARAMEDIC:		5,000.00 ANNUALLY/1.65	

Revisions Board Approved 09/15/2016, 09/21/2017

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS PAY GRADE SCHEDULE

POSITION TITLE	EXEMPT STATUS	PAY GRADE	MINIMUM / OVERTIME	MAXIMUM / OVERTIME
PRN TELECOMMUNICATOR	N	201	12.77 W/CERTS	13.72/17.00
911 PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR	N	202	10.52/15.78	15.78/23.67
UPON COMPLETION OF PROBATION			.50	.50
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CERTIFICATION			.50	.50
EMD CERTIFICATION			.50	.50
EFD CERTIFICATION			.50	.50
APCO CERTIFICATION			.25	.25
CPR CERTIFICATION			.25	.25
FDLE CERTIFICATION			.25	.25
COMPLETE CERTIFICATION			13.27/19.91	18.53/27.80
ANNUAL SALARY			\$30,362	\$42,397
911 P.S. TELECOMMUNICATOR SUPERVISOR	N	205	14.00/21.00	19.50/29.25
ANNUAL SALARY			\$32,032	\$44,616
ANNUAL SALARIES FOR THE ABOVE PAY GRADES ARE CALCULATED ON 1976 REGULAR HOURS AND 208 OVERTIME HOURS ANNUALLY				
TRAINING QA COORDINATOR	EA	206	32,680	48,010
UPON COMPLETION OF PROBATION			.50	.50
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CERTIFICATION			.50	.50
EMD CERTIFICATION			.50	.50
EFD CERTIFICATION			.50	.50
APCO CERTIFICATION			.25	.25
CPR CERTIFICATION			.25	.25
FDLE CERTIFICATION			.25	.25
COMPLETE CERTIFICATION			38,396.80	53,726.40

Revisions Board Approved 05/07/2015, 09/15/2016, 04/20/2017, 05/17/18

ASSISTANT 911 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER MGR	EA	207	19.76 41,100	29.16 60,653
911 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER MANAGER	EE		NEGOTIABLE	
Employee will only be eligible for increases at the time, and not prior to, the County Board of County Commissioners Human Resources Department receiving required State certifications as stipulated. It is the employee's responsibility to provide the required state certifications. No retro-activity pay will be paid relative to the payment of supplements.				

L. EMPLOYEE LEAVE BUYBACK PROGRAM

Each year, when annually appropriated by the Board, employees may sell up to 40 hours of their annual leave balance in excess of 160 hours, and/or up to 40 hours of their sick leave balance in excess of 160 hours. Annual leave will be paid out at 100% of the employee's current hourly rate of pay. Sick leave will be paid out at 25% of the employee's current hourly rate of pay. The employee may elect to have the County add a portion of the employee's leave buyback to the employee's contribution of their health savings account. The County will add an additional 5% to any amount elected to be added to the employee's health savings account. Participation in the Leave Buyback Program will not affect the employee's computation or payment of unused accrued annual or sick leave maximum payouts at separation from County employment, provided that separation from county employment is for reasons other than misconduct. The employee must file their request for participation in the employee leave buyback program with Payroll no later than September 30.

To participate in the Leave Buyback Program an employee must meet all of the following:

Have at least 160 hours of Annual Leave as of October 1.

Have at least 160 hours of Sick Leave as of October 1.

Have not received any written disciplinary action during the last year, ending September 30.

Buyback policy approved by Board of County Commissioners December 17, 2015.

CHAPTER 7 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

A. POLICY

All employees will be hired in accordance with policies established by the Board and procedures established by the County Manager. The County will recruit, select, and promote employees on the basis of the needs of the County and the qualifications and relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities of candidates and employees. Veterans' Preference will be given to eligible veterans in accordance with Florida law.

B. POLICY STATEMENTS – It is the desire of the Board:

1. To attract and retain employees meeting the minimum requirements of each position as outlined in the Classification Plan.
2. To select employees based on suitability for a given position without regard to race, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or any other protected classification.
3. To develop competent supervisors who respect the individual rights of each employee and who treat all employees with courtesy, dignity and respect.

C. APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Vacant positions will be posted on employee bulletin boards, on the County website, in the Human Resources Office, and in other media outlets as necessary. Applicants will complete the County's standard employment application as found on the website or in the Human Resources Office. Applications for vacancies must be received on or before the final date/time announced in the advertisement. Separate applications must be filed if an applicant is applying for more than one vacancy at a time. Legible copies of the application will be accepted.

D. TERM OF APPLICATION

Applications for positions with the County will be active and considered by the County for a term of sixty (60) days from the date the application is filed, unless the application becomes void by another policy of the County. The application, if not renewed, will be void and no longer considered by the County. It may be destroyed in accordance with Florida's Record Retention Law.

E. FRAUDULENT CONDUCT OR FALSE STATEMENTS BY APPLICANTS

Information provided on an employment application that is found to be false, incomplete or misrepresented in any respect, will be sufficient to eliminate the applicant from further consideration of employment or may result in immediate discharge from employment whenever it is discovered.

F. COLLECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION IN COMPLIANCE WITH F.S.S. 119.071

Social security numbers and certain benefits information are not subject to Florida's public record laws and are maintained on a confidential need-to-know basis, such as information subpoenaed by a court of law or provided to another agency whose receipt of social security numbers are necessary to carry out their function(s). Social security numbers will be obtained solely for the purpose of fulfilling duties and responsibilities as prescribed by law and include:

1. Background check investigation such as criminal, credit record check and/or driving record
2. Florida Retirement System and deferment income information
3. Insurance benefits
4. Verification of employment information

G. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

It is the policy of the Board to require all managerial or supervisory employees (County Manager, Department Heads, Directors, Assistant Directors, and Foremen) to reside within Columbia County. Managerial and supervisory employees who do not reside within the county at the time of their initial hiring or promotion will be required to establish primary residence within the county by the completion of the first six (6) months of employment or promotion. The Board will not be responsible for assisting with relocation expenses. The County Manager may consider exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis and may approve exceptions from this requirement. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in immediate termination of employment.

H. PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENINGS

Upon a conditional offer of employment, applicants for County positions will be required to undergo pre-employment testing. A drug test, physical exam, physical agilities test, a driver's license check (if applicable) and a criminal history background check may be performed. The screenings will be scheduled by the Human Resources Department and the cost will be the responsibility of the Board.

CHAPTER 8 - APPOINTMENTS & CLASSIFICATIONS

A. INITIAL APPOINTMENTS

All employees will be appointed to one of the following classifications:

1. Regular Full-Time – Jobs in this classification are full-time in accordance with the normal work schedule of the department, usually at least forty (40) hours per week. Regular full-time employees are eligible for County fringe benefits, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.
2. Regular Part-Time – Jobs in this classification will be on-going for more than six (6) months but require working fewer hours than regular full-time jobs. Employees appointed to this classification are eligible for some County fringe benefits, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.
3. Temporary Full-Time – Jobs in this classification are of a temporary or transitory nature. Special projects, seasonal, or other similar types of work fit within this classification. The job requires the employee to work on a full-time basis in accordance with the normal work schedule of the department. The duration of the job will not exceed six (6) months and will end upon completion of the particular job or project. Employees assigned to this classification are not eligible for County fringe benefits but may receive legally mandated benefits.
4. Temporary Part-Time – Jobs in this classification are of a temporary or transitory nature. Special projects, seasonal or other similar types of work fit within this classification. The job requires the employee to work fewer than the normal scheduled hours of the department. The duration of the job will not exceed six (6) months and will end upon completion of the particular job or project. Employees assigned to this classification are not eligible for County fringe benefits but may receive legally mandated benefits.
5. PRN or “On-Call” – Jobs in this classification are “as needed” and employees are paid an hourly wage only. No specific hours are guaranteed to employees in this classification. Employees are not eligible for County fringe benefits but may receive legally mandated benefits.

B. PROMOTIONS, TRANSFERS, AND DEMOTIONS OR REASSIGNMENTS

All subsequent appointments will be identified as one of the following:

1. Promotion – An appointment to a classification with a higher pay grade.
2. Transfer – An appointment to a classification with the same pay grade.

3. Demotion or Reassignment – An appointment to a classification with a lower pay grade.

C. “EXEMPT” AND “NON-EXEMPT” CLASSIFICATIONS

In addition to the above classifications, employees are categorized as either “exempt” or “non-exempt” for the purpose of federal and state wage and hour law. Exempt employees do not normally receive overtime pay; they generally receive the same salary regardless of hours worked. Non-exempt employees are subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are typically paid on either an hourly or salary basis. Non-exempt employees may be paid at time and one-half of hourly rate or compensatory time off may be given in lieu of paid overtime. Employees will be informed of their classification upon hire and informed of any subsequent changes to their classification.

CHAPTER 9 - ORIENTATION PERIOD

- A.** The first six (6) months of County service or following promotion, transfer, or demotion or reassignment will be considered an orientation period for all employees. During this period, the employee's work performance will be observed to determine suitability for the position.
- B.** During the orientation period, the Department Head will:
 - 1. Provide an adjustment period for the employee to become familiar with the job duties and responsibilities.
 - 2. Periodically evaluate and coach the employee regarding work performance.
 - 3. Provide on-the-job instruction and guidance.
 - 4. Observe the employee's work habits, abilities, attitude, attendance, and other appropriate factors to determine if continued employment in the job is recommended.
- C.** The Department Head will send the Human Resources Director an evaluation of the employee's job performance before the end of the sixth month of the orientation period. The evaluation will become part of the employee's personnel file.
- D.** An employee's initial orientation period, or following a promotion, demotion, reassignment, or transfer, may be extended by the Department Head for up to ninety (90) days. Orientation periods may also be extended at the discretion of the County Manager. Extensions of the orientation period must be completed before the end of the final business day the orientation period expires. Any decision that would normally warrant being placed in an extension after the expiration period will be treated as a disciplinary action.
- E.** Employees found to be unsatisfactory during the course of their initial orientation period, or an orientation period following a demotion or reassignment, may be terminated from employment at any time and without recourse to established grievance procedures.
- F.** Employees who are promoted or transferred and who do not successfully complete the orientation period may be returned to their previous position if the position is vacant.
- G.** Employees serving an initial orientation period will be eligible for all employee benefits (subject to the established waiting period) unless stated otherwise in the County's PPPM. Employees completing other types of orientation periods are eligible for all employee benefits.

CHAPTER 10 - STANDARDS OF CONDUCT/CODE OF ETHICS

County employees are considered "Good Will Ambassadors" in their roles as public employees. This involves a degree of duty and obligation regarding public and private conduct that is not common in other non-public employment. All County employees are expected to comply with the following standards of conduct:

1. As a condition of employment, a consistently positive, courteous, and professional attitude toward the public and co-workers is an essential function of every position. While different positions have different primary areas of responsibility, everyone should work as a team and be willing to pitch in as necessary to get the job done. Regular attendance at work is also a condition of employment.
2. Personal phone calls and conversations should be limited and completed as quickly as possible. Personal conversations or phone calls must cease immediately to take care of public business or the work-related needs of a co-worker.
3. The use, selling, storing, or distributing cigarettes, e-cigarettes (including any electronic and smokeless devices), cigars, snuff, dip, pipe tobacco, and/or chewing tobacco or any other tobacco product that any employee may use is prohibited in and on governmental (County) buildings, vehicles, and in or on other County equipment, including all mobile motorized and heavy equipment.
4. All employees should be aware of how their use of fragrances (perfumes, colognes, toiletries, scented hair products, etc.) may impact their co-workers. People with fragrance sensitivity often experience symptoms such as breathing difficulties: wheezing, a tight feeling in the chest, or worsening of asthma symptoms; headaches; nausea; hives and other skin irritations; and limitations in memory and concentration. If you experience an allergic reaction or have a sensitivity to a workplace scent or fragrance, please notify your supervisor so that the issue may be addressed. Collaboration between all parties should remedy the situation. Accommodation requests will be considered the same as any other disability accommodation.
- 3.
- 4-5. Offices must be staffed at all times during the normal workday. Meal periods and other absences should be scheduled so that at least one person is on duty at all times.
- 5-6. Off duty conduct which reflects poorly on the County or is prejudicial to the interests of the County may be sufficient grounds for discharge.
- 6-7. County employees may be called upon to express opinions and to provide information concerning County government and its operations and policies. Expressions of opinions should be weighed carefully in light of their possible effect and should be based upon facts of which the employee has knowledge. Employees should be aware that their opinions may be interpreted by listeners as representing the official stance of the County.
- 7-8. Employees are expected to refrain from repeating rumors and/or creating dissension in the organization.

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~~8-9.~~ Employees are encouraged to maintain their personal appearance to reflect a good public image.

~~9-10.~~ The use of alcoholic beverages or other intoxicants is expressly forbidden during working hours. The use of any controlled substance as prohibited by law, except prescription drugs being used as prescribed by a licensed physician, is also prohibited during working hours as well as other than working hours. Employees must comply with the County's Drug-Free Workplace Policy.

11. The possession or use of medical marijuana is not allowed on our premises. If an applicant or employee with a legal referral for marijuana (for the treatment of a medical condition) tests positive based on the substance limits for the drug test, it will be reported by the lab as a "positive drug test" and will be treated in accordance with all other positive drug tests. Employees and applicants shall be given an opportunity to provide any information, relevant to the test, including identification of currently or recently used prescription or non-prescription medications as well as any legal referral for marijuana use for the treatment of a medical condition. There are no additional exceptions for applicants or employees with legal referrals for marijuana. See Columbia County Drug-Free Workplace Act Policy.

To avoid misunderstandings and conflicts of interest, County employees will adhere to *Florida State Statute* 112.313 entitled "Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees." If the statute is amended, the County policy is automatically amended as well.

SOLICITATION OR ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.--No public officer, employee of an agency, local government attorney, or candidate for nomination or election shall solicit or accept anything of value to the recipient, including a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service, based upon any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the public officer, employee, local government attorney, or candidate would be influenced thereby.

DOING BUSINESS WITH ONE'S AGENCY.--No employee of an agency acting in his or her official capacity as a purchasing agent, or public officer acting in his or her official capacity, shall either directly or indirectly purchase, rent, or lease any realty, goods, or services for his or her own agency from any business entity of which the officer or employee or the officer's or employee's spouse or child is an officer, partner, director, or proprietor or in which such officer or employee or the officer's or employee's spouse or child, or any combination of them, has a material interest. Nor shall a public officer or employee, acting in a private capacity, rent, lease, or sell any realty, goods, or services to the officer's or employee's own agency, if he or she is a state officer or employee, or to any political subdivision or any agency thereof, if he or she is serving as an officer or employee of that political subdivision. The foregoing shall not apply to district offices maintained by legislators when such offices are located in the legislator's place of business or when such offices are on property wholly or partially owned by the

legislator.

UNAUTHORIZED COMPENSATION.--No public officer, employee of an agency, or local government attorney or his or her spouse or minor child shall, at any time, accept any compensation, payment, or thing of value when such public officer, employee, or local government attorney knows, or, with the exercise of reasonable care, should know, that it was given to influence a vote or other action in which the officer, employee, or local government attorney was expected to participate in his or her official capacity.

SALARY AND EXPENSES.--No public officer shall be prohibited from voting on a matter affecting his or her salary, expenses, or other compensation as a public officer, as provided by law. No local government attorney shall be prevented from considering any matter affecting his or her salary, expenses, or other compensation as the local government attorney, as provided by law.

MISUSE OF PUBLIC POSITION.--No public officer, employee of an agency, or local government attorney shall corruptly use or attempt to use his or her official position or any property or resource which may be within his or her trust, or perform his or her official duties, to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption for himself, herself, or others.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST. --No public officer or employee of an agency shall have or hold any employment or contractual relationship with any business entity or any agency which is subject to the regulation of, or is doing business with, an agency of which he or she is an officer or employee, excluding those organizations and their officers who, when acting in their official capacity, enter into or negotiate a collective bargaining contract with the state or any municipality, county, or other political subdivision of the state; nor shall an officer or employee of an agency have or hold any employment or contractual relationship that will create a continuing or frequently recurring conflict between his or her private interests and the performance of his or her public duties or that would impede the full and faithful discharge of his or her public duties.

DISCLOSURE OR USE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.--A current or former public officer, employee of an agency, or local government attorney may not disclose or use information not available to members of the general public and gained by reason of his or her official position, except for information relating exclusively to governmental practices, for his or her personal gain or benefit or for the personal gain or benefit of any other person or business entity.

CHAPTER 11 – LENGTH OF SERVICE

Length of service is defined as the length of time served since an employee's most recent date of full-time employment or full-time re-employment with the County.

Length of service will be used for the purposes of calculating the accrual rate of annual leave, longevity, and other terms and conditions of employment.

If a break in service occurs as a result of a reduction in force or layoff, regular full-time employees who are recalled within six (6) months of their last day of employment will have their length of service restored without any break in service.

An employee's length of service will cease as a result of the following:

1. Resignation;
2. Retirement;
3. Termination of employment;
4. RIF or layoff, including when the employee becomes re-employed with the County **after** six (6) months from the last date of employment;
5. Failure to report to the Department Head, in writing, an intention of returning to work within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date indicated on the return receipt of the certified mail delivering the recall offer notice;
6. Failure to return from military leave within the time limits proscribed by law;
7. Failure to return from an authorized leave of absence upon the expiration of the leave;
8. Leave of absence without pay due to a job related illness or injury for a period exceeding twelve (12) months.

The Human Resources Office will be responsible for tracking and recording the length of service of all employees.

With respect to employees subject to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the provisions in the Collective Bargaining Agreement pertaining to seniority apply to those employees. If any provision in the Collective Bargaining Agreement conflicts with or is inconsistent with this policy, the terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement control.

CHAPTER 12 - OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS ACTIVITY

- A.** Employees will not engage in other employment or in private business during the hours they are working for the County. The County Manager may authorize employees to engage in outside employment during off-duty hours provided that the interests of the County are not adversely affected. Employees will not use County office space, supplies, or equipment in connection with any outside employment.

An employee who is seeking consideration for outside employment/business activities will complete an Outside Employment or Business Activity form and submit it to the Department Head. The Department Head will approve or disapprove the request and then submit it to the County Manager for final review and approval/disapproval. The executed original form will be placed in the employee's personnel file and a copy will be sent to the Department. The County reserves the right to revoke permission for outside employment/business activities.

- B.** The County Manager will consider the following circumstances when reviewing requests for outside employment/business activities:
1. Outside employment /business activity must not interfere with or be in conflict with the proper performance of the employee's County duties.
 2. The employee will not be associated with any business considered as having a questionable reputation that would reflect unfavorably upon the employee or the County.
 3. The employee will not be associated with any firm owned or operated by another County employee in the same division or shift.
 4. The employee should not be a principal or in a position of influence in a company doing business with the County.
 5. The employee will not have any employment or contractual relationship with any business entity or agency that engages in business or contractual agreement with the County where a conflict of interest occurs.
 6. The number of hours worked per week in outside employment/business activities will not normally exceed one-half (1/2) of the employee's regularly scheduled County workweek. However, management reserves the right to make exceptions to this provision.

CHAPTER 13 - POLITICAL ACTIVITY

1. County employees will refrain from political activities while on County time.
2. Political activities are defined as the acts of soliciting votes, distributing campaign literature, or engaging in “rallies” or other political gatherings.
3. Political activities will not be conducted while using a County vehicle or equipment or while on special leave (temporary duty, administrative leave) approved for the purpose of conducting County business.
4. Political activities of County employees will be restricted in accordance with these provisions and with section 104.31 *Florida State Statutes*.

CHAPTER 14 - PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS (COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNITS/UNIONS)

A. PARTICIPATION

All employees have the right to organize, join, and participate in, any employee organization freely and without fear of reprisal or penalty. All employees have the right to refuse to organize, join, or participate in any employee organization without fear of reprisal or penalty.

B. LABOR AGREEMENTS

Employees who are covered under a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) will also be subject to the PPPM of the County. If conflicts occur between the CBA and the County's PPPM, the CBA will control.

CHAPTER 15 - EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES – “NEPOTISM”

A. STATEMENT OF POLICY

In accordance with *Florida State Statute* 112.3135, a County employee may not appoint, employ, promote, or advance or advocate for the employment, promotion, or advancement of a relative to a position over which the employee exercises any jurisdiction or control. It is the responsibility of affected employees to notify Human Resources if a family relationship under this policy exists.

Definition – For purposes of this policy, a relative is defined as an individual related to the County employee as:

1. Father, father-in-law, stepfather
2. Mother, mother-in-law, stepmother
3. Brother, brother-in-law, stepbrother, half-brother
4. Sister, sister-in-law, stepsister, half-sister
5. Grandfather, grandmother
6. Spouse
7. Son, son-in-law, stepson
8. Daughter, daughter-in-law, stepdaughter
9. Uncle, aunt
10. Nephew, niece
11. First cousin

CHAPTER 16 - USE OF EMPLOYER FURNISHED TRANSPORTATION/EQUIPMENT

A. ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES

1. The Board of County Commissioners, through the budgetary process, will approve the purchase, assignment, and use of all County vehicles and equipment.
2. County vehicles for commuting may be assigned to the County Manager, Department Heads, and other employees who have a bona fide reason for using a County vehicle (e.g. on call status), for driving to and from home. Employees who are allowed commuting use of vehicles may not use the vehicles for personal use except on a *de minimis* (minimal) basis. This type of use might include a stop for lunch between two business locations, or a brief stop at a convenience store on the way home from work.

B. PROPER USE OF VEHICLES/EQUIPMENT

1. Employees must maintain a valid Florida driver's license and acceptable driving record. Employees must consent to having their driving records reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with this requirement.
2. Employees will obey all traffic laws of the State of Florida and will operate vehicles/equipment in a safe and appropriate manner. Accidents, traffic citations, and loss of personal insurance must be reported immediately to the supervisor and/or Safety Director.
3. Employees will be responsible for the routine inspection of their vehicles/equipment to ensure that they are kept in good working order. Adhering to the maintenance schedule of the vehicle/equipment, including oil changes, tires, brakes, etc, is the responsibility of the employee. County furnished vehicles/equipment are to be kept clean and free of clutter.
4. Vehicles/equipment will not be allowed out of Columbia County unless approved by the Department Head or County Manager. Vehicle/equipment use may be monitored by tracking devices such as GPS units.
5. Employer furnished transportation /equipment is for official use only. Non-employees or non-authorized people will not be transported in County owned vehicles/equipment. Only people who are expressly engaged in performing work or some other good for the County are authorized to ride in vehicles/equipment with employees.
6. Smoking, and the use of smokeless tobacco products, is prohibited in County vehicles/equipment.
7. Driving while under the influence of alcohol, the illegal use of controlled substances, or using County vehicles/equipment while impaired in any other way

is prohibited. Employees may not transport alcohol or illegal substances in County vehicles/equipment.

8. Employees who drive or operate commercial vehicles/equipment, or who are otherwise subject to separate state or federal laws, are also expected to adhere to all applicable policies, laws, and regulations regarding vehicle/equipment use.
9. Employees may not drive/operate equipment while using an electronic communications device in order to write, send, or read text-based communications, including text messages, instant messages or electronic mail.
10. Employees may not operate a vehicle/equipment while wearing a headset, headphone, or other listening device, other than a hearing aid or instrument for the improvement of human hearing.
11. Failure to adhere to these procedures may result in disciplinary action.

C. QUALIFIED NONPERSONAL-USE VEHICLES

1. Employees who are assigned “qualified nonpersonal-use vehicles” for commuting will not be considered to have a taxable fringe benefit under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations. Qualified nonpersonal-use vehicles include the following types:
 - a. Clearly marked police and fire vehicles.
 - b. Unmarked vehicles used by law enforcement officers if the use is officially authorized.
 - c. An ambulance or hearse used for its specific purpose.
 - d. Any vehicle designed to carry cargo with a loaded gross vehicle weight over 14,000 pounds.
 - e. Delivery trucks with seating for the driver only, or the driver plus a folding jump seat.
 - f. A passenger bus with a capacity of at least 20 passengers used for its specific purpose.
 - g. School buses.
 - h. Tractors and other special-purpose farm vehicles.
 - i. Pickup trucks. A pickup truck with a loaded gross vehicle weight of 14,000 pounds or less is a qualified nonpersonal-use vehicle if it has been specially modified so it is not likely to be used more than minimally for personal purposes. For example, a pickup truck qualifies if it is clearly marked with permanently affixed decals, special painting, or other advertising associated with a trade, business, or function and meets either of the following requirements.
 - (1) It is equipped with at least one of the following items:
 - (a) A hydraulic lift gate.
 - (b) Permanent tanks or drums.

- (c) Permanent side boards or panels that materially raise the level of the sides of the truck bed.
 - (d) Other heavy equipment (such as an electric generator, welder, boom, or crane used to tow automobiles and other vehicles).
- (2) It is used primarily to transport a particular type of load (other than over the public highways) in a construction, manufacturing, processing, farming, mining, drilling, timbering, or other similar operation for which it was specially designed or significantly modified.
- j. Vans. A van with a loaded gross vehicle weight of 14,000 pounds or less is a qualified nonpersonal-use vehicle if it has been specially modified so it is not likely to be used more than minimally for personal purposes. For example, a van qualifies if it is clearly marked with permanently affixed decals, special painting, or other advertising associated with a trade, business, or function and has a seat for the driver only (or the driver and one other person) and either of the following items.
- (1) Permanent shelving that fills most of the cargo area.
 - (2) An open cargo area and the van always carries merchandise, material, or equipment used in a trade, business, or function.

D. FRINGE BENEFIT STATUS

1. Employees who commute in County-furnished vehicles other than qualified nonpersonal-use vehicles will be considered to be receiving taxable fringe benefit income subject to federal income and payroll taxes (FICA).
2. Based upon current IRS regulations, the taxable fringe benefit for these employees will be computed upon \$3.00 per commuting round trip (\$3.00 per day).
3. This taxable benefit will be added to the taxable income of affected employees on a bi-weekly basis. Unless affected employees notify the Board's Finance Office otherwise, ten (10) round trips or \$30.00 will be added to each employee's compensation bi-weekly.
4. Employees have the right to forgo use of employer provided transportation at any time; however, employees will be responsible for any charges resulting from the time period in which employer provided transportation was used.
5. All employees subject to the fringe benefits status of employer provided transportation will maintain a log of trips made per pay period. An example of the log is attached and made a part of this policy.
6. All logs submitted must be signed by the Department Head and forwarded to the Finance Office with the payroll prelist. Failure to submit a transportation log will result in the maximum number of work days and the maximum number of trips being assessed to the employee.

7. If, at the close of each calendar year, any amount of additional Social Security withholding is owed, the employee will have it deducted from the final two payroll checks for the year. The amount will be determined from the transportation logs submitted by the employee. The determined amount will be added to the employee's W-2 form as wages for that calendar year and will be subject to federal income tax.
8. Employees who terminate employment prior to the end of the calendar year will have any additional Social Security withholding (if applicable) deducted from the final paycheck.

Employee Transportation Log

Name: _____

Date: _____

	DATE	# OF TRIPS	RATE	AMOUNT
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
_____ EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
_____ DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE			1.50	
			1.50	
			1.50	
		TOTAL		

NOTE: 1 TRIP = DISTANCE FROM HOME TO WORK OR FROM WORK TO HOME.
AVERAGE DAY = 2 TRIPS

CHAPTER 17 - TRAVEL AND PER DIEM

1. County employees may have a need to travel on official business to conferences, conventions, training sessions, and other work-related events. Employees will be reimbursed for the expenses related to travel only if prior approval has been granted by the Department Head or his/her designee. Overnight travel must be approved in advance by the Department Head or his/her designee.
2. Reimbursement for travel expenses will be made according to the prevailing State of Florida approved mileage rate for use of a private vehicle and per diem rate for food and lodging. The cost of approved travel by common carrier, taxi, or rental vehicle will also be reimbursed to the employee.
3. Employees should use County furnished transportation as the first option for required travel. Travel will not be reimbursed when using personal vehicles without prior approval.
4. Class "C" meals (when travel is for short day trips with no overnight stay) will not be reimbursed. Employees will not be reimbursed for meals if they are provided onsite at no cost.
5. Employees will submit the approved voucher for reimbursement form to accounting in a timely manner.

Conferences and Conventions

The County will pay for attendance at conferences or conventions if:

1. The main purpose of the conference or convention is in connection with the official business of the County and directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the participating individual.
2. The activity provides a direct educational or other benefit supporting the work and public purpose of the person attending.
3. The duties and responsibilities of the traveler attending the meetings are compatible with the objectives of the conference or convention.
4. The request for payment of travel expenses is in compliance with this policy.

CHAPTER 18 – HOLIDAYS

A. OBSERVED HOLIDAYS

1. The County observes the following paid holidays.
 - a. New Year's Day January 1st
 - b. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Third Monday in January
 - c. Good Friday Friday before Easter
 - d. Memorial Day Last Monday in May
 - e. Independence Day July 4
 - f. Labor Day First Monday in September
 - g. Veterans Day November 11
 - h. Thanksgiving Day Fourth Thursday in November
 - i. Friday after Thanksgiving Friday after Thanksgiving
 - j. * Christmas Eve December 24th (Observed on the last work day before Christmas)
 - k. Christmas Day December 25
2. Holidays falling on Saturday will be observed on the Friday preceding the holiday. Holidays falling on Sunday will be observed on the Monday following the holiday or the day recognized nationally. Departments who normally operate 24 hours a day will observe on the actual day of occurrence. A holiday begins 12:00 a.m. and ends 11:59 p.m. Eligible employees will receive holiday pay from date of hire. ** The Board of County Commissioners may approve an alternate day to observe Christmas Eve, depending on the day Christmas Eve falls.
3. On-call and temporary employees are not eligible for holiday pay or benefits.
4. Regular part-time employees will receive pro-rated holiday time in accordance with their full-time equivalency.
5. To receive holiday pay, an eligible employee must be in approved pay status the regularly scheduled day prior to and immediately after a holiday. In accordance with this policy, an approved vacation day or any other excused and paid day off is considered a day worked for purposes of holiday pay eligibility.

B. PERSONAL HOLIDAY

Upon successful completion of the initial orientation period, regular full-time employees will be granted an eight (8) hour personal holiday with pay to be taken during the fiscal year (October 1 – prior to the last payroll period in September). Use of the personal holiday must be approved in advance by the Department Head/designee and the holiday must be taken in its entirety (all eight hours at once). Regardless of the regularly assigned work hours per day (for example: 8, 10, 12, or 24), the maximum personal holiday granted will be eight (8) hours. Personal holidays that are not used during the fiscal year will be forfeited and unused personal holidays will not be paid out upon termination (use it or lose it). Personal holiday time off will not be considered "time worked" for the purpose of overtime calculation.

C. HOLIDAY PAY

1. In the event a non-exempt employee is required to work on an observed holiday, or the actual holiday, the employee will be paid eight (8) hours holiday pay (at straight time) plus pay at the rate of one and one-half times his/her regular hourly rate for hours actually worked on the holiday.
2. Holiday hours not worked will not be considered "time worked" for the purpose of overtime calculation.

D. AUTHORIZATION FOR HOLIDAY PAY

All work scheduled on an observed holiday must be approved by the Department Head.

CHAPTER 19 - ANNUAL LEAVE

A. ELIGIBILITY AND ACCRUAL RATES

All regular full-time employees earn annual leave at the rates indicated below (unless specified by a collective bargaining agreement). Regular part-time employees who work at least twenty (20) hours per week earn pro-rated annual leave in proportion to the full-time equivalency (FTE). Temporary, on-call, elected, and other non-regular employees are not eligible to accrue annual leave. If eligible, annual leave will begin to accrue immediately upon hire but there will be a three (3) month waiting period (from the hire date) before the leave can be used.

ACCRUAL RATES FOR REGULAR EMPLOYEES

Length of Service	Biweekly	Annual
Up to 10 years (through 120 months)	3.693 hrs	96.02 hrs
10 years to 20 years (121- 240 months)	4.620 hrs	120.12 hrs
More than 20 years (241+ months)	6.160 hrs	159.12 hrs

ACCRUAL RATES FOR 12 HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

Length of Service	Biweekly	Annual
Up to 10 years (through 120 months)	4.062 hrs	105.61 hrs
10 years to 20 years (121-240 months)	5.082 hrs	132.13 hrs
More than 20 years (241+ months)	6.776 hrs	176.18 hrs

ACCRUAL RATES FOR 24 HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

Length of Service	Biweekly	Annual
Up to 10 years (through 120 months)	5.17 hrs	134.42 hrs
10 years to 20 years (121-240 months)	6.47 hrs	168.22 hrs
More than 20 years (241+ months)	8.62 hrs	224.12 hrs

B. COMPUTATION OF ANNUAL LEAVE

1. Regular employees will accrue annual leave based on length of continuous service with the Board of County Commissioners.
2. Annual leave will be earned on the last day of each pay period.
3. Annual leave cannot be used before it is earned.
4. Employees must be in active pay status (not on leave without pay) to earn leave.
5. Annual leave will not be used in increments of less than one quarter (1/4) hour.
6. Employees are encouraged to take annual leave within the calendar year. However, employees are allowed to carry over up to three hundred fifty-two (352) hours of annual leave accrued as of December 31st into the next calendar year. Annual leave in excess of 352 hours on the final payroll of the calendar year will be forfeited. Excess leave cannot be donated to other employees.

7. Employees who enter the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) will be allowed to elect a lump-sum payment of any or all of their unused, accrued annual leave, up to the maximum 240 hours, at the beginning of the DROP participation period. Employees who enroll in DROP will continue to earn annual leave according to the accrual schedule. At final separation, the employee will be paid only for the annual leave balance, if any, not paid at the beginning of the DROP period.

C. USE OF ANNUAL LEAVE

1. Requests to use annual leave should be submitted in writing at least one calendar week in advance if possible.
2. Annual leave requests will be granted at the discretion of the Department Head or his/her designee who must consider departmental workloads. However, every effort will be made to accommodate employees.
3. Employees may not use annual leave or compensatory time to cover tardiness.
4. Cash payment in lieu of time off is not permitted.

D. PAYMENT/FORFEITURE OF UNUSED ANNUAL LEAVE

1. Employees who separate from County employment before the completion of six (6) months of employment will not be paid for accrued annual leave. Such leave will be forfeited and cannot be donated to other employees.
2. Separating employees who have at least six (6) months of service with the County will be paid for all unused, accrued annual leave up to a maximum of two hundred forty (240) hours, provided that separation from County employment is for reasons other than misconduct. Leave will be paid at the employee's current rate of pay.
3. In the case of the death of an employee who is eligible for payment, unused annual leave will be paid to the employee's estate or otherwise as provided by law.

CHAPTER 20 - SICK LEAVE

A. ELIGIBILITY AND ACCRUAL

All regular employees will earn sick leave. Temporary, on-call, elected and other non-regular employees will not accrue sick leave. Employees must be in active pay status (not on leave without pay) to earn leave. Part-time employees who work at least twenty (20) hours per week will earn sick leave in a pro-rated amount computed on a base rate of 3.693 hours per biweekly pay period. If eligible, sick leave will begin to accrue immediately upon hire but there will be a three (3) month waiting period (from the hire date) before the leave can be used. Sick leave will be credited on the last day of each pay period.

ACCRUAL RATE FOR REGULAR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

Biweekly – 3.693 hrs

Annual – 96.02 hrs

ACCRUAL RATE FOR REGULAR FULL-TIME 12 HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

Biweekly – 4.062 hrs

Annual – 105.61 hrs

ACCRUAL RATE FOR REGULAR FULL-TIME 24 HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

Biweekly – 5.17 hrs

Annual – 134.42 hrs

B. USE OF SICK LEAVE

1. Sick leave may be used only with the approval of the Department Head and will not be authorized prior to the time it is earned and credited to the employee.
2. Sick leave will be approved for the employee's personal illness, injury, disability, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions including childbirth and miscarriage, or exposure to a contagious disease which would endanger others, or for an illness in the employee's immediate family (~~spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, or in-laws~~ see definition of immediate family below). Sick leave may be used for doctor, dentist, or other recognized health care provider appointments when it is not possible to arrange the appointment for off-duty hours, but not to exceed the reasonable amount of time required to complete the appointment. Sick leave may not be used for injury sustained while engaged in outside employment.
3. "Immediate family," as used in the preceding paragraph, refers to the employee's spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, ~~and~~ in-laws, and domestic partner residing in the same household. —A child is a biological, adopted, or foster child, a step-child, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis, who is under 18 years of age or is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability. A parent is a biological, adoptive, foster or step-parent. An in-law refers to a current father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.

4. Utilization of sick leave will be implemented according to the following definitions:
 - a. Verified sick leave: Any sick leave instance verified by medical certification, including illness in the employee's immediate family.
 - b. Unverified sick leave: Any sick leave instance for which no medical certification is provided.
5. The minimum charge for sick leave will be one quarter (1/4) hour.
6. Abuse of sick leave:
 - a. Use of more than four (4) days of unverified sick leave in a 120 day period.
 - b. A pattern of unverified sick leave or use of unverified sick leave in combination with days off, holidays off, or other time off.
 - c. Any combination of 1 and 2 above.

C. ADMINISTRATION

1. All requests for sick leave must be in writing and approved by the Department Head or designee prior to use. In the event prior notification is not possible, an employee must immediately contact his/her supervisor regarding the absence no later than thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled starting time. Unless incapacitated, employees are expected to call their supervisors personally. Notification is required daily unless otherwise instructed by the Department Head or designee.
2. An employee may be required to supply proof of sickness, injury or disability, if absenteeism exceeds three (3) consecutive work days or six (6) days within a thirty (30) day period or if a pattern of sick leave leave in combination with days off, holidays off, or other time off is documented. If the employee is sent to a physician of the County's choosing for the purpose of providing proof of illness or ability to perform at work, the County will pay the expenses.

D. PAYMENT/FORFEITURE OF UNUSED SICK LEAVE

1. A separating employee with a length of service of eight (8) years or more is eligible for payment of unused, accrued sick leave, provided that separation from County employment is for reasons other than misconduct. In cases of death where the employee is eligible for payment, the accrued unused sick leave payment will be made to the employee's estate or as otherwise provided by law, subject to the limits in the section below.
2. Employees who are eligible for payment of sick leave credits will be paid at the employee's current regular hourly rate of pay for 25% of all unused sick leave

credits, not to exceed 480 hours paid (after percentage is calculated). In no case will payment in excess of 480 hours be paid. ~~Employees eligible for payment of unused sick leave earned before October 1, 1981 will be paid at the rate of 100% for those benefits earned prior to October 1, 1981, at the September 30, 1981 rate of pay.~~ No other payment in lieu of sick leave is permitted.

Commented [JC1]: If you no longer have employees to whom this would apply, remove it from the handbook.

3. Employees who enter the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) will be allowed to elect a lump-sum payment at final separation of 25% of all unused, accrued sick leave credits, paid at the employee's current rate of pay. Not to exceed 480 hours paid (after percentage is calculated). In no case will payment in excess of 480 hours be paid.
4. Employees who terminate County service and are not eligible for payment of unused sick leave will forfeit their leave. Terminating employees may not donate their leave to other employees.

CHAPTER 21 - WORKER'S COMPENSATION LEAVE

1. The County provides worker's compensation insurance benefits for employees who are injured in the course of employment with the County. Employees must report any injury arising out of and in the course of employment immediately so that the worker's compensation provisions of Florida law can be applied. Employees who sustain a job-connected injury must use a physician designated by the County.
2. Both parties (the County and employees) agree to cooperate in eliminating injuries arising out of and in the course of employment. The parties further agree to work together to provide a safe and healthy working environment.
3. An employee who experiences a job-connected injury that is compensable under the state worker's compensation law will be carried in full pay status for a period not to exceed seven (7) calendar days immediately following the injury for a maximum of forty (40) work hours. The employee will not be required to use his/her own accrued leave credits during this time. If unable to return to work at the end of the seven-day period, the employee will receive lost wages in the amount entitled to under the worker's compensation law. Once approved for lost wages, employees may not use their accrued sick or annual leave to supplement worker's compensation benefits.
4. An employee who is receiving worker's compensation benefits will not accrue annual or sick leave during the duration of the leave.
5. The County may provide "light duty" work for employees released to do so and who are unable to perform their regular duties. Employees on "light duty" will be paid at their regular rate of pay.
6. The position of an employee on long-term worker's compensation leave may be filled with a temporary employee.

CHAPTER 22 – MILITARY LEAVE

1. Short-term military leave will be granted in accordance with Chapters 115 and 250 of the *Florida Statutes*. A request for short-term military leave under this section shall be submitted to the employee's supervisor in writing or verbally as soon as possible prior to the requested date. A copy of the official military orders or appropriate military certification will be filed in the employee's personnel file.
2. An employee who is a member of the United States Armed Forces Reserve or the Florida National Guard will, upon presentation of a copy of the employee's official military orders or appropriate military certification, be granted leave without a loss of pay, time, or benefits, during the periods in which the employee is ordered to active duty for training. Whether continuous or intermittent, such leave with pay will not exceed two hundred forty (240) working hours in any one annual period.
3. An employee who is a member of the Florida National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States, shall be granted leave of absence from their respective duties to perform active military service, the first thirty (30) days of any such leave of absence to be with full pay.
4. Long-term military leave shall be granted in accordance with Chapters 115 and 250 of *Florida Statutes*. A request for long-term military leave under this section shall be submitted to the employee's supervisor in writing or verbally as soon as possible prior to the requested date. A copy of the official military orders or appropriate military certification will be filed in the employee's personnel file.
5. An employee ordered to active military duty in the National Guard will be granted long-term military leave without pay for:
 - a. any period extending beyond the initial thirty (30) day period of activation under Chapter 250.28 or 252.36 *Florida Statutes*; or
 - b. any period extending beyond two hundred forty (240) working hours in a calendar year.
6. An employee who is granted long-term military leave shall retain seniority rights.
7. A request for long-term military leave shall be submitted in writing as soon as practicable, accompanied by proper documentation.
8. Reinstatement/re-employment of employees fulfilling the requirements of military service will be treated in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and any other applicable state and federal laws.

CHAPTER 23 - MISCELLANEOUS LEAVES OF ABSENCE WITH PAY

The following leaves of absence with pay may be granted to all full-time and part-time employees (who are eligible for leave accrual) without a waiting period. Court leave, bereavement leave, and administrative leave will be proportionate to the work schedule and full-time equivalency (FTE) for part-time employees.

A. COURT LEAVE

1. An employee who is summoned as a member of a jury panel during any regularly scheduled work hours will be granted administrative leave with pay for all hours required for such duty, not to exceed the number of hours in the employee's normal workday. However, if the jury duty does not require an absence for the entire workday, the employee is required to return to duty immediately upon release by the court. All jury fees may be retained by the employee. The County will not reimburse the employee for meals, lodging, and travel expenses incurred while serving as a juror.
2. An employee subpoenaed as a witness in a court or an administrative hearing that does not involve personal litigation or services as a paid expert witness, will be granted court leave with pay. All non-expert witness fees may be retained by the employee. The County will not reimburse the employee for meals, lodging, and travel expenses incurred while serving as a witness.
3. Appearances by an employee subpoenaed in the course of duty to represent a County department as a witness or defendant will be considered regular work time. If attendance is required at a time other than the employee's regular work shift, all hours required for such attendance will be included in the calculation for overtime compensation if eligible for overtime pay. The employee will be paid per diem and travel expenses. If the employee receives any form of payment for appearing, it must be turned over to the Finance Department.
4. In no case will court leave with pay be granted for court attendance when an employee is engaged in personal litigation or serves as a paid expert witness. However, an employee may be granted annual leave in such cases with the approval of the Department Head.
5. Employees shall provide the Department Head with supporting documentation, for example a jury summons or subpoena, at the time of the leave request.

B. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

In the event of the death of an employee's father, father-in-law, stepfather, mother, mother-in-law, stepmother, brother, brother-in-law, stepbrother, half-brother, sister, sister-in-law, stepsister, half-sister, grandfather, grandmother, grandchild, spouse, son, son-in-law, stepson, daughter, daughter-in-law, stepdaughter, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, ~~or~~ first cousin or domestic partner residing in the same household, all regular employees are eligible for bereavement leave not to exceed four (4) consecutive calendar days. Proof of death and the relationship to the employee may be required.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Administrative leave may be approved for official purposes (for example closing of County buildings due to a hurricane or other weather event) as identified by the appropriate County official. Administrative leave is not deducted from the leave balances of employees.

CHAPTER 24 - UNPAID LEAVE

Leave without pay shall be granted only when it is in the interest of the County to do so. The needs of the employee shall be considered as far as possible, but leave shall normally be granted only for health, education, military service or extenuating and extraordinary personal reasons.

An employee who has completed the initial orientation period may request leave without pay not to exceed twelve (12) months. A request for leave of absence without pay for less than thirty (30) days may be granted by the Department Head (inclusive in the maximum of twelve (12) months).

Request for leave without pay in excess of thirty (30) days must be made in writing to the Board of County Commissioners at least five (5) days prior to the next Board meeting before the requested starting date of such leave.

The request shall specify the reason for the leave, the date of leaving, and date of return to work.

1. If an employee on leave without pay receives pay for work performed for any employer other than the County, he/she shall be subject to immediate dismissal, except when such work has been specifically approved by the Board.
2. During an employee's approved leave without pay, the vacated position may be filled by a temporary appointment, a temporary promotion, or assignment of another employee. At the expiration of the leave, the employee may be reinstated to the position vacated. If the position has been eliminated, he/she may be reinstated in any other vacant position for which he/she is qualified. Nothing herein should be construed as a guarantee of position availability.
3. Failure of an employee to report to work promptly at the expiration of a leave without pay may lead to dismissal.
4. An employee shall not earn annual or sick leave while on leave without pay which exceeds five (5) work days in any pay period.
5. An employee who has been placed on a leave of absence without pay and is therefore in non-pay status at the close of business on the day before a holiday shall not be eligible to receive payment for such holiday or any other holiday which occurs while the employee is on such leave.
6. The employee shall be responsible for the entire cost of employee group insurance premiums after thirty (30) days (unless taking approved FMLA leave – see FMLA policies).

CHAPTER 25 - FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE (FMLA)

Employees who need to take Family and Medical leave should contact Human Resources to determine their eligibility for the leave and if so, to obtain the necessary documentation and make arrangements for their leave.

A. ELIGIBILITY AND REASONS

Employees who have worked for the County for at least twelve (12) months and at least 1,250 hours during the preceding twelve (12) months are considered eligible for FMLA leave. Eligible employees may take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave in a twelve (12) month period for the reasons listed below. The twelve (12) month period in which eligible employees may take leave is a rolling twelve-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

1. The birth of a son/daughter of an employee and to care for the child;
2. The placement of a son or daughter with an employee for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child (entitlement to leave for birth, placement for adoption or foster care of a son or daughter expires twelve (12) months from the date of birth or placement of the child);
3. In order to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
4. A serious health condition which renders the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the employee's position.

Son or daughter means a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in place of a parent, who is under eighteen (18) years of age or is incapable of self care because of a mental or physical disability. Parent means the biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother of an employee or any individual who stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a son or daughter (does not include parents "in-law").

A "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either: (1) in-patient care (i.e. an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity (for purposes of this policy, defined to mean the inability to work, attend school, or perform other regular daily activities due to the serious health condition, treatment for, or recovery from), or any subsequent treatment in connection with in-patient care; or (2) continuing treatment by a health care provider.

B. VERIFICATION

Verification of the qualifying reason for FMLA is required. When you request leave, the County will notify you of the requirement for medical certification and when it is due. In accordance with Department of Labor rules, the County may request, at the County's expense, a second or third health care provider's opinion for leave taken because of a

serious health condition. The County may also require subsequent recertification from the employee's health care provider on a reasonable basis.

C. INTERMITTENT LEAVE / REDUCED LEAVE SCHEDULE

For intermittent leave or leave on a reduced schedule taken because of a serious health condition, there must be a medical need for the leave that is best accommodated through an intermittent or reduced leave schedule.

If an employee needs leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule for planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt operations. Employees requesting leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment may be temporarily transferred to another job with equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodates recurring periods of leave, with the approval of the Department Head or County Coordinator and in conjunction with the Human Resources Department.

Intermittent leave or working a reduced number of hours after the birth or placement of a child without a serious health condition is not permitted unless the County agrees.

D. SPOUSES

If both spouses work for the County, the combined leave shall not exceed twelve (12) weeks in a twelve (12) month period if leave is taken:

1. For the birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after birth;
2. For the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care, or to care for the child after placement; or
3. To care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition.

E. HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS

1. During FMLA leave, the County will continue to pay its portion of the health insurance premiums and maintain the employee's coverage under the health plan in the same manner as if the employee had been continuously employed during the entire leave period, provided the employee continues to pay his/her share of the premiums.
2. If the employee fails to continue to pay his/her share of the premium, notices of proposed insurance cancellation and the opportunity to pay the premium will be provided before cancellation.
3. If an employee does not return to work after the expiration of FMLA, the employee will be required to reimburse the County for its portion of health insurance premiums during the family leave as permitted by law, unless the

employee does not return because of the presence of a serious health condition which prevents the employee from performing his/her job or circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

F. LEAVE ACCRUAL

During leave, the FMLA does not require accrual of employment benefits such as annual leave, sick leave, seniority, etc. Accordingly, during unpaid FMLA leave, accrual of benefits and seniority will be on the same basis as for any other unpaid leave of absence. Pension benefits will be determined in accordance with Florida Retirement System rules.

G. RELATIONSHIP TO PAID LEAVE

Employees may elect or may be required to substitute accrued paid leave for an equivalent portion of FMLA leave. When paid leave is substituted for unpaid FMLA, the employee will be notified of the designation when the leave begins. When paid leave is substituted, paid leave and FMLA leave will run concurrently and it will not extend the 12 week leave period. Leave covered by Workers' Compensation by the County and/or leave covered by a disability plan will run concurrently with FMLA leave when the reason for the leave is covered by the FMLA.

H. APPLICATION FOR FMLA LEAVE

Applications by the employee for FMLA must be submitted in writing at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to begin, if the need for the leave is foreseeable based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care, or planned medical treatment for a serious health condition of the employee or a family member. If thirty (30) days notice is not practicable, due to a lack of knowledge regarding when leave will begin, a change in circumstances, or a medical emergency, notice must be given as soon as practicable.

I. EMPLOYEE OBLIGATIONS

During FMLA leave, employees must periodically report on their medical status and intent to return to work. Upon taking such leave, the employee will be advised of the reporting requirements. When the employee gives unequivocal notice of his/her intent not to return to work, the employment relationship will be terminated, and the employee's entitlement to continued leave, maintenance of health benefits (subject to COBRA requirements), and reemployment will cease.

Eligible employees who take FMLA leave are required to comply with the County's time and attendance policies. Employees must follow the County's procedures for requesting leave and reporting absences and tardiness. Employees who do not comply with these policies, or who fail to cooperate with the County in administering this policy (including providing requested documents) may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Failure to comply with these procedures also may result in a delay or denial of FMLA leave.

J. RETURNING FROM LEAVE

Except during the course of approved intermittent leave, all employees of the County whose FMLA leave was taken due to the employee's own serious health condition must obtain and present certification from the employee's health care provider that the employee is able to resume work before the employee will be allowed to return to work.

K. NO WORK WHILE ON FMLA

The taking of another job while on a leave of absence, including FMLA leave, is grounds for immediate termination, to the extent permitted by law.

CHAPTER 26 - FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE FOR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS' FAMILIES

A. TYPES OF LEAVE AND ELIGIBILITY

If you are an employee who is otherwise eligible to take leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (see preceding policy), you may be eligible for military family leave. There are two types of leave available.

Military Caregiver Leave:

The County will grant an eligible employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (closest blood relative) of a covered service member or non-active veteran with a serious injury or illness up to a total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of unpaid leave during a single twelve (12) month period to care for the service member or non-active veteran. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness. A serious injury or illness is one that was incurred by a service member in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of his/her office, grade, rank, or rating. The single twelve (12) month period for leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness begins on the first day the employee takes leave for this reason and ends twelve (12) months later, regardless of the twelve (12) month period established by the County for other types of FMLA leave. An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) workweeks for leave for any FMLA qualifying reason during the single twelve (12) month period. Only twelve (12) of the twenty-six (26) weeks total may be for a FMLA qualifying reason other than to care for a covered service member.

Qualifying Exigency Leave:

The County will grant employees up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave during the normal twelve (12) month period established by the County for FMLA leave because of "any qualifying exigency" related to or arising out of the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent being called to "covered active duty," or has been notified of an impending call to active duty status.

"Covered active duty" means (a) in the case of a member of a regular component of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country; and (b) in the case of a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty under a provision of law referred to in 10 U.S.C. § 101(a)(13)(B).

Qualifying exigencies include:

1. Issues arising from a covered military members' short notice deployment (i.e. deployment on seven or less days of notice) for a period of seven days from the date of notification;
2. Military events and related activities such as official ceremonies, programs, or events sponsored by the military or family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military, military service organization, or the American Red Cross that are related to the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member;
3. Certain childcare and related activities arising from the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member, such as arranging for alternative childcare, providing childcare on a non-routine, urgent, immediate need basis, enrolling or transferring a child in a new school or day care facility, and attending certain meetings at a school or a day care facility if they are necessary due to circumstances arising from the active duty or call to active duty of the covered military member;
4. Making or updating financial and legal arrangement to address a covered military members' absence;
5. Attending counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider for oneself, the covered military member, or the child of the covered military member, the need for which arises from the active duty or call to active duty status of the covered military member;
6. Taking up to five days of leave to spend time with a covered military member who is on short-term temporary rest and recuperation leave during deployment;
7. Attending to certain post-deployment activities, including attending arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings and events, and other official ceremonies or programs sponsored by the military for a period of ninety (90) days following the termination of the covered military members' active duty status, and addressing issues arising from the death of a covered military member;
8. Any other event that the employee and the County agree is a qualifying exigency.

B. SPOUSES

If both spouses work for the County, they are limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) workweeks in a single twelve (12) month period if (1) the leave is to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness or (2) is a combination of leave

to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness **and** leave for the birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after birth, leave for the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care or to care for the child after placement, or leave to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition.

C. APPLICATION AND NOTICE

Employees who want to take leave under the military provisions of the FMLA must follow similar procedures for application and notice of leave as are used for other FMLA leave. When the request is for leave because of a qualifying exigency, employees must submit an application advising why they need the leave as soon as reasonable and practicable.

If a request is for military caregiver leave and the leave is foreseeable, employees must submit the application for leave not less than thirty (30) days before the date the leave is to begin. Employees should attempt to schedule leave so as not to disrupt County operations. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must submit the application as far in advance of the date the leave is to begin as is practicable.

Military family caregiver leave may be taken on an intermittent (rather than on an uninterrupted) basis or on a reduced schedule if medically necessary because of the health condition of the service member. Leave to a qualifying exigency may be taken on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule basis.

D. VERIFICATION

When the application for FMLA is because of a qualifying exigency due to the service member's covered active duty, or for military caregiver leave, the application should state the nature of the relationship of the employee to the service member and the reason for the request. For military caregiver leave, certification from a health care provider will be required, in accordance with the non-military FMLA policy.

E. CONDITIONS

Other conditions such as accrual, health insurance premiums, relationship to paid leave, no work during FMLA, and any other conditions applicable to the preceding FMLA leave policy, are also applicable to military family leave.

CHAPTER 27 – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

A. POLICY

In accordance with *Florida Statute* 741.313, the Board will grant up to three (3) days leave in any twelve-month period to an employee if the employee or a family or household member is the victim of domestic violence.

B. ELIGIBILITY

Florida Statute 741.313 covers employees who have worked for the County for three (3) months or longer.

C. UNPAID LEAVE

An employee seeking domestic violence leave for an eligible activity (see D., below) must, before receiving the leave, exhaust all paid annual, personal and sick leave, if applicable, that is available to the employee. Once the employee has exhausted all accrued paid leave, or the employee is not able to use leave (due to a waiting period) or is not eligible to accrue paid leave (for example, part-time or temporary employees), Domestic Violence leave will be provided without pay.

D. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The law covers leave for specific activities including:

1. Seeking an injunction for protection against domestic violence or repeat violence, dating violence or sexual violence;
2. Obtaining medical care or mental health counseling or both for the employee or a family or household member to address injuries resulting from domestic violence;
3. Obtaining services from a victims' services organization such as a domestic violence shelter or rape crisis center;
4. Making the employee's home secure from the perpetrator of domestic violence or finding a new home to escape the perpetrator;
5. Seeking legal assistance to address issues arising from domestic violence or attending or preparing for court-related proceedings arising from the act of domestic violence.

E. NOTICE REQUIRED

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of the employee, or to the health or safety of a family or household member, an employee seeking leave from work under this policy must provide the Department Head with advance notice in the amount of one calendar week. Documentation of the act of domestic violence may be required.

F. INTERFERENCE OR RETALIATION

The Board will not interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of or any attempt by an employee to exercise any right provided under this chapter. The Board will not discharge, demote, suspend, retaliate, or in any other manner discriminate against an employee for exercising his/her rights under this chapter. However, an employee has no greater rights to continued employment or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee was not entitled to leave under this chapter. The Board retains the right to discipline or terminate any employee in accordance with the PPPM, other than for exercising his/her rights under this chapter.

G. CONFIDENTIALITY

Personal identifying information that is contained in records documenting an act of domestic violence and that is submitted to the County by an employee under the requirements of this section is confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art I of the State Constitution. A written request for leave that is submitted by a County employee under the requirements of this chapter and any agency time sheet that reflects such a request are confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution until one (1) year after the leave has been taken.

CHAPTER 28 - SICK LEAVE TRANSFER

This policy describes the procedures to request, receive and donate sick leave among employees. The policy applies to employees who are eligible to accrue leave, according to the County's annual and sick leave accrual policies.

A. GENERAL RULES

In certain circumstances, and with the approval of the Department Head and the Human Resources Director, an employee may request to voluntarily transfer sick leave to another employee.

1. Sick leave hours can be donated to another employee only in case of the employee's or the employee's immediate family's (spouse, child, parent, domestic partner residing in the same household, and any person ~~who resides in the employee's household and who~~ is recognized by law as a dependent of the employee) serious illness, injury, or accident. Donated sick leave cannot be used for absence due to workers' compensation injury or illness or elective (non-medically necessary) surgery.
2. The receiving employee must have exhausted all available leave credits, including all annual leave, sick leave, compensatory time, and personal holiday credits.
3. The receiving employee must present a doctor's certification to the Human Resources department in order to be eligible to receive transferred sick leave hours.
4. Donating employees must complete the County's Donation of Sick Leave form and submit it to the Department Head. It will then be forwarded to Human Resources for verification of leave balances and approval.
5. The donating employee must maintain a minimum of sixty four (64) hours of sick leave after the transfer of any sick leave hours to another employee.
6. An employee who is leaving County employment may not donate sick leave hours.
7. An employee who is in the initial orientation period may receive transferred sick leave, provided the ninety (90) day waiting period to use leave has been satisfied.
8. An employee must have completed the initial orientation period to transfer sick leave to another employee.

9. Requests for donated leave will be distributed by the Department Head, following the approval of the Human Resources Department. No medical details or private health information will be divulged in the request.

B. UNUSED DONATED SICK LEAVE

Any transferred sick leave hours that are not used for a particular request will be returned to the sick leave balance of the donating employee.

CHAPTER 29 - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A. EMPLOYEE GROUP HEALTH, DENTAL, AND LIFE INSURANCE

1. **Eligibility:** All regular full-time and part-time employees who are employed to work thirty (30) or more hours per week are eligible for the County's group health benefit programs. These programs are designed to assist the employee and their eligible dependents in meeting the financial obligations that can result from illness, disability, and death. Coverage includes major medical, prescription drugs, life insurance, dental, and other supplemental plans. The County reserves the right to amend or terminate any of these programs and to increase contributions toward any benefits at its discretion. Whenever amendments are made to any of the County's benefits, the plan administrator will notify plan participants.
2. **Enrollment and effective dates:** employees may enroll in the benefit plans as a new hire, during the annual open enrollment period, or at any time during the year if a "qualifying event" occurs. Coverage begins on the first day of the month following two (2) months employment for new hires. If an employee enrolls during open enrollment, the effective date of coverage will be October 1st and if an employee enrolls due to a qualifying event the benefit effective date will be the date of the qualifying event. Coverage terminates on the last day of the month in which an employee terminates employment subject to COBRA (see 4., below).
3. **Qualifying Events:** Federal tax laws set rules about the types of changes employees can make during the year because premiums are paid through payroll deduction on a pre-tax basis. In addition to the annual open enrollment period, changes can be made at any time due to special circumstances called qualifying events. Employees must notify the Human Resources department of a qualifying event within thirty (30) days of the event and documentation of the event is required. Qualifying events include marriage or divorce, change in number of dependents due to birth, adoption, or death, change in work status or spouse's work status, unpaid leave of absence.
4. **Continuation of Benefits:** A federal law called the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their families who lose their health benefits the right to choose to continue group health benefits provided by their group health plan for limited periods of time under certain circumstances such as voluntary or involuntary job loss, reduction in the hours worked, transition between jobs, death, divorce, and other qualifying life events. Qualified individuals may be required to pay the entire premium for coverage up to 102 percent of the cost to the plan. Employees who notify the Human Resources office of these types of changes will be advised of their COBRA rights and responsibilities.

B. FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Regular employees of the Board of County Commissioners participate in the Florida Retirement System (FRS). Enrollment in the FRS is mandatory for eligible employees and both the County and the employee make contributions to the plan. The FRS offers two types of plans, the Pension Plan and the Investment Plan. Information about the plans will be mailed to the employee's home at the time of hire and a selection must be made within five (5) months of the hire date. Direct any questions about the FRS to Human Resources or to the Division of Retirement.

C. DIRECT DEPOSIT

Direct deposit provides a fast, reliable way of having paychecks automatically deposited to the financial institution of the employee's choice. Direct deposit is not mandatory but is encouraged. Contact the Human Resources Office or the Payroll Department in order to take advantage of this convenience.

D. DEFERRED COMPENSATION

Deferred compensation is a way to save for retirement by deferring (delaying) the receipt of some of your paycheck until a later date, usually upon retirement. Deferred compensation allows you to build up a pool of savings to supplement your retirement income. You will not be taxed on the contributions until you begin to receive distributions from the plan. The County has several authorized deferred compensation providers. Please contact the Human Resources Office if you are interested in this benefit.

CHAPTER 30 - PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

A. PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROGRAM

1. The Human Resources Director will establish and administer a program for evaluating the performance of all employees of the Board. The performance review will be in a standard written form designed to permit the evaluation of the employee's performance as accurately and as fairly as possible. Prior to the performance evaluation becoming part of the employee's record, the employee will be given a copy and will be entitled to discuss it with the rating supervisor. In the event that an employee refuses to sign the review, it will be placed in the employee's personnel file with a notation that the employee refused to sign it.

The Performance Review Program is intended to:

- a. motivate employees toward improved performance by acknowledging their strengths and suggesting areas needing improvement in a positive and constructive manner;
- b. evaluate suitability for continued employment, job transfers and promotions;
- c. provide a record of employment progress; and
- d. be used in determining whether an employee's work is so deficient as to warrant corrective action, up to and including dismissal.

B. TYPES OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

1. Orientation Reviews:
 - a. Performance reviews will be completed at regular periods during the orientation periods, as determined by the appropriate administering official, in order to inform the employee of his/her performance level.
 - b. At the end of the orientation period, the performance review will be used as the basis for determining continuing employment status.
 - c. The Department Head may, at his/her discretion, institute a three (3) month extension of the orientation period for employees who would not otherwise pass the standard six (6) months orientation period. If the orientation period is extended three (3) months, an additional performance review will be conducted prior to completion of the extended orientation period.
 - d. An employee who fails to pass an initial orientation period will be notified of his/her termination prior to the expiration of the orientation period, and the employee shall not have the right to grievance procedures or any other established procedure.

2. Annual Performance Reviews:

An annual performance review will be completed for all employees prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

3. Special Performance Reviews:

A special performance review may be requested by a Department Head or his/her designee when the manner of an employee's performance is either so commendable as to justify the submission of a special review for exceptional performance or so deficient as to justify the submission of a special review to document such deficiency. Special performance reviews regarding deficiencies shall include instructions concerning improvement and a time frame for improving performance to a satisfactory level.

In addition to these formal performance reviews, the County encourages Department Heads and supervisors to discuss employee job performance on a frequent and ongoing basis. The failure of the County to conduct a performance review is not to be construed as indicating that employee job performance was or was not satisfactory.

CHAPTER 31 - REDUCTIONS IN FORCE

The Board may determine that a layoff or reduction in force (RIF) is necessary because of budgetary constraints, a condition of financial exigency, lack of work, program or grant discontinuation, technological changes or replacement, reorganization, elimination of positions or functions of the County, material changes in job descriptions, or other reasons at the sole discretion of the Board.

A. ORDER OF LAYOFF

If the Board determines that a layoff or RIF is necessary, the County Manager will determine which positions and/or employees are subject to the layoff or RIF in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the County. In determining which positions and/or employees are subject to layoff or RIF or the order of layoff, the County Manager, in conjunction with the appropriate Department Head and/or Human Resources Department may consider, but not be limited to, the following factors: the needs of the County, length of service, job performance, qualifications, and employment status such as temporary, probationary, part-time, or full-time status. In addition, in accordance with Chapter 295, *Florida Statutes*, some employees may be eligible for veterans' preference in retention.

B. NOTICE OF LAYOFF

Employees designated for layoff or RIF, or employees in positions designated for layoff or RIF, will be provided with advance written notice prior to the effective date of the layoff or RIF. However, no minimum notice period is guaranteed prior to the effective date of the action.

C. PAYMENT OF LEAVE

Employees designated for layoff or RIF will be paid for unused, accumulated leave, consistent with the County's leave payout policies.

D. RECALL RIGHTS

For a period of six (6) months following their last date of employment, regular, full-time employees designated for layoff or RIF will be given priority consideration for recall into their classification or other vacant County positions for which they apply and are qualified. Regular, full-time employees who are recalled within six (6) months of their last day of employment will not be considered to have a break in service and will have their length of service restored.

E. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS

If a Collective Bargaining Agreement applies to an employee and/or position eliminated under this policy and any provision of the Collective Bargaining Agreement conflicts with or is inconsistent with this policy, the terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement apply. Unless otherwise provided by an applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement, a layoff or RIF shall not be subject to grievance or appeal. A layoff or RIF is not a disciplinary action.

CHAPTER 32 - SEPARATION

A. TYPES OF SEPARATIONS

Separations and/or terminations of employment from positions will be designated as one of the following types:

1. Resignation;
2. Retirement;
3. Death;
4. Abandonment;
5. Reduction in Force (see Reduction in Force Policy); or
6. Discharge (see Disciplinary Policy)

B. RESIGNATION

Resignation is the separation of an employee from County service through the submission of a written notice expressing a desire to resign.

1. A regular employee wishing to leave County service in good standing is requested to submit a written notice of resignation at least two (2) weeks prior to the effective date of his/her resignation.
2. Department Heads and assistant department heads wishing to leave County service in good standing should submit written notice of resignation to the Board at least four (4) weeks prior to the effective date of resignation.

C. RETIREMENT

Retirement is the separation from County employment based on state retirement eligibility. An employee retiring from County employment may elect to remain on the County's group health/life in accordance with applicable state and/or federal laws. There is no mandatory retirement age, however, employees who are approaching normal retirement age are encouraged to plan in advance and submit paperwork in a timely manner. The Human Resources Office can assist with retirement planning and application.

D. DEATH

Separations will be effective as of the date of death. All compensation due to the employee as of the effective date of separation will be paid to the beneficiary of record, surviving spouse, or to the estate of the employee as determined by law and policy.

E. ABANDONMENT

Employees in any of the following situations will be deemed to have abandoned their positions and to have resigned from County service:

1. Employee is absent for three (3) consecutive working days without proper notice to the County.
2. Employee fails to return from leave of absence upon expiration of leave.

F. RETURN OF COUNTY PROPERTY

At the time of separation, and prior to receiving final compensation due, all records, books, assets, uniforms, keys, tools, telephones, and other County property in the employee's custody, shall be returned to the Department. Money or County property due to the County because of any shortages will be collected through appropriate action.

CHAPTER 33 - DISCIPLINARY POLICY

A. PURPOSE

The disciplinary policy is established to secure cooperation in and orderliness of employment relations and operations, safeguard optimum working conditions; correct unsatisfactory performance and improper behavior; provide for equitable treatment of employees, and maximize productivity through efficient and effective management.

B. POLICY

1. The disciplinary policy will be administered in a progressive and constructive manner. The severity of the disciplinary action will be related to the gravity of the offense, the employee's record of prior disciplinary actions and, when appropriate, the employee's length of service. An employee who has been disciplined will be advised of his/her rights of appeal.
2. The Department Head will be responsible for administering the disciplinary policy with final authority residing with the County Manager. The County retains the right to treat each incident on an individual basis without creating a precedent for other cases which may arise in the future and to determine the appropriate discipline on a case-by-case basis.

C. FORMS OF DISCIPLINE

The County recognizes the following types of disciplinary action:

1. Documented verbal warning;
2. Written reprimand;
3. Suspension without pay for up to five (5) working days;
4. Demotion;
5. Probation;
6. Combination of the above; and
7. Discharge.

D. GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1. This policy includes recommended but not mandatory penalties to apply to specific offenses; however, the penalty applied will be discretionary by management and nothing in this chapter will require that a particular form of discipline be applied in any case prior to the application of another form of discipline.
2. In determining the discipline to be imposed in a particular case, management may consider the severity of the offense, the cost involved, the time interval between violations of similar or other rules of conduct, the employee's work

record, the employee's length of service with the County, the employee's overall value to the County, the ability and potential of the employee concerned and other factors as may bear on the efficient and harmonious operations of the government.

3. While a more severe penalty than suggested may be used for the offense, the managerial employee who does not use the recommended penalty for a Group I or II offense will note in writing the reason for the action and will consult with the Office of Human Resources before the action is taken.
4. For purposes of this Disciplinary Policy, a "day" shall be defined as the disciplined employee's regular work day or shift. For example, if an employee who works 10 hour days is suspended for 3 days without pay, the suspension shall be for 10 hours each day. In contrast, if an employee who works 8 hour days is suspended for 3 days without pay, the suspension shall be for 8 hours each day.

E. NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1. In all cases of documented verbal warning, written reprimand, suspension without pay, demotion, probation, discharge or any combination of these sanctions, the employee will be notified in writing of the action taken and a copy of the notice will be retained by the Human Resources Director for placement in the employee's personnel file.
2. The Department Head and/or his/her designee will coordinate all disciplinary action, except verbal warnings and written reprimands, with the Human Resources Director.
3. Employees should sign for the receipt of a disciplinary notice but may note their disagreement with the actions if they wish on a separate sheet which will be attached to the notice.

F. OFFENSES AND PENALTIES

1. Group I Offenses
 - a. First Occurrence: Documented verbal warning, written reprimand, and/or one (1) day suspension without pay.
 - b. Second Occurrence: One (1) to five (5) day suspension without pay.
 - c. Third Occurrence: Up to five (5) day suspension without pay or discharge.
 - (1) Failure to work overtime, special hours or special shifts after being scheduled with reasonable notice according to departmental overtime and standby duty policies.
 - (2) Unauthorized posting or removal of material on County bulletin boards.
 - (3) Deliberately wasting time, stopping work and/or loitering.

- (4) Leaving work area or duty assignment without authorization. This includes leaving a work area for a lunch break, rest period or at the end of the work schedule, without permission or relief when appropriate.
- (5) Failure to perform assigned duties.
- (6) Substandard performance of assigned duties.
- (7) Tardiness including returning late from lunch or rest periods without authorization or reporting late at the beginning of the work shift. Three (3) times in a thirty (30) day period will be used as a guide for the first offense.
- (8) Absence without authorization or failure to notify appropriate supervisory personnel on the first day of absence.
- (9) Violation of safety practices including the performance of unsafe acts, failure to wear and/or use safety equipment, or failure to comply with safety rules.
- (10) Scuffling, wrestling, prankish and/or mischievous acts which distract or disrupt the work of others.
- (11) Disruptive and/or disorderly conduct.
- (12) Failure to maintain safe and sanitary conditions or proper personal hygiene.
- (13) Failure to comply with the "Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees" (*Florida Statutes* 112.311).
- (14) Gambling on County time or at County work sites.
- (15) Making or publishing vicious, malicious or false statements concerning any employee, the County or its operations.
- (16) Sleeping on duty without authorization.
- (17) Unauthorized solicitation during the work hours of any employee involved in the solicitation.
- (18) Violation of any Administrative Directive.
- (19) Documented discourtesy to the public or other employees.
- (20) Unauthorized use or possession of County property, equipment or personnel.
- (21) Failure to immediately report a personal injury or damage to equipment to one's supervisor.
- (22) Negligence through carelessness resulting in the loss of County property valued at \$100.00 or more.
- (23) Careless acts resulting in the falsification or destruction of County records including accident reports, work records, purchase orders, time sheets or any other reports or records.
- (24) Failure to keep the department and the Office of Human Resources notified of the employee's proper address and telephone number (if any)
- (25) Engaged in political activities while on County time.
- (26) Failure to keep County furnished vehicles in a clean and appropriate manner.
- (27) Loss or misuse of a County purchasing or credit card.

- (28) And/or other offenses, not specifically listed, which in the opinion of the Department Head and County Manager should best be categorically grouped in this section.

2. Group II Offenses

- a. First Occurrence: Three (3) to five (5) day suspension without pay.
- b. Second Occurrence: Discharge
 - (1) Provoking, instigating or willfully fighting at a County worksite.
 - (2) Threatening, intimidating, using abusive language or obstructing the work of others.
 - (3) Willful negligence in the performance of assigned duties or negligence which would endanger the employee, other employees or the public.
 - (4) The deliberate misuse, destruction or damage of County property.
 - (5) Deliberate falsification and/or destruction of County records.
 - (6) Refusal to perform assigned duties or to comply with written or verbal instructions of higher level supervision.
 - (7) Immoral, unlawful, indecent behavior or other improper conduct which would affect the employee's relationship with the public and/or co-workers.
 - (8) Refusal to provide testimony on issues involving County property or other matters related to the County's interest.
 - (9) Failure of the supervisor to enforce safety regulations.
 - (10) Reporting to work or working while unfit for duty, either medically, mentally or physically, unless the unfitness is a result of a violation of a Group III offense.
 - (11) Failure to report a request for information from an employee or receipt of a subpoena to the County Manager or Department Head regarding any matter relating to County business.
 - (12) Improper use of County Communication Systems.
 - (13) Misrepresenting oneself as a County employee to conduct personal business or to receive special treatment.
 - (14) And/or other offenses, not specifically listed, which in the opinion of the Department Head and County Manager should best be categorically grouped in this section.

3. Group III Offenses

- a. First Occurrence: Discharge.
 - (1) A clearly documented history of abuse of rules, regulations and/or other policies.
 - (2) Loss of necessary prerequisites or abilities to perform the job. Fifteen (15) days shall be given to regain prerequisites or abilities. Failure to do so will result in dismissal.
 - (3) Curtailment or restriction of production or interference with work at County worksites, including but not limited to: instigating, leading or participating in any walk-out, strike, slow down or refusal to return to work.

- (4) Unauthorized possession of weapons, firearms, explosives, or other dangerous instruments on County property or worksites unless otherwise permitted by law.
- (5) Unauthorized removal of County property or the property of an employee.
- (6) Reporting to work under the influence of intoxicating substances, such as alcohol or illegal drugs.
- (7) Possession, sale, distribution or use of controlled substances at the worksite. If an employee has a valid prescription, he or she may possess and use the controlled substance as directed, provided that the prescription drug does not impair the employee's ability to safely perform his or her job.
- (8) While on County property or operating or riding in or on County equipment, the possession, use, sale, attempted sale or procurement of illegal drugs or non-prescribed controlled substances either on or off duty, or alcoholic beverages while on duty.
- (9) Refusal to take a drug test upon request; testing positive for drug use in accordance with the County's Drug Free Workplace policy; inability to pass a drug test within 30 days of a positive result to a drug test; determination of violation of County's Drug Free Workplace policy.
- (10) Conviction of any felony or first degree misdemeanor directly related to the employee's position or job.
- (11) Absence of three (3) consecutive work days without proper authorization at which time the employee is considered to have abandoned the position and resigned from the County's employ.
- (12) Making false claims or misrepresentations in an attempt to obtain accident benefits, workers' compensation or other payments.
- (13) Two (2) consecutive performance evaluations below a satisfactory rating.
- (14) Insubordination.
- (15) Any off-duty conduct that reflects poorly on the County or is prejudicial to the interests of the County.
- (16) Refusal to fully and truthfully cooperate in an investigation related to the operation of the County conducted by or at the direction of the County.
- (17) Excessive absenteeism or excessive tardiness not excused by medical or other legitimate reasons.
- (18) Discourteous, insulting, abusive or inflammatory language or conduct related to the performance of the employee's job toward the public, an employee, or a member of management.
- (19) Absence from duty without authority, including refusal to report to duty at any time as directed or refusal to follow the established procedure for recording attendance.
- (20) Lying or falsification of any document or any other dishonesty connected with the employee's employment or in any way related to the operation of County government or any department, division or area of County government.

- (21) Violation of a posted or otherwise known County or departmental rule, procedure, order, regulation or any State or County statute or ordinance which is related to the employee's employment.
- (22) Accumulated disciplinary actions, no one of which standing alone would warrant discharge.
- (23) Abuse of sick leave, or false claim for eligibility for sick leave.
- (24) Demonstrated inability to perform the essential functions of the job.
- (25) And/or other offenses, not specifically listed, which in the opinion of the Department Head and County Manager should best be categorically grouped in this section.

CHAPTER 34 - GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

This grievance procedure is established to provide a mechanism for employees to bring complaints, grievances, or situations that may need adjustment or information, to the attention of management. It is the intent and desire of the County to adjust complaints or grievances informally and both supervisors and employees are expected to make every effort to resolve problems as they arise. However, it is recognized that there will be grievances which will be resolved only after a complete review. The submission of a grievance by an employee shall in no way adversely affect the employee or his/her employment with the County.

B. CAUSES OF GRIEVANCES

An employee may file a grievance to register a complaint, to solve a problem, to redress an alleged wrong, to request information, to modify or erase disciplinary measures taken against him/her, such as written reprimand or a suspension from work. Grievances may also be filed to restore alleged loss of rights due to the PPPM or written Department Rules and Regulations.

C. UNACCEPTABLE GRIEVANCES

This grievance procedure is for individual employees to solve their own problems concerning the PPPM or written Departmental Rules and Regulations. Grievances are unacceptable if filed by one employee for another or for groups of employees. In addition, employees may not submit grievances which include any of the County's Administrative Policies.

D. PROCESSING A GRIEVANCE

In order to assure employees a method to get their particular grievances considered rapidly, fairly, and without reprisal, the following steps are provided:

1. The aggrieved employee will, within five (5) working days of the incident, submit his/her complaint or grievance in writing to the immediate supervisor who may consult higher level supervision in an effort to achieve a prompt satisfactory adjustment. The immediate supervisor will make a decision and notify the employee in writing within three (3) working days of receiving the complaint or grievance and discussing it with the employee.

2. If the aggrieved employee feels that the matter has not been settled or adjusted to his/her satisfaction by his/her immediate supervisor, he/she may submit the matter in writing to the Department Head within three (3) working days after the answer from number one (1) was given. The Department Head will schedule a meeting with the employee within five (5) working days after receipt of the grievance. If the matter is not resolved at this meeting, the Department Head will give a written answer within three (3) working days after the scheduled meeting.
3. If the grievance is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction by the decision of his/her Department Head, the employee may appeal to the County Manager within three (3) working days after receiving the written findings of the Department Head. The County Manager will schedule a meeting with the concerned employee, in writing, within five (5) working days.
4. The decision of the County Manager in this grievance procedure will be final and binding on the parties.

E. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. The time limits of this grievance procedure may be extended by management due to illness, vacation, business trips or emergency. If an extension of time is required, the employee will be notified.
2. Under this grievance procedure, the employee and management have the opportunity to call a witness at the D.2 level and thereafter for each step to the next higher level in the grievance procedure.
3. Any grievance shall be considered settled at the completion of any level, unless it is appealed within the time limits set forth. It is hoped that the great majority of grievances will be satisfactorily settled in the first or second level.
4. Employees may not use this grievance procedure to pursue complaints of discrimination, retaliation or harassment. Complaints of discrimination, retaliation or harassment must be made using the EEO complaint process found in Chapter 2 of the PPPM or the harassment complaint procedure found in Chapter 4 of the PPPM.

CHAPTER 35 – TWO-WAY RADIO RULES & REGULATIONS

A. PURPOSE

The Two-Way Radio Rules and Regulations policy is established to ensure two-way radio systems are in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). As operators of two-way radio equipment, County employees must be thoroughly familiar with the rules that apply to their particular radio operation. Following these rules will assist in eliminating confusion and will assure the most efficient use of two-way radios.

B. POLICY AND PROPER USE

1. When using any County two-way radio, employees must abide by the following:
 - a. It is a violation of FCC rules to interrupt any distress or emergency message.
 - b. Use of profane or obscene language is prohibited by Federal law. County license can be suspended by the FCC if such language is used.
 - c. It is against the law to send false call letters, of a false distress or emergency message.
 - d. The FCC requires brief conversations and confines them to business. To save time, use coded messages whenever possible.
 - e. Using the County two-way radio to send personal messages (except in an emergency) is a violation of FCC rules. You may send only those messages that are essential for the operation of County business.
 - f. It is against federal law to repeat or otherwise make known anything you overhear on County radios. Conversations between others sharing the County's channel must be regarded as confidential.
 - g. The FCC requires that you identify yourself at certain specific times by means of your call letters.
 - h. During a declared "state of emergency" by the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners all radio transmissions will be limited to emergency traffic only for the duration of the declared emergency.
2. Possessing a two-way radio is a privilege. Any variation from the above rules and regulations may result in disciplinary action and/or the two-way radio being removed from employee's vehicle and/or equipment.

CHAPTER 36 - COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The Communications Policy is established to ensure that County owned electronic and communication devices or systems are used in a lawful, professional and ethical manner, both at work sites and through remote access. Resources provided by the County belong to the County and are to be used for authorized purposes only.
2. This policy covers, but is not limited to, the following equipment: telephones, televisions, video equipment, tape recorders and recordings, cellular phones, cameras, pagers, personal digital assistants (PDA), voice mail systems, fax machines and computers, including electronic mail (e-mail) systems and Internet access. Use of any of the above-mentioned communication devices or systems are subject to monitoring by the County.
3. Procedures for assigning Internet access, telephones, cellular phones, voice mail, PDAs, pagers and other equipment will be established by the County Manager or his designee.
4. This policy applies to regular and temporary employees and to volunteers. Employees are also subject to other applicable provisions of the PPPM, including but not limited to chapters covering Sexual Harassment, Standards of Conduct, Outside Employment/Business Activity, Political Activities, Participation in Employee Organizations, Disciplinary Policy and Two-Way Radios.

B. POLICY AND PROPER USE

1. Other than where specifically authorized, the County's resources are not designated or intended for personal use. Employees should exercise discretion in sending and receiving communications of a personal nature; such communications should be held to a minimum.
2. Users of electronic communication systems must exercise restraint in language and terminology and exhibit the same degree of propriety and professionalism as used in other official communications. Employees are responsible for the content of all text, audio or images they send via the County's communications systems. All messages communicated via email shall include the employee's name.
3. The County will carry out its responsibility to manage its electronic resources and information systems as necessary, which may include accessing systems and files of individual employees. Employee use of County resources will not be private in nature. Any information or records produced, stored, transmitted or received through or on County equipment or systems remains County property. The County reserves the right to access and disclose all information created on, sent over, or received via County resource.

4. Electronic mail messages are public records when they are created or received in the transaction of official business and as such are subject to the terms of Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes* which governs public records.
5. Long-distance telephone calls are to be used only in the transaction of official County business. Each Department Head will be held accountable for all long distance calls made from the telephone extensions assigned to the department, and shall establish departmental procedures to ensure that only calls involving official County business are charged to the County.
6. Employees who make or receive personal calls on County-owned cellular telephones are responsible for reimbursing the County for the cost of the calls according to designated procedures.
7. Software may only be downloaded with the approval of the Department Head or designee and must be registered to the County in accordance with law.
8. Department Heads and Supervisors have the authority and responsibility to ensure resources are used appropriately and to take corrective action when warranted.
 - a. At no time shall an employee's personal use of County resources interfere with the conduct of business.
 - b. When conducting business of a personal nature the same restrictions governing business use are in effect and there must be no additional cost or liability to the County for personal access or use.
 - c. An employee may make off-duty personal use of a County computer for professional and career development purposes, in keeping with other restrictions of the policy, and with prior notice to and approval from the employee's supervisor.

C. SECURITY

1. The County will routinely monitor employees' use of communication resources. Reasons for such monitoring may include cost analysis, resource management and compliance with law and policy. Employees using the County's communication resources, including email, thereby consent to the County's monitoring of messages. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of the County's computer and email systems.
2. Employees shall not disclose passwords to unauthorized persons or otherwise breach the security of computers and information systems. All passwords used by employees must be disclosed to persons with responsibility for security.
3. No employee shall deliberately degrade the performance of any system or equipment or deprive authorized personnel of resources or access to any system

or equipment. Users must not attempt to gain unauthorized entry to resources or attempt to disrupt the intended use of any system or equipment.

4. No employee shall use loopholes in computer security systems or knowledge of a special password to damage computer systems, obtain extra resources, take resources from another user, gain access to systems or use systems for which proper authorization has not been granted.

D. PROHIBITED ACTIVITY

1. The following inappropriate activities are specifically prohibited by this policy: seeking, transmitting, reproducing, downloading, storing, retaining, possessing or communicating any information or materials that are discriminatory, harassing, obscene, violent, threatening, sexually explicit, defrauding or illegal in nature.
2. To prevent the transmission of computer viruses, unauthorized downloading is prohibited.
3. Copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than the County may not be transmitted, received or stored on County-owned equipment without prior authorization as required by law. Persons obtaining access to the materials of others must respect all copyrights and may not copy, retrieve, modify or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission or as a single copy for reference only. Failure to observe copyright or license agreements may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
4. County computer equipment may not be used to create or maintain anti-employee or anti-employer websites or other websites that are contrary to the best interests of the County.
5. No email or other electronic communication may be sent which hides the identity of the sender or which represents the sender as someone else.
6. No employee shall directly or indirectly use County electronic or communication resources or information systems for personal gain or political purposes other than resources designated for use by the public (e.g. public access Internet stations at the public library).

E. POLICY COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

1. Each Department Head is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, including monitoring and auditing Internet access, assuring system security, and monitoring performance.
2. To ensure adherence to this policy, the County may, at its sole discretion, monitor employee activities for signs of misconduct, inefficiency or inappropriate use.

3. The County reserves and intends to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose, as appropriate and as provided by law, all data and messages created, received or sent over any component of an electronic resource or information system.
4. Any employee who violates this policy and abuses the privilege of County facilitated access to electronic resources will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
5. The County will report illegal violations to appropriate law enforcement agencies.
6. Any employee who discovers a violation of this policy shall notify his or her immediate supervisor who shall in turn notify the Department Head. Any employee may notify the Department Head directly in the event the employee's immediate supervisor is thought to have violated the policy.

CHAPTER 37 – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

- A.** The Board recognizes the growing importance of online social media networks as a communication tool. This policy addresses employees' use of such networks including: personal websites, web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other kind of social media. The Board respects the right of employees to use these mediums during their personal time. Use of these mediums during the workday or on County equipment, however, is prohibited. Approved departmental use of social media (for instance Library website, etc) is allowed but must follow the guidelines listed in this policy.
- B.** The Board takes no position on employees' decision to participate in the use of social media networks. In general, employees who participate in social media are free to publish personal information without censorship by the Board. However, Board of County Commissioners requires that employees observe the guidelines set forth below:
1. If an employee chooses to identify himself/herself as a County employee on any social media network, employees are required to state in clear terms that the views expressed on any social media network are the employee's alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board.
 2. Employees are prohibited from disclosing confidential information on any social media network.
 3. Employees are prohibited from displaying the County's logo on any social media network without permission from the County. Also, they should not post images of co-workers without the co-worker's consent.
 4. Employees are prohibited from acting as a spokesperson for the County or posting comments as a representative of the County.
 5. Employees are prohibited from using social media in a manner that violates any County policy, including the County's harassment policy and Code of Ethics policy. For example, employees are prohibited from making or reposting comments or remarks about their co-workers, supervisors, the County, the Board or its vendors that are harassing, physically threatening, sexually suggestive, humiliating, demeaning, hateful or derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, color, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristics.

CHAPTER 38- SAMENESS VS. CONSISTENCY POLICY

- A.** The County strives to ensure fair treatment of all employees. It is in the best interest of the County to ensure that disciplinary and corrective action are prompt, consistent and impartial and most importantly, correct the problem, prevent recurrence and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.
- B.** It is important that employees realize that the same infraction committed by different employees holding different positions may, at times, result in different corrective action procedures. It is the responsibility of the managers and human resource team to review the totality infractions of the individual(s) involved to ensure that the corrective action or termination decision is reasonable and appropriate for the offense.
- C.** Example of why the same corrective action for the same infraction is not appropriate. Consider three employees that each fall asleep while they are on duty. One is a Fiscal Assistant, the second is the Receptionist and the third is an employee that is responsible for regularly operating a motor vehicle. When the Fiscal Assistant is caught sleeping on the job, a verbal warning may be appropriate, when the Receptionist falls asleep at the front desk, a final written warning may be issued instead because of the role's public nature. But falling asleep while operating the County vehicle would result in immediate termination, without warning, for the third employee because of the obvious safety concerns. The circumstances surrounding the infraction determine the appropriate level of discipline more than the infraction itself.
- D.** The goal is to administer corrective actions in a manner that best serves the County and results in satisfactory performance.

CHAPTER 39- EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE PROHIBITION POLICY

- A.** The County prohibits leaders and employees alike from providing employment reference information to third parties, including prospective employers. Any and all solicitations for reference information should be immediately directed to the human resource office for appropriate management.
- B.** The human resource office shall only provide a former employee's position title, dates of employment, and whether such employee is eligible to be rehired absent court mandate or a contractual agreement to the contrary.
- C.** Such policy has been designed to protect both employees and the County from liability.

CHAPTER 40- E-MAIL CURFEW POLICY

- A.** Columbia County has an obligation under the Fair Labor Standards Act to capture and pay for all hours worked by non-exempt employees. If those non-exempt employees are receiving, reading, and sending work-related emails using their smart devices or laptops after hours or “off-the-clock” they must be compensated for that time.
- B.** It is the policy of the County that non-exempt employees will work only their assigned schedule unless they are provided with specific, prior approval by their Department Head or his/her designee for a schedule change or overtime. Reading, sending, or otherwise working on emails off work hours constitutes work and is strictly prohibited without such prior approval. Employees violating this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

CHAPTER 41 — HEALTH BENEFIT PERIOD DEFINITIONS POLICY

A. MEASUREMENT PERIOD

1. Initial Measurement Period

Columbia County has established an initial Measurement Period of six months for all new hires where the work schedule of the individual is either variable or unknown. The average number of hours worked per week will be reviewed from the date of hire to the end of the first six months of employment to determine eligibility for County provided health benefits.

2. Standard Measurement Period

The County's Standard Measurement Period will be for a 12-month beginning on August 1 of each year and ending on July 31 of the following year. The average number of hours worked per week for each part-time employee will be reviewed during this time to determine eligibility for County provided health benefits.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE PERIOD

1. Initial Administrative Period

The County's Initial Administrative Period begins immediately following the Initial Measurement Period and extends until the last day of the first month following the employee's seven month anniversary. During this Initial Administrative Period, those part-time employees having completed the Initial Measurement Period will be notified of their eligibility for County provided health benefits. An opportunity to enroll in the County provided health benefits and additional information will be provided to eligible employees, including:

- a. Coverage options available to them under the County's plan
- b. Coverage cost
- c. Term of such coverage or the "Initial Stability Period"
- d. Enrollment documents

2. Standard Administrative Period

The County's Standard Administrative Period begins on August 1 and ends on September 30 of each year. Part time employees will be notified of their new or continued eligibility for County provided health benefits during this time. Additionally, those employees who are newly eligible for County provided health benefits will be provided the opportunity to enroll and given additional information, including:

- a. Coverage options available to them under the County's plan
- b. Coverage cost
- c. Term of such coverage or the "Standard Stability Period"
- d. Enrollment documents

C. STABILITY PERIOD

If an employee chooses to enroll in the County provided health plan, coverage is guaranteed during the Stability Period no matter how many hours are worked so long as the individual remains an employee.

1. Initial Stability Period

The County's initial Stability Period begins on the first day following the end of the Initial Administration Period and extends for six consecutive calendar months. An employee whose Initial Measurement Period overlaps with the Standard Measurement Period for ongoing employees will be included in the Standard Measurement Period as well.

2. Standard Stability Period

The County's Standard Stability Period is one year in length and begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.

CHAPTER 42- WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

A. OBJECTIVE

1. The Columbia County Board of County Commission is committed to preventing workplace violence and maintaining a safe work environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general Columbia County has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidating and/or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during working hours, on County premises or where County business is taking place.

B. SCOPE OF POLICY

1. All full-time, part-time, active, seasonal, temporary, PRN, employees are covered under this policy.

C. RISK REDUCTION MEASURES

1. **Hiring:** Human Resources' takes reasonable measures to conduct background investigations to review candidates' backgrounds.
2. **Individual Situations:** While the County does not expect employees to be skilled at identifying potentially dangerous persons, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to promptly inform his/her immediate Supervisor, Department Head, County Manager or Human Resources if any employee or third (3rd) party (such as a vendor or citizen) exhibits behavior which could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior includes:
 - a. Discussing weapons and/or bringing them to the workplace
 - b. Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger;
 - c. Making threatening remarks;
 - d. Sudden or significant deterioration of performance;
 - e. Displaying irrational and/or inappropriate behavior.

D. DANGEROUS/EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

1. Employees who confront or encounter an armed or dangerous individual should not attempt to challenge or disarm the individual. Employees should remain calm. If a Supervisor can be safely notified of the need for assistance without endangering the safety of the employee or others, such notice should be given.
2. All suspicious individuals and/or activities should also be reported as soon as possible. Do not place yourself in peril. If an employee sees and/or hears a commotion or disturbance near his/her workstation, do not try to intercede or see what is happening. Employees encountering imminent danger should call 911 immediately.

E. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

1. All employees and members of the public should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. The County does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities.
2. This list of behaviors, while not inclusive of all, provides examples of conduct that is prohibited:
 - a. Fighting or “horseplay”
 - b. Causing physical injury to another person;
 - c. Making threatening and/or intimidating remarks;
 - d. Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress;
 - e. Intentionally damaging County property or property of another employee;
 - f. Possession of a weapon while on County property (other than the lawful possession of a firearm in the employee’s locked vehicle or where otherwise authorized by law), in a County vehicle. Firearms, weapons and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from County buildings and County vehicles without proper authorization from the County Manager.
 - g. Committing acts motivated by and/or related to domestic violence.
3. A threat while off duty to commit an act of violence on County property is a violation of this Policy.

F. REPORTING PROCEDURES AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

1. Any potentially dangerous situation must be reported immediately to a Supervisor, Department Head, County Manager or Human Resources. This includes conduct by employees, as well as conduct by citizens, vendors, solicitors or other members of the public. When reporting an incident, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible.
2. Columbia County will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats or actual violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, Columbia County may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.
3. Columbia County encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their Supervisor, Department Head or County Manager before the situation escalates into potential violence.

G. ENFORCEMENT

1. Employees involved in any type of workplace violence may be removed from any County property or site where County business is taking place and shall remain off County premises pending the outcome of an investigation.
2. Any employee determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence and/or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines may be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to and including job reassignment, suspension or termination.
3. Individuals engaged in violent acts on the County's premises may be reported to the proper authorities and fully prosecuted.

CHAPTER 43 – MEDIA POLICY

A. PURPOSE

To establish a policy regarding media relations, including all interaction with the media and response to media requests for information. Media Relations is defined as communication with or information provided to all media in any form, including traditional (i.e. print, radio, TV), online and social media, especially information that has the potential to generate numerous inquiries or ongoing interest from the media or public.

B. POLICY

It is the policy of the County to respond to news media questions or inquiries effective, accurately and quickly to inform its residents, businesses, and visitors.

The County Manager is solely responsible for the County's media relations, with the exception of public safety issues or incidents involving fire or emergency services, and shall serve as the media point of contact ("POC") for the County. The POC will serve as the sole liaison with the media, either by responding to requests for information (such as public records requests) or facilitating contact with the appropriate department managers or personnel for response. Specific guidelines for responding to media requests follow.

C. SCOPE

This policy applies to all County full-time and part-time employees, temporary or seasonal workers, volunteers and interns, and contractors (hereinafter, collectively "employee").

This policy aligns with the Florida Sunshine Laws in that the Policy endeavors to provide accountability, transparency and engagement, as well as strengthens citizen engagement and communications.

D. AUTHORIZED COUNTY SPOKESPERSON

A spokesperson is a County employee who has the authority to make statements to traditional, online and social media on behalf of the County. Unless otherwise authorized, the County's spokespersons are:

1. Tourist Development Director
2. Economic Development Director
3. Fire and Emergency Management Public Information Officers

A spokesperson may share or delegate their spokesperson responsibilities when subject matter expertise/information is sought beyond what the spokesperson could provide, and when the delegated spokesperson is adequately prepared to undertake this responsibility.

E. NON-SPOKESPEOPLE

Employees who are not authorized spokespeople must refer media inquiries to the authorized spokesperson for the Department or project and notify the POC. County employees who are not designated spokespeople are not authorized to make statements to the media and/or in public discussions on behalf of the County, or to respond to public records requests.

F. MEDIA INQUIRIES

Except for media inquiries related to public safety issues involving fire or emergency services, all County employees must notify the POC and the employee's Department Director about all television, radio, newspaper or other media inquiries they receive and provide the POC with the reporter's name, phone number, subject of the inquire, deadline, and other relevant information.

The POC will coordinate with the appropriate Department a response, and, after consultation with the appropriate Department, designate a spokesperson.

G. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

A public discussion includes but is not limited to media interviews, public presentations, open houses, public meetings, posts, comments and questions on websites, blogs and social media sites – anywhere an audience can see or hear the statements being made by participants.

When participating in public discussions online (e.g., commenting on blogs, Twitter posts, Facebook), it is important to understand the difference between personal use, professional use, and official use:

1. Personal Use – when you participate on a social media site or blog and comment as yourself about your opinions, interests, family and friends. Personal social media activity should be done outside work hours, using your own personal computer/Smartphone/device, from an account or profile associated with your personal email address;
2. Professional Use – when you participate on a social media site or blog and comment personally as an experienced person in your field of expertise. This should be done using your own personal computer/Smartphone/device, from an account or profile associated with your personal email address;
3. Official Use – when you are delegated the authority to participate on a social media site or blog as a spokesperson for the County. This should be done using a County-owned computer/Smartphone/device, using a County email address or online account established and administered by the County's Information Technology department.

H. COUNTY-INITIATED INFORMATION

Media contact shall be initiated only by the POC. This includes contacting reporters and editors, and issuing press releases and media advisories. Departments seeking publicity for events or activities should contact the POC as early as possible.

County employees or Departments, with the exception of Fire and Emergency Management as specifically outlined in their departmental policies regarding media relations shall not initiate news media contacts or arrange news conferences and the like without prior approval from the POC.

I. PERSONAL POINTS OF VIEW

It is recognized that all employees have the right to their personal points of view regarding any issue; accordingly, County employees as citizens are free to communicate with the news media. However, personal points of view may conflict with the County's official policy and/or position. Therefore, County employees who write letters to the editor of any newspaper may not use official County stationery. If an employee chooses to identify himself or herself as a County employee in any personal letter or email to the editor or any other media, he or she must include language which states that the views set forth in the letter do not represent the views of the County, but rather, are the employee's personally held opinions. Similar disclaimers must be given if an employee addresses a public meeting, participates in a radio talk show, engages on a social media site or blog, or is interviewed for a radio or television program unless the employee is officially representing the County.

Employees who represent the County in any of the above forums must identify themselves as an official spokesperson for the County after obtaining prior approval from the POC. During public discussions and media interviews, employees acting as County spokespeople are expected to convey the official position of the County rather than personal point of views.

J. PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

Because the Fire Department and Emergency Management operate during off-business hours and weekends and their work generates a high volume of media calls, those departments have designated personnel as media spokespersons and follow specific guidelines when releasing information. Any media calls to other County employees regarding incidents involving fire or emergency services should be referred immediately to the Fire Department or Emergency Management, as appropriate. All information released to the media by the Fire Department or Emergency Management should be provided immediately to the POC; and, when, appropriate, those offices should be contacted at the time of major incidents.

K. EMERGENCY OR CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

All emergency or controversial issues shall be reported immediately to the POC. This includes information relating to potential or actual lawsuits and other legal matters; accidents involving serious bodily injury or death; an employee grievance; wrongdoing

by a County employee; a natural or manmade disaster; or serious breaches of County performance. The POC will inform the Board; thereafter, the POC will coordinate and disseminate accurate information to the news media.

L. NON-MEDIA INFORMATION REQUESTS

All employees are encouraged to answer general or routine inquiries, provided they pertain to their area of work, the employee is knowledgeable enough about the subject to answer, and the information is already in the public domain (e.g., published in public reports or on the County's website).

CHAPTER 44 – SELF-REPORTING OF ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS POLICY

- A.** Anyone known to be violating a local, state, and/or federal law on County property or at a County-supported function will be subject to referral for prosecution to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- B.** All employees are required to self-report the following information to their immediate supervisor or the Human Resources office within forty-eight (48) hours:
 - 1. Any arrests/charges that are considered a felony
 - 2. Any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation.
- C.** For purposes of this policy a minor traffic violation is defined as a non-criminal violation that may require community service hours, but is not punishable by incarceration and for which there is no right to trial by jury. Criminal traffic violations, including driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, are not minor and must be reported.

CHAPTER 45 – WORKPLACE INJURIES

- A.** Our County strives to provide a workplace that is free from any known health or injury hazards. Employees can assist us by bringing forward any health or safety concerns. Employees may speak with their supervisor or our Human Resources Department about any issues related to safety without fear or reprisal or retaliation. Employees may also receive periodic training on workplace safety and responsible handling of hazardous substances.
- B.** If an employee sustains a job-related injury or illness, it must immediately be reported to the Supervisor, or Human Resources Department or another member of management. This reporting requirement applies to all injuries, no matter how small or insignificant it may appear initially. The County wants to ensure that any injured employee receives prompt and appropriate medical attention. Additionally, our County complies with all federal and state regulatory standards regarding workplace injuries and illnesses. As such, we must make a timely record of any workplace injuries or illnesses. We also are responsible for workers' compensation insurance for employees which provides for medical coverage, disability coverage and loss of work time compensation due to a work- related injury.
- C.** Employees may report work related injuries and illnesses without any concerns of adverse employment action or retaliation by our County.

CHAPTER 46 - CONSENSUAL ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

- A.** The County prohibits romantic or sexual relationships between a management or other supervisory employee and his or her staff (an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that person) because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. In addition, such a relationship may give rise to the perception by others that there is favoritism or bias in employment decisions affecting the staff employee. Moreover, given the uneven balance of power within such relationships, consent by the staff member is suspect and may be viewed by others or, at a later date, by the staff member him/herself as having been given as the result of coercion or intimidation. The atmosphere created by such appearances of bias, favoritism, intimidation or coercion or exploitation undermines the spirit of trust and mutual respect that is essential to a healthy work environment.
- B.** Additionally, the County discourages romantic or sexual relationships between all employees. Such relationships can complicate working associations with other employees, limit an employee's eligibility for transfer or promotion and personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried over into day-to-day working relationships. Employees in a close personal relationship should refrain from public workplace displays of affection or excessive personal conversation.
- C.** If any supervisory or management employee enters into a consensual relationship that is romantic or sexual in nature with a member of his or her staff (an employee who reports directly or indirectly to him or her), or if one of the parties is in a supervisory capacity in the same department in which the other party works, the parties must notify the manager. Although the parties may feel that what they do during non-working hours is their business and not the business of the office, because of potential issues regarding "quid pro quo" harassment, this is a mandatory requirement. This requirement does not apply to employees who do not work in the same department or parties who do not supervise or otherwise have management responsibilities over others.
- D.** Once the relationship is made known to the County, the County will review the situation in light of all the facts (reporting relationship between the parties, effect on co-workers, job titles of the parties, etc.) and will determine whether one or both parties need to be moved to another job or department. That decision will be based on which move will be least disruptive to the County as a whole.
- E.** If it is determined that one or both parties must be moved, but no other jobs are available for either party, one or both parties may be terminated.
- F.** This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender of the individuals involved.

CHAPTER 47-PROMISSORY NOTE POLICY

- A.** By executing the acknowledgement form attached to Columbia County Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, the employee accepts and understands that it may be utilized as an enforceable promissory note. If the employee fails to return any equipment, uniforms, money, credit cards, or other property assigned to the employee during employment, the County may first withhold the value of such amount from any final compensation due to the employee including paychecks, paid time off accrual, or any other such earned benefit. If such compensation does not exist or is insufficient to offset the value of the property due, the employee understands and agrees that the County has legal entitlement to such property and will be responsible for such value and the cost of all attorney fees and costs expended in pursuing such property.

**EQUIPMENT USE AGREEMENT
& ENFORCEABLE PROMISSORY NOTE**

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

I acknowledge that I have been provided with the following Columbia County Board of County Commission equipment and that I am wholly responsible for the ongoing care and ultimate return of such equipment at the expiration of my employment. I further acknowledge that this document serves as an enforceable promissory note and that the full retail value of any such property not returned upon request at any time during or after my employment may be deducted from any and all monies owed to me at such point, including accrued sick and vacation time and any outstanding pay. Moreover, I agree and understand that I will be continually obligated to the Columbia County Board of County Commission for any remaining balance after such deductions are made. I agree that I am also responsible for any sustained attorney's fees and costs that are incurred by the Columbia County Board of County Commission in the pursuit and collection of such monies. The items are as follows:

_____ Laptop: _____
(Provide Brand, System and Serial #)

_____ Carrying Case	_____ Separate Speakers
_____ Power Supply and Cord	_____ Softphone Headset
_____ Accompanying Software	_____ Digital Camera
_____ Flash Drive	_____ Tablet
_____ USB Mic/Headset	_____ Cell Phone
_____ Webcam	_____ Other _____

_____ Uniforms: # Shirts _____, # Pants _____, # Jackets _____, #shoes _____

_____ Fire Bunker Gear (helmet, nomex hood, bunker jacket, bunker pants, structure boots, structure gloves)

_____ Misc. Equipment (describe) _____

1. The Columbia County Board of County Commissioner's equipment is provided for the benefit of the Columbia County Board of County Commission and its employees to be used for County business and purposes only.

2. The Columbia County Board of County Commissioner's equipment must not be used as follows: (1) for personal gain or the advancement of individual views; (2) to express personal opinions on the internet; (3) to solicit any non-Columbia County Board of County Commission business or activities; or (4) to play games during work hours. Further, a User must not send email or other communications that either

mask personal identity or indicate that someone else sent it. Unauthorized review duplications, dissemination, removal, installation, damage, or alteration of files, password, computer systems or programs, or the property of the Columbia County Board of County Commission or improper use of information obtained by unauthorized means, is prohibited.

3. Sending, saving, or viewing offensive material is strictly prohibited. Messages stored and or transmitted on the Columbia County Board of County Commissioner's equipment must not contain content that may reasonably be considered offensive to any County employee. Offensive material includes, but is not limited to, sexual comments, jokes or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any comments, jokes or images that would offend someone on the basis of his or her race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, veteran status, as well as any other category protected by federal, state, or local laws. Any use of the internet to harass or discriminate is unlawful and strictly prohibited by the Columbia County Board of County Commission.

4. Guidelines for Proper Care.

- a. Do not eat or drink while using equipment.
- b. Do not leave equipment exposed to direct sunlight or excessive heat.
- c. Do not leave equipment in a vehicle.
- d. Do not allow children to play with equipment.

5. Any equipment that is discovered to be stolen, missing or damaged must be reported immediately to your direct supervisor.

I have reviewed the above stated terms and agree to comply with the terms.

Signature: _____

Formatted: Centered, No bullets or numbering

CHAPTER 48 - Personnel Records

Employee personnel records are the property of the Organization and access is highly restricted. Only management personnel who have a legitimate reason to review the information will be allowed to do so.

Employees may review the information in their own file at the convenience of management and on Organization property. Employees are not permitted to remove, change, delete or otherwise alter any of the information in the file. Additionally, documents or information contained within the personnel files may not be copied.

Copies of documents or information contained within the personnel file of a [current and/or](#) former employee are provided only with a public records request under the terms of Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes* which governs public records.