

**COUNTY OF PULASKI**

**PERSONNEL POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**Effective January 1, 2022 (ORIGINAL DATE)**

THE COUNTY ADMINSTRATOR SHALL INSURE THAT THIS POLICY MANUAL AND ANY REQUIRED ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS ASSOCIATED THEREWITH ARE KEPT CURRENT AND READILY AVAILABLE TO MANAGEMENT AT ALL TIMES.

NO SUPERVISOR OR DEPARTMENT HEAD HAS ANY AUTHORITY WHATSOEVER TO MAKE ANY CONTRARY REPRESENTATIONS OF ANY RULES OR REGULATIONS, AS SET FORTH IN THIS POLICY, OR OF ANY ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES TO ANY EMPLOYEE.

NOTHING CONTAINED IN THIS HANDBOOK IS INTENDED TO CREATE (NOR SHALL BE CONSTRUED AS CREATING) A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT (EXPRESS OR IMPLIED) OR GUARANTEE OF EMPLOYMENT FOR ANY SPECIFIC PERIOD OF TIME OR FOR ANY SPECIFIC PROCEDURES OR TYPE OF WORK. EITHER YOU OR THE AUTHORITY MAY TERMINATE THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY REASON, WITH OR WITHOUT CAUSE OR NOTICE.

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT NO SUPERVISOR, MANAGER, OR REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AUTHORITY OTHER THAN THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HAS THE AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO ANY AGREEMENT WITH YOU FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR ANY SPECIFIED PERIOD OR TO MAKE ANY PROMISES OR COMMITMENTS CONTRARY TO THE FOREGOING. ANY EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO BY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR SHALL NOT BE ENFORCEABLE UNLESS IT IS IN WRITING AND SIGNED BY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR.

NOTHING CONTAINED IN THE HANDBOOK IS INTENDED IN ANY FASHION TO PROHIBIT, RESTRICT, OR INTERFERE WITH CONDUCT PROTECTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT. THIS INCLUDES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ENGAGING IN "PROTECTED CONCERTED ACTIVITIES."

THE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, BENEFITS AND OTHER PROGRAMS CONTAINED IN THIS HANDBOOK MAY BE MODIFIED, AMENDED, OR CANCELED BY THE COUNTY AT ANY TIME WITH OR WITHOUT ADVANCED NOTICE.

THIS PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED) AND SUPERSEDES ALL PREVIOUS MANUALS, LETTERS, MEMORANDA, AND UNDERSTANDINGS RELATIVE TO THE CONTENTS OF THIS POLICY MANUAL. THE PROVISIONS SHALL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL THEY MAY BE MODIFIED, ALTERED, OR RESCINDED, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, BY RESOLUTION. ONLY THE PULASKI COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HAS THE ABILITY TO ADOPT ANY REVISIONS TO THE POLICIES IN THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK.

THIS POLICY IS NON-INCLUSIVE OF ALL POLICY'S AND PROCEDURES OF VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS OF THE COUNTY SUCH AS PUBLIC SAFETY, E-911, CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE AUTHORITY. EMPLOYEES SHOULD CONSULT WITH THEIR SUPERVISOR REGARDING SPECIFIC POLICIES OR PROCEDURES FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENT.

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The County does not tolerate employee violence or threats of violence on County property or on County time. The County strives to provide each employee with a safe working environment and to provide our clients with a comfortable business climate. Employees who jeopardize this safe atmosphere by engaging in violent behavior will be disciplined, up to and including termination for a first offense. Violent behavior includes fighting, threats, harassment, verbal assault, and other aggressive or intimidating behavior that places another individual in discomfort or fear for his or her well-being. ....		108
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### A. Welcome

Welcome to the County of Pulaski ("The07-0 County")! We are happy to have you join us here.

We believe in keeping our employees fully informed about our policies, procedures, practices, benefits, what employees can expect from the County, and the obligations assumed as an employee of The07-0 County. This practice is designed to provide fair treatment of employees. Our handbook provides employees with basic information to become familiar with the policies, procedures, practices and benefits of The07-0 County and reflects a great deal of concern for the people who make it possible for the County to exist, its employees.

We wish you the best of luck and success in your position and hope that your employment relationship with The07-0 County will be a rewarding experience.

### B. Management & Board of Commissioners

It is the policy of The07-0 County to adhere to the principles of individual recognition and direct and open communication with our employees. Our success is founded on the skills and effort of our employees. It is our policy to deal with our employees fairly and honestly and to respect and recognize each as an individual. We believe that open and frank discussion between employees and Management is the most satisfactory method of deciding matters that affect employees

The County also has a Board of Supervisors. The Board is responsible for the general management of the affairs, funds and records of The07-0 County. It meets on a regular basis and is subject to certain by-laws.

### C. Personnel Policy Updates

From time to time, the County Administrator shall be granted the authority to modify, correct or update the Pulaski County Personnel Policy, as it relates to matters that are non-material in nature, are typographical or grammatical or are requirements for compliance with Federal or state regulations or laws, without formal approval. Formal approval by the Board of Supervisors shall be required when such amendments are material changes to the intent, operation or functions of the Policy.

### D. Equal Employment Opportunity (updated 07/24/2023, 08/30/2023, 12/18/2023)

Pulaski County shall provide equal opportunity in employment and career development. The County is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion to create an equitable work environment based upon merit, qualifications and competence. The County administers its policies without regard to an applicant's or employee's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/transgender status, marital status, political affiliation, age, national origin, genetic makeup, veteran status or disability, which if needing accommodation, may be reasonably accommodated and commit to following federal, state and local anti-discrimination laws. The County shall provide qualified applicants and employees with disabilities, as defined in Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), with reasonable accommodations that do not impose an undue hardship. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to, advertisement, recruitment, referral, hiring, transfer, selection for training, promotion, demotion, discipline, rates of pay or other compensation, transfer, layoff, termination, recall, use of all facilities, and participation in all County-sponsored activities. The Human Resources Director shall be designated as the ADA Coordinator and the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer for the County and is responsible for ensuring that County leadership, managers, supervisors and employees are aware and trained on this policy and pertinent federal, Commonwealth of Virginia and local laws, guidelines, executive orders and regulations directing equal employment opportunity and all other anti-discrimination programs. If employees believe, they are or have been the victim of unfair

treatment in violation of this policy or if they have any questions concerning this policy, they should report such concerns or questions to their supervisor, Human Resources, or any other member of management with whom they feel comfortable. We encourage such reporting and will not tolerate any forms of retaliation against individuals making such reports or who participate in any investigations concerning such issues. Employees also have an obligation to report any observed discrimination and harassment.

**E. Non-Discrimination Statement – Title VI, Federal Financial Assistance (added 9/18/2023)**

Pulaski County gives public notice of its policy to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related statutes. Title VI requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which Pulaski County receives financial assistance. Further, in accordance with the requirement of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Pulaski County will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities. All questions and requests for information should be directed to Pulaski County's Title IV Compliance Officer (Community Development Manager/GIS Coordinator).

**F. Employment-At-Will**

We hope that each employee's period of employment at The07-0 County will be a rewarding experience. However, we recognize that circumstances change with the passage of time and that some employees may seek opportunities elsewhere or choose to leave the County for other reasons. Other employees may not fulfill the operational needs of the County or changed circumstances may reduce available employment opportunities, which may result in involuntary terminations. We sincerely hope that none of these situations occur, but realistically we have to acknowledge that the possibility does exist. **Therefore, the right of the employee or the County to terminate the employment relationship at-will is recognized and affirmed as a condition of employment.** At-will means that both the employees and The07-0 County have the right to terminate employment at any time, with or without advance notice, and with or without cause.

**G. Policy on Harassment Prevention**

The County is committed to providing a work environment that is free of unlawful harassment of all types. Consistent with our policy of equal employment opportunity, harassment in the workplace based on a person's race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, age, genetic makeup, veteran status, or disability will not be tolerated. Thus, the County has a strict policy prohibiting unlawful harassment in any form, including sexual harassment, whether committed by other employees, volunteers, Management and/or third parties.

The harassment policy prohibits unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, particularly where:

- 1) submission by an employee to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment; or
- 3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

In addition, this policy prohibits offensive or unwelcome sexual propositions, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic comments about an individual's body, sexually degrading comments, and sexually suggestive objects, pictures or other materials in the workplace.



Department Heads and supervisors is responsible for ensuring that the County's work environment is free of harassment, whether sexual or otherwise. In addition, all employees are responsible for respecting the rights of their co-employees.

**Reporting:** Any employee who believes he or she has experienced unlawful job-related harassment should report any such harassment promptly to a department head, supervisor or Human Resources. Should any employee believe it would be inappropriate to discuss the matter with his or her direct supervisor, the employee may report it directly to the Human Resources Director.

Every effort will be made to promptly investigate all allegations of harassment in as confidential a manner as possible and appropriate corrective action taken if warranted. If the County determines that any employee has violated this harassment policy, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the offending employee, up to and including termination of employment. We will periodically follow-up with the complainant to ensure that the actions taken by the County have remedied any problems and that the issues that prompted the complaint have not recurred.

The County prohibits any form of retaliation against an employee for making a bona fide complaint of harassment under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation.

## **H. Vaccination Policy (Updated 07-22-2024)**

In consideration of Pulaski County employee's health, the County offers free Hepatitis A & B vaccinations to all employees. This vaccination is covered under most insurance plans as a preventative vaccine and therefore is 100% covered by the individuals' health insurance plan. In cases where the vaccine may not be covered, Pulaski County or the PSA would agree to cover the cost for the positions outlined below. Employees may contact their health care provider or local health department to schedule a time to receive the vaccination.

Hepatitis B is a viral infection caused by Hepatitis B virus (HBV), which causes death in 1-2% of patients. Most people with Hepatitis B recover completely, but approximately 5-10% become chronic carriers of the virus. Most of these people have no symptoms, but can continue to transmit the disease to others. HBV also appears to be a causative factor in the development of liver cancer. Thus, immunization against Hepatitis B can prevent acute hepatitis and reduce sickness and death from chronic active hepatitis, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

Employees of the following departments are considered to have an expected occupational hazard and are therefore highly recommended to receive the vaccine:

PSA Water/Wastewater Department  
PSA Sanitation Workers, Drivers and Drop Site Attendants  
Public Safety Department  
Randolph Park Employees (administering first aid)  
Sheriff's Department

Many other vaccinations are offered as preventative under the County's insurance plan and are covered at 100%. Pulaski County does not cover vaccination costs for those not insured under the County plans.

The Public Safety Department, Sheriff's Department and Firefighter employees must adhere to policies and procedures of that department and work with the Infectious Disease Control Officer to determine what vaccinations are recommended for the performance of their job.

## **I. Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy**

The County has an obligation to its clients and the public to conduct its operations safely and efficiently. With this commitment and obligation in mind, The07-0 County is reaffirming its policy regarding alcohol and drug abuse. The County is also reaffirming its willingness to assist employees with alcohol or drug related problems to find the appropriate

treatment for rehabilitation and recovery. Department Heads should work with Human Resources regarding suspected or known drug/alcohol abuse problems amongst their employees and volunteers.

In accordance with our drug and alcohol abuse policy, we reemphasize to our employees (and employees of other companies, contractors or volunteers) that the abuse of drugs and alcohol poses a serious threat to the safety of our employees and to the County's operations. Accordingly, the use, possession, being under the influence, impairment, or having a detectable presence of drugs or alcohol in one's system (except where expressly authorized by medical consent) or manufacture, distribution or sale of such substances on County premises or on-the-job, or off-the-job abuse of such substances which adversely affects or threatens to adversely affect an employee's job performance or other County interests is prohibited.

**Definitions:** "Drugs" and "alcohol" include any substance with the potential to produce the effects of intoxication and/or the potential to produce physical, mental, emotional or behavioral changes, which could adversely affect an employee's ability to perform his/her, job safely and efficiently. This prohibition includes any prescription or over-the-counter drug unless an employee's possession and use of such drug on County premises, or on-the-job, is expressly medically authorized. The term "County premises" is used in its broadest sense and includes all land, property, buildings, structures, cars, trucks, and all other means of conveyance owned or leased by the County, or otherwise being utilized for County business. The term "on-the-job" includes paid and unpaid meal periods during the business day, and paid working time and paid overtime.

**Prescription Medications:** Employees may not work under the influence of medication that inhibits their ability to work safely or conduct themselves appropriately. Employees taking prescription or non-prescription medications and reporting to work are responsible for understanding the potential effects such medication may have on their ability to work and otherwise conduct themselves in a safe and appropriate manner. Employees should work with their medical providers to understand the effects such medications may have on their job duties. Employees may wish to request a job description and provide this to their medical provider when discussing such effects. Employees who are taking prescription or non-prescription medications, which may inhibit the ability to perform their duties or otherwise conduct themselves in a safe and appropriate manner, should immediately notify their manager. Employees who bring medications to work must maintain these medications in a locked compartment or inaccessible location out of visibility. Employees failing to notify their manager of safety concerns may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Concerns:** Employees who have drug and/or alcohol abuse problems are encouraged to seek assistance through appropriate community agencies. The County will take no disciplinary action against an employee who voluntarily seeks such assistance prior to the County's determination that the employee is violating this policy and will also be protected under the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which declares that the government cannot compel a person to be a witness against him/herself also known as the Garrity Rights. The existence of, or employee participation in, an employee-assistance program does not, however, relieve any employee from compliance with the terms of our policy or other applicable standards governing performance and conduct. Employees who violate our Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may be allowed to participate in an approved treatment program as an alternative to termination. Employees will be placed on a one-year probationary period upon completion of the treatment program and must undergo a rehabilitative drug screen before returning to work. Employees of independent contractors and temporary agency employees who violate this policy will not be allowed to perform additional services on behalf of The07-0 County.

**Testing and Monitoring:** To further insure safe and healthy working conditions, The07-0 County may request an employee to participate in drug or alcohol testing for justifiable reasons, including but not limited to:

1. Pre-employment testing
2. Reasonable suspicion testing
3. Post-accident testing
4. Periodic and unannounced testing
5. Random testing
6. Rehabilitative testing

Employees are required to be readily available for testing under this policy immediately upon a manager's request unless required medical treatment or other established compelling circumstances prevent the employee from complying with the request. This requirement may include remaining at work or on the scene of an accident or incident when requested. An employee's failure to do so may be deemed interference with testing procedures and a violation of this policy.

**Workplace Searches and Other Measures:** The County also reserves the right to take other justifiable measures, including the inspection of all County premises and the personal property of employees on County premises in order to insure compliance with this policy. Participation in the inspection of personal property is voluntary, but employees who refuse shall be deemed in violation of this policy, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Contracted employees who refuse shall not be permitted to perform further work for The07-0 County.

Your cooperation in the enforcement of this policy will assist the County in providing you and your fellow employees with a healthy and safe work environment.

#### **CDL Driver's & Safety Sensitive Positions Referral for Evaluation and Treatment**

1. Any CDL driver who engages in prohibited conduct shall be evaluated by a substance abuse professional who shall determine what assistance, if any, the employee needs. Pulaski County utilizes the services of the EAP program to make this determination.
2. Before returning to duty in a CDL driving position the driver must pass a return to duty test and complete any program prescribed by the substance abuse professional.
3. The driver will be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and controlled substance tests administered by the employer following the driver's return to duty. These tests will be a minimum of six (6) in the first twelve (12) months following the driver's return to duty. Follow-up testing shall not exceed 60 months from the date the driver returns to duty. The substance abuse professional may suspend this testing after the first six tests if no longer deemed necessary.
4. Employees in safety sensitive positions that test positive during a random, accident or reasonable suspicion screening shall be subject to a write up of disciplinary action and subjected to six months of random drug/alcohol screenings. Additional infractions will result in termination of employment.

#### **J. Records Management Policy (added 07/24/2023)**

This policy establishes the general responsibilities for management, retention, and disposition of Pulaski County's records as mandated by the Virginia Public Records Act (VPRA), Code of Virginia § 42.1-76–§ 42.1-91. This policy applies to all employees (including part-time and per diem) and authorized agents of Pulaski County and its affiliates.

Pulaski County is committed to effectively managing its records, regardless of media type, by adhering to best practices and following a systematic and logical plan developed by the organizational units that maintain the records. The successful implementation and ongoing effectiveness of this policy is dependent on the cooperation of each organizational unit to ensure that permanent records are preserved and nonpermanent records are destroyed in a timely and orderly manner.

The policy will provide guidance for achieving the following objectives:

1. Comply with the Virginia Public Records Act (VPRA), Code of Virginia § 42.1-76–§ 42.1-91, which governs the creation, maintenance, and disposition of public records
2. Develop and implement procedures, guidelines, systems, and business practices that facilitate the creation, backup, preservation, filing, storage, and disposal of records of all formats

3. Create a network of personnel throughout Pulaski County trained to manage records of all types
4. Reduce risks associated with unintended disclosure of sensitive information
5. Protect essential and historical information about Pulaski County

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## **Responsibilities Under the Virginia Public Records Act (VPRA):**

### **Records Management Program:**

Pulaski County will implement a sound records management program in accordance with the Virginia Public Records Act (VPRA) § 42.1-76 et seq. An effective records management program will implement Library of Virginia–approved records retention and disposition schedules, document destruction of scheduled records, train employees, and create and disseminate records management procedures.

### **Designated Records Officer**

Pulaski County will designate at least one records officer to oversee the County’s records management program in accordance with the Virginia Public Records Act (VPRA) § 42.1-85. The designated records officer will serve as a liaison to the Library of Virginia for the purposes of implementing and overseeing a records management program, and coordinating legal disposition, including destruction of obsolete records. Pulaski County will identify the person or persons who will serve as records officer(s) by submitting the Records Officer Designation and Responsibilities Form (RM-25) to the Library of Virginia. Pulaski County has designated the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors/Executive Secretary as the designated records officer for Pulaski County.

### **Delivery of Records to Successor**

At the end of a records custodian’s term of office, appointment, or employment, all records should be turned over to his/her successor. In the event Pulaski County ceases to exist and there is no successor, all records should be transferred to the Library of Virginia per the Code of Virginia § 42.1-88.

### A. Categories/Definitions of Employees

It is important that you understand the definitions of the employment classifications at The07-0 County and know your classification. Your employment classification helps determine your employment status and what benefits for which you are eligible. If you have questions or are not sure what your employment classification is, please see your supervisor or Human Resources. The07-0 County classifies its employees as follows:

**Introductory employees:** Employees begin employment with The07-0 County as introductory employees. Such employees' performances are evaluated during this time to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with the County is appropriate. After satisfactorily completing the introductory period, employees will be informed of their new employment classification. (Introductory employees are referred to as "probationary employees" for purposes of the Grievance Policy and are thus not entitled to access the Grievance Procedure.

**Full-time regular employees:** Employees hired to work The07-0 County's normal, full-time, forty-hour workweek on a regular basis who have completed the introductory period. Such employees may be "exempt" or "nonexempt" as defined below. Full-time employees are entitled to the benefits stated in this handbook provided they qualify for each individual benefit.

**Part-time regular employees:** Employees hired to work fewer than forty hours per week on a regular basis. Such employees may be "exempt" or "nonexempt" as defined below. While they do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and workers' compensation insurance), they are ineligible for all of Pulaski County's other benefit programs with the exception of leave time.

**Temporary employees:** Employees engaged to work full-time or part-time with the understanding that their employment will be terminated no later than on completion of a specific assignment. Such employees may be "exempt" or "nonexempt" as defined below. Employees hired from temporary employment agencies for specific assignments are employees of the respective agency and not of The07-0 County. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits including leave time.

Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), they are ineligible for all of Pulaski County's other benefit programs.

**Nonexempt employees:** Employees who are required to be paid overtime at the rate of time and one half (*i.e.*, one and one-half times) their regular rate of pay for all hours worked beyond forty hours in a workweek, in accordance with applicable federal wage and law hours. Local entities provide compensatory time to these employee's or paid time as required by the FLSA.

**Exempt employees:** Employees who are not required to be paid overtime, in accordance with applicable federal wage and hour laws, for work performed beyond forty hours in a workweek. Executives, professional employees, outside sales representatives, and certain employees in administrative positions are typically exempt.

**Retiree:** A full-time employee who is eligible and files for Virginia Retirement System retirement. Employees otherwise leaving employment will either be deemed as resigning their position or termination of employment.

You will be informed of your initial employment classification as an exempt or nonexempt employee during your orientation session. If you change positions during your employment as a result of a promotion, transfer, or otherwise, you will be informed by Human Resources of any change in your exemption status.

Please direct any questions regarding your employment classification or exemption status to Human Resources.

### B. Working Hours (Updated 07-22-2024)

Supervisors will advise employees of the times their schedules will normally begin and end. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Flexible scheduling or flextime, is available in some cases to allow employees to vary their starting and ending times each day within established limits. Flextime may be possible if a mutually workable schedule can be negotiated with the supervisor involved. However, such issues as staffing needs, the employee's performance, and the nature of the job will be considered before approval of flextime. Employees should consult their supervisor to request participation in the flextime program.

Normal call out procedures for each department is no less than one hour before the start of the employees shift. Employees must call their supervisor directly to report the absence and reason thereof.

Meal and work breaks may not be taken in conjunction with another break; may not be taken in the aggregate as either one longer break or as one shorter break with a longer one; and may not be carried over to a different workday. Meal and work breaks also may not be used to offset or otherwise account for an absence, tardiness, late return from another break, early departure from work, or any other kind of time from work under any circumstances.

Supervisors will inform employees of scheduled break and/or lunch periods. Employees are expected back at their workstation ready to start work at the end of each scheduled break and/or lunch period.

All full-time employees are provided with one meal period each workday. Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time.

If a work crew has problems with providing time for meals during typical lunch periods, as an example, where work hours have been altered due to emergency work, it would be reasonable to stop for such a break later in the day.

This policy is not intended to restrict employees from stopping at stores but it is intended that supervisors and/or employees will be held accountable for unreasonable activities. As a guide to unreasonable activities, the following is provided:

1. Stopping for meals or purchases, on a regular basis, within two (2) hours after work hours begin is unreasonable.
2. Employees who will not have access to stores throughout the day should bring with them food and/or refreshments they may like and not request a work crew stop for such activities.
3. Any stop during work hours should be completed promptly with return to work without unnecessary waste of time.
4. Employees participating in breakfast activities at stores/restaurants after work hours begin would be considered unreasonable.
5. Public Safety Department personnel Sheriff's Department personnel and firefighter personnel are expected to be available for emergency calls during meal times, refreshment stops, breaks and all other times while on duty. Therefore, this policy does not apply.

### **C. On-Call Policy**

**PSA Water Department:**

1. Each department employee will be on call on a rotating basis weekly, beginning on Monday following normal working hours and extending to the following Monday morning.
2. While on call, the employee will be furnished a vehicle for transportation to and from work and for responding to any call.
3. While on call, employees will be provided a pager or cell phone. The Water/Sewer Department supervisor will be permanently assigned a cell phone. At least one additional pager or cell phone will be made available for the employee on call.
4. The employee on call will be compensated ten (10) hours pay at the current hourly pay rate for each week served on call. When an employee is on-call during a holiday, that employee will also earn 2 hours of pay at time and a half and be paid at time and a half for hours worked if called out.
5. Upon responding to a call for emergency work, the employee will be paid a minimum of 2 hours at time and a half for all hours worked. Hours in addition to the initial two hours will also be paid at time and a half. The initial 2 hours and additional hours shall be marked on the time sheet as Emergency Work (EW).
6. Scheduling for on call time will be done by the Water Distribution Department supervisor. It is anticipated that changes in the on call schedule will occur to accommodate the convenience of employees' non-work schedules.
7. When assistance is needed on call, other employees of the Water/Sewer Department will be contacted by the employee on call. If an employee is called out to assist the "on-call" employee due to a large incident involving more than one employee, then that employee shall denote his time as emergency work (EW) and this will be paid at time and a half. If further assistance is needed, contact should be made to the General Services Facilities Manager, the General Services Director, the PSA Director, or the Water Treatment Plant Operator. The Emergency Management Coordinator can also be called on for assistance. The PSA Director/County Engineer has also arranged for the public works departments of the towns of Dublin and Pulaski to be called on for assistance.
8. Each employee of the Water/Sewer Department will be provided with ample keys for access to the garage complex and equipment and supplies necessary for emergency water repair.
9. Employees are requested to advise their supervisor of their out of town travel plans to the greatest extent possible so that the employee on call will be aware of where he may likely receive assistance.

**General Services Staff:**

1. An employee will be designated to receive calls for emergency response during weekends and holidays. Duty will be rotated among employees. Each department employee will be on call on a rotating basis weekly, beginning on Monday following normal working hours and extending to the following Monday morning.
2. The employee on call will be compensated ten (10) hours pay at the current hourly pay rate for each week served on call. When an employee is on-call during a holiday, then that employee will also earn 2 hours of pay at time and a half and be paid at time and a half for hours worked if called out.
3. Upon responding to a call for emergency work, the employee will be paid a minimum of 2 hours at time and a half for all hours worked. Hours in addition to the initial two hours will also be paid at time and a half. The initial 2 hours and additional hours shall be marked on the time sheet as Emergency Work (EW).
4. The on call employee will be contacted through a telephone, pager or cell phone.
5. The on call employee will be normally dispatched by the 24-hour dispatch service at the Sheriff's Department. The public or employees needing the on call services are requested to contact an E-911 dispatcher. In addition, the



General Services Facilities Manager, the Emergency Management Coordinator, a Constitutional Officer, a Court Clerk, a judge or any department head staff member may issue a call for assistance from the on call staff.

6. The employees will respond to requests for assistance at buildings and properties under the supervision of the Board of Supervisors or the Public Service Authority. Calls for assistance with the Public Service Authority will be secondary to that of the Public Service Authority employees on call or working at the water treatment plant. The buildings under the supervision of the General Properties staff include: County Administration Building; Maple Shade offices, Bob White Building, Sheriff's Office, Randolph Park, Health Department; Old Courthouse; Brick Courthouse; Pulaski County Library branches within the Town of Pulaski and the Town of Dublin; County Garage complex; Old Riverlawn Elementary School, Loving Field, and the former Cloyd's Mountain Landfill.
7. The on call employee will be expected to respond within one half hour by calling the E-911 Dispatch Center.
8. Time worked on call and in response to emergency calls will be marked "EW" on the monthly time sheet on the appropriate date with the total number of hours responded as well as the eight hours on call noted.
9. On call duty will begin at the 4:00 p.m. end of workday prior to the weekend or holiday affected. It will extend until 7:30 a.m. on the day following the weekend or holiday affected.
10. Should an on call staff member need assistance, they should contact other members of the staff assigned to on call duty. If an employee is called out to assist the "on-call" employee due to a large incident involving more than one employee, then that employee shall denote his time as emergency work (EW) and this will be paid at time and a half. At the same time, they should alert the General Services Facilities Manager of the need for assistance. If the General Services Facilities Manager is unavailable, they should alert one of the following department head staff members: Emergency Management Coordinator; Assistant County Administrator; General Services Director; County Engineer; Human Resources Director. Whenever a response will take more than four hours, one of the preceding department head staff members or general properties superintendent should also be notified.

#### **D. Severe Weather Conditions and Emergency Closings (Updated 07-22-2024)**

If the County offices are closed by the County Administrator, or his designated agent, time missed from work will be considered holiday leave. For essential employees who work during the time the offices are closed, time worked will also follow the holiday policy for hours worked on a holiday and non-exempt employees shall be compensated at time and one half for the hours worked during the closing. Non-essential employees MAY NOT report to work during an emergency closing or inclement weather event unless authorized by a supervisor. Any authorized non-essential employee that reports to work or works from home will only receive compensation at regular/straight time. If an employee has previously scheduled vacation time or is sick, they will not be required to utilize leave time during the time the offices are closed.

The following positions are hereby established as **essential positions** during an emergency closing/inclement weather occurrence:

Public Safety Personnel  
Sheriff's Department Deputies  
Firefighter Personnel  
E-911 Center Personnel  
Water Treatment Plant Personnel  
Emergency Management Coordinator

The above listed positions should report to work regardless of offices closing due to emergency closings or inclement weather events unless otherwise advised. Since these positions provide essential services to the citizens, inclement weather or other emergency situations may, in fact, increase the workload for these employees.



Essential employees who do not report to work during an inclement weather situation and who do not call their immediate supervisor, may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action as determined by the County Administrator or the employee's immediate supervisor.

Should an essential employee not be able to report to work when the offices have been closed due to transportation problems, the essential employee must advise their immediate supervisor and transportation may be provided to the essential employee in reporting to work.

If an essential employee cannot report to work during an emergency closing or inclement weather event due to other reasons, the employee's supervisor must be notified immediately. If the supervisor decides, the employee is not required to report to work it shall be at the discretion of the supervisor whether the employee will be required to utilize any leave time.

There are also alternative essential positions that may be required to report to work due to an emergency closing or inclement weather and will be notified by the supervisor/department head or County Administrator. Those positions include:

County Administrator  
Assistant County Administrator  
PSA Executive Director/County Engineer  
General Services Director/PSA Deputy Director  
Garage Personnel  
PSA Water & Sewer Personnel  
General Services Personnel

The above positions shall ONLY report if notified by their supervisor/department head or County Administrator. Non-exempt non-public safety employees will receive compensation at time and one-half for the hours worked during the closing. Non-public safety exempt employees shall receive compensatory time at a straight time rate.

In instances where the offices do not close due to inclement weather situations, each employee should use his or her own discretion and take appropriate leave when necessary. Employees are encouraged to maintain adequate leave balances for inclement weather situations.

If the County offices are not closed for inclement weather but the County school system is closed for the entire day, employees may be tardy up to one hour without having to use leave or make up time.

Employees will be notified of closings via various media outlets such as TV, Facebook, email and Code Red. Employees are strongly encouraged to register with the Code Red system alerts.

#### PSA Refuse Employees:

Because of hazardous road conditions, it may become necessary not to operate the refuse collection service. Employees will be notified by use of a calling tree as soon as the decision is made to not operate the trucks for collection service as the result of closing of County offices. In the event that the PSA refuse trucks do not operate and County offices remain open, then PSA refuse employees may report to work as an alternative to taking annual leave.

### **E. Timekeeping**

Hourly employees are required to record the time they start and stop work, and when they leave the premises or break for lunch. Hourly employees should report to work no more than six minutes prior to their scheduled starting time and stay no more than six minutes after their scheduled workday has ended unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.

It is the employee's responsibility to adequately record their time worked. Supervisors will review and then initial the time record before submitting it for processing. In addition, if corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes by initialing the time record.

**It is a violation of County policy for any employee to record another employee's time, alter another employee's time card, or alter his/her own time card without permission.**

If an employee has a question concerning his/her time card, he/she should discuss the matter with the payroll supervisor.

#### **F. Overtime (Updaed 07-22-2024)**

Employees may be scheduled to work overtime when operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours. Whenever possible, advance notification will be provided. If determined necessary, overtime work will be authorized by the supervisor beyond an employee's standard scheduled hours of work. The 07-0 County tries to distribute overtime assignments fairly among all employees who are qualified to perform the required work. Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime compensation in accordance with federal and state wage and hour provisions. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked.

*All overtime worked regardless of the department, job class or status must have the specific approval of the employees supervisor, failure to receive such approval may result in disciplinary action. The County Administrator shall monitor overtime in protection of the liability of the County.*

#### **FLSA Non-Exempt County/PSA Salaried Employees:**

Non-Exempt salaried employees who work over 40 hours per week shall be compensated at a rate of 1.5 x for hours worked over 40 in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Employees required to work on a holiday, regardless of the number of hours worked that week, shall receive 1.5 x for hours worked. The overtime shall be accrued as compensatory time unless otherwise stated by the supervisor.

#### **FLSA Non-Exempt County/PSA Hourly Employees:**

Overtime pay for FLSA Non-Exempt hourly employees is compensated at the rate of 1.5 x pay for any work hours exceeding forty (40) in a one-week work period. All hours worked on a holiday shall be compensated at 1.5x pay in addition to the number of hours holiday pay per the holiday pay policy.

#### **FLSA Non-Exempt Overtime on a Daily Basis for County/PSA Employees:**

Overtime on a daily basis is allowable at the discretion of the employee's supervisor.

#### **FLSA Non-Exempt for Salaried Public Safety Department Employees:**

Public Safety Department salary employees will be compensated at a rate of 1.5x pay for any hours exceeding their base salary calculated hours per week. No pay shall be given for a holiday if the employee does not work the holiday.

#### **FLSA Non-Exempt for Hourly Public Safety Department Employees:**

Public Safety Department hourly employees will be compensated at a rate of 1.5x pay for any hours exceeding forty (40) in a one-week work period. No pay will be given for a holiday if the employee does not work the holiday.

#### **FLSA Non-Exempt Sheriff's Department Deputies & Firefighters**

Section 3(s)(1)(C) of the FLSA covers all public agency employees of a State, a political subdivision of a State, or an interstate government agency.

Section 7(k) of the FLSA provides that employees engaged in fire protection or law enforcement may be paid overtime on a "work period" basis. A "work period" may be from seven consecutive days to 28 consecutive days in length. For work

periods of at least 7 but less than 28 days, overtime pay is required when the number of hours worked exceeds the number of hours that bears the same relationship to 212 (fire) or 171 (police) as the number of days in the work period bears to 28. For example, fire protection personnel are due overtime under such a plan after 106 hours worked during a 14-day work period, while law enforcement personnel must receive overtime after 86 hours worked during a 14-day work period.

Under certain prescribed conditions, a State or local government agency may give compensatory time, at a rate of not less than one and one-half hours for each overtime hour worked, in lieu of cash overtime compensation. Employees engaged in police and fire protection work may accrue up to 480 hours of compensatory time.

In consideration of this Code, Pulaski County recognizes all positions below that of a lieutenant as non-exempt per FLSA.

### **G. Pay Procedures (updated 07/24/2023)**

Regular Full Time and Part-Time employees are paid semimonthly on the 15th and last working day of the month. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. Pulaski County operates on a two-week hold back period.

In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off such as a weekend or holiday, employees will receive pay the day prior.

Employees may have pay directly deposited into their bank accounts if they provide advance written authorization to Pulaski County. Employees will receive an itemized statement of wages when Pulaski County makes direct deposits. Employees may access direct deposit records via Pulaski County's Employee Self Service (ESS) account on the Pulaski County website.

Direct deposits are submitted via a pre-note to the bank on the first attempt to ensure the correct routing and account number were submitted by the employee (new hire and change of accounts). Therefore, the initial paycheck is printed and the employee is required to pick it up. Checks are released to employees only. Spouses or other individuals are not allowed to receive employee paychecks.

Employee's receiving actual paychecks will not receive them prior to the actual payday except in occasions when the employee is scheduled to take vacation leave. In those cases, employees may pick up their paycheck the day prior to payday after 2:00 p.m.

Since Pulaski County defers payroll for a two-week period, employees terminating employment will receive one final paycheck following their termination date inclusive of wages and any required leave payout.

Pay errors should be reported promptly to the supervisor and to payroll. The Payroll Supervisor will confirm the error with the supervisor and the necessary adjustments will be made ASAP.

### **H. Compensatory Time/ Earned PTO (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Compensatory Time shall only be earned by FLSA Non-Exempt employees. All employees that are considered Exempt per FLSA standards shall accrue Earned PTO. This designation applies to FLSA Exempt Executive, Administrative, IT , Professional Employees, Law Enforcement and Fire Protection employees.

Executive Employees - Earned PTO for Executive employees exempt from the FLSA is earned at a straight hour for hour for any hours worked over 8 hours per day. Work performed on weekends or holidays is eligible for Earned PTO at a straight hour for hour. Prior approval by the County Administrator is required for overtime hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours per week. This shall also apply to Professional and IT Classified employees. In addition, Sheriff's Department Executive staff who work 12-hour rotating shifts will earn hour for hour for any hours worked over 12 per day.

The following is a list of Executive employee positions to which the above policy applies:

County Administrator  
Assistant County Administrator  
Human Resources Director  
Sheriff's Department Personnel ( Lieutenant Level and above)  
Chief of Fire & Rescue  
Joint 911 Executive Director  
Joint 911 Deputy Directors  
Emergency Management Coordinator  
Finance Director  
Assistant Finance Director  
Economic Development Director  
Garage Supervisor  
Director of General Services/PSA Deputy Director  
Building Official  
Director of Planning/Zoning  
Library Director  
Tourism Director  
Commonwealth Attorney Administrative Executive Assistant  
Registrar  
Public Safety Director  
Public Safety Deputy-Director  
Public Service Authority Director  
Director of Parks & Recreation

Professional Employees - The following is a list of Professional employee positions to which the above policy applies:

County Engineer  
Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney's

IT Employees - The following is a list of IT employee positions to which the above policy applies:

Library Technology Coordinator  
IT Director

Administrative Employees - Earned PTO for Administrative employees exempt from the FLSA is calculated at straight time for the first hour over 8 hours per day and then **1.5 x** for hours worked over 10 per day. Work performed on weekends or holidays is eligible for Earned PTO at **1.5 x** hours worked that day, Overtime hours worked must be approved by the supervisor or department head prior to the work being performed.

The following is a list of Administrative employee positions to which the above policy applies:

Project Manager  
Payroll Supervisor  
PSA Payroll Coordinator

Small Business Solutions Manager  
Virginia Regional Industrial Facilities Authority Project Manager  
GIS Coordinator  
Executive Administrator for General District Court & Chief Deputy

Earned PTO accrued exceeding 30 days or 240 hours, 480 for Law Enforcement and Fire Personnel, by employees exempt from the FLSA shall be lost by any exempt employee if not used by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. Further, it shall be the policy that employees exempt from the FLSA shall only be compensated for a maximum of 30 days or 240 hours, 480 for Law Enforcement and Fire Personnel of accrued Earned PTO upon retirement, resignation or termination.

Compensatory time that is earned by FLSA Non-Exempt employees must be calculated at 1.5 X their regular rate of pay. Compensatory time for FLSA Non-Exempt employees must be paid once the employee reaches a 240-hour threshold (480 for law enforcement and fire personnel). Upon separation of employment, all FLSA Non-Exempt employees must be paid their Compensatory Time balances.

The following positions are considered EXEMPT and not eligible for any type of overtime or additional compensation:

Sheriff  
Treasurer  
Commissioner of the Revenue  
Commonwealth's Attorney  
Clerk of Circuit Court

Sheriff's Department (LEO):

- 1) Effective July 1, 2024
- 2) All employees will begin a working 80 hour per 14-day cycle timesheet before Earned PTO/comp time can begin accruing (Fair Labor Standard Act states all Non-Exempt LEO must work 86 hours in two weeks before accruing comp time). Exempt LEO's shall receive Earned PTO.
- 3) Any hours worked in a 14-day cycle over 80 hours but less than 87 hours are hour for hour Earned PTO time and should be marked separate from the comp time line.
- 4) Any hours worked in a 14- day cycle from 87 and above are calculated at time and a half comp time earned for FLSA Non-Exempt LEO's and as Earned PTO for FLSA Exempt LEO's.
- 5) Only hours worked within the 14 - day cycle are counted towards your 80 hours (comp days, vacation days or sick leave days do not count towards the 80 hours).
- 6) Any hours worked below 80 hours in a 14-day cycle will need to be drawn from comp time, Earned PTO or vacation time. Sick time may be used only when the employee is out sick or under doctor's care for an illness.
- 7) Only worked hours need to be listed on the time sheet, if you take a comp day, Earned PTO, sick day or vacation day do not list hrs on the date you used it, just mark the box for that day with a C, PTO, V, S and wait to calculate what hours are needed and mark it in the boxes at the bottom left of the timesheet.
- 8) Callouts after signing off during a work day or on days off will automatically be counted as comp time earned for FLSA Non-Exempt LEO's and Earned PTO for FLSA Exempt LEO's, even if your 80 hrs are not met

- 9) Comp time, Earned PTO and/or vacation time used for the full 12-hour shift should in most instances be scheduled in advance when the schedule is made.
- 10) Paid OT details will automatically be paid as OT hours no matter if the 80-hour threshold is met and should be documented on a separate OT sheet, not on the timesheet.
- 11) Comp time/Earned PTO should be documented and noted on the individual's timesheet.

### **I. Pay Advances**

The County does not provide pay advances on unearned wages.

### **J. Pay Corrections**

In the event that there is an error in your pay, you should immediately bring the discrepancy to your supervisor and payroll's attention so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible. Requests must be in written form and signed by both the employee and the supervisor. This correction usually occurs on the next payroll date if reported promptly.

### **K. Pay Deductions and Setoffs**

County policy prohibits improper deductions from employee pay; however, the law requires the County to make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal, state, and local income taxes. The County must also deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "wage base." The County matches the amount of Social Security taxes paid by each employee.

When the County offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law, eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their pay to cover the costs if they wish to participate in these programs.

Pay setoffs and garnishments are pay deductions taken by the County, as required by law or court order, usually to help pay off a debt or obligation to the County or others. Voluntary pay deductions, garnishments, and pay setoffs will be the responsibility of the employee during unpaid leave.

Questions concerning why deductions were made from your pay or how they were calculated should be addressed to the Payroll Supervisor.

### **L. Garnishment of Employee Wages**

Garnishments are court orders requiring an employer to withhold specified amounts from an employee's wage for payment of a debt owed by the employee to a third party. State law requires the County to honor garnishments of employee wages (including child support) as a court or other legal judgment may instruct. The law also provides for an administrative fee to be charged when a garnishment occurs.

Employees are expected to manage their personal financial affairs in such a manner as not to require debtors to seek garnishments or payroll liens for payment of bills and/or taxes owed by the employee. Should the County receive a notice of wage garnishment or wage liens other than those for child and/or spousal support, the employee will meet with Payroll or Human Resources to review the seriousness of the matter and may be required to seek appropriate outside assistance to aid in their money management problems. Any employee served with wage garnishments or wage liens resulting from more than one indebtedness, not including those for child and/or spousal support, in any consecutive twelve-month period may be terminated.

### **M. Separation of Employment/Resignation (updated 07/24/2023)**

To resign a position in good standing, an employee must provide a two-week advance written notice. If a special circumstance exists, the notice requirement may be waived by the County Administrator. Failure to provide such

notice may result in forfeiture of compensation for accrued leave. Failure to return to work at the expiration of an approved leave of absence shall be interpreted as a voluntary resignation.

If it is considered to be in the best interest of the County for the employee not to work the two week period following the notice of resignation, the employee may be asked to leave the premises immediately upon notification of resignation.

An employee's official date of separation will be considered their last day of work. No employee will be permitted to use Sick Leave or Vacation Leave once the employee has made the supervisor aware of their separation unless the time was approved prior to knowledge of the resignation. VRS contributions will stop as of the date of resignation.

The County will determine if the terminating employee has any outstanding debt owed to the County and whether the individual has in his/her possession any electronic equipment, tools, keys, manuals, uniforms or other County property. Upon completion of a full accounting of the employee's and the County's accounts as determined by the County, a final pay check for time worked (less deductions) will be issued to the employee on the next regular pay day in accordance with applicable federal and state law. The County will issue a check designated as the final payment for all services rendered as well as any leave accrual payments due per policy.

Upon resignation or termination, the employee should contact Human Resources to address any employment issues. Any employee terminating employment is expected to return any County property in his/her possession. Failure to do so may result in legal action.

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## **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

The County provides well-balanced benefits to eligible employees designed to meet the needs of employees and provide protection from financial hardship. These benefits will be reviewed periodically to assure that they keep pace with area practice.

The information contained in this handbook regarding employee benefits is not a contract to provide these benefits to any employee. The eligibility requirements of these benefits are described in the summary plan documents and/or benefits booklets. Full-time employees are eligible for the following benefits provided by the County if they meet specific requirements:

- \*Health, Dental Vision & Pharmacy Insurance/COBRA Compliance
- \*Bereavement Leave
- \*Jury Duty Leave
- \*Virginia Credit Union Membership
- \*Nationwide 457b Deferred Compensation Plan
- \*YMCA Membership Dues
- \*Educational Assistance & Paid Training
- \*Employee Assistance Program (includes mental health, legal and financial counseling services)
- \*Paid Life Insurance as well as Additional Option Life Insurance

- \*Military Leave
- \*Paid Holidays
- \*Virginia Retirement System Pension Plan
- \*Relocation Assistance (for select positions)
- \*Short-Term Disability
- \*Long-Term Disability
- \*Sick Leave and Sick Leave Bank Benefits
- \*Tool and Equipment Assistance (for select positions)
- \*Uniform and Uniform Maintenance (for select positions)
- \*Wellness Programs
- \*Vacation Leave
- \*Unpaid Leaves of Absence (FMLA)
- \*AFLAC Accidental, Critical & Critical with Cancer
- \*AirMed Flight Insurance
- \*Nationwide Pet Insurance
- \*VRS Group Long-Term Care Insurance
- \*Discounts with Dell Computer and Verizon

While The07-0 County is committed to providing its employees the best in employee benefits, it also must reserve the right to modify plans and/or co-pays if deemed necessary by the County. Thus, the terms of the benefit plans described are subject to change at any time by the insurer(s) or The07-0 County. Questions concerning benefits and/or insurance information should be directed to Human Resources.

#### **A. Life Insurance**

Life insurance offers you and your family important financial protection. Pulaski County provides a basic life insurance plan for eligible employees. Additional supplemental and/or dependent life insurance coverage may also be purchased for the employee, spouse and dependents. This coverage is available through the Virginia Retirement System. This life insurance provides employees with group life insurance, natural death benefits, double indemnity for accidental death.

Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance provides protection in cases of serious injury or death resulting from an accident. AD&D insurance coverage is provided as part of the basic life insurance plan.

Employees in the following employment classifications are eligible to participate in the life insurance plan:

- \* Regular full-time employees

The amount of employee life insurance is equal to your annual salary rounded to the next highest thousand then doubled.

Details of the basic life insurance plan including benefit amounts are available by contacting the Human Resources Director.

#### **B. Short-Term Disability – VRS Hybrid Employees Only**

All full-time VRS Hybrid employees are eligible for the Hybrid Short-Term Disability (STD) plan offered by Pulaski County and administered by a third-party administrator.

#### Definitions:

1. VRS Hybrid Employee - An employee who was hired on or after January 1, 2014 with no previous VRS service or an employee re-hired after January 1, 2014 who elected to take a refund of their employee contribution of VRS Service.



2. Illness/Non-Work Related Injury - Medical conditions which preclude an employee from performing their job duties, including disability related to pregnancy or childbirth and/or employee exposure to a contagious disease such that his or her presence on the job might jeopardize the health of others. The use of short-term disability insurance is for the employee's serious health condition or disability only, family members are not eligible.
3. Totally Disabled - Any disability that occurs as a result of a non-work-related illness or injury that prevents an insured employee from performing their job for wages or profit and that requires the insured employee to be under the regular care of a licensed physician.
4. Waiting Period - The number of consecutive days an insured employee must be totally disabled before benefit coverage begins.
5. Basic Weekly Earnings - Insured employee's rate of earnings in effect immediately prior to the date of a short-term disability claim begins. This rate does not include bonuses, overtime or any other extra compensation other than commissions.

Procedures:

New VRS Hybrid employees are automatically enrolled in the Hybrid Short-Term Disability Program, which is administered through a third party vendor at the time of employment. Employees must be enrolled in the program one year to be eligible for non-occupational short-term disability benefits. For work related short-term disability, please see the chart below.

Employees are paid a percentage of their normal income replacement level based on the charts listed below depending on the type of disability.

Non-Occupational Short-Term Disability:

Please contact Human Resources with questions regarding leave policies and income during periods of non-occupational short-term disability.

Months of Continuous Service	Workdays at 100% Income Replacement	Workdays at 80% Income Replacement	Workdays at 60% Income Replacement
0-12	0	0	0
13-59	0	0	125
60-119	25	25	75
120-179	25	50	50
180+	25	75	25

Work-Related Short-Term Disability:

You are eligible for work-related short-term disability coverage from the first day your coverage is effective. To qualify for a work-related benefit, your disability must arise out of or in the course of employment with your employer - e.g. the result of an occupational illness or injury that occurs on the job. Contact Human Resources about your workers' compensation benefits and assistance with filing a worker's compensation claim.

You are eligible for income replacement at 60% of your pre-disability income. For a disability occurring after five years of continuous participation in the STD plan, and with your current employer, you become eligible for income replacement beginning at 100% of your pre-disability income, which reduces to 80% and then 60% (for each, less deduction of other income). The percentage level change depends on your months of continuous program participation with your current employer and how long you are disabled as shown in the table below.

Months of Continuous Service	Workdays at 100% Income Replacement	Workdays at 80% Income Replacement	Workdays at 60% Income Replacement
Fewer than 60	0	0	125
60-119	85	25	15
120+	85	40	0

#### Benefits Coverage:

1. Short-term disability benefits cannot be used until the insured employee has completed a waiting period of seven (7) calendar days, with benefits effective on day eight (8).
2. Benefits are paid monthly after the waiting period has been lifted.
3. Short-term disability provides a maximum of up to 125 workdays of supplemental pay per injury or illness. The 125 workday period is based on a Monday through Friday workweek and includes paid holidays.
4. Upon exhausting all STD benefits, an employee may file a claim for long-term disability (LTD) benefits through VACORP/Anthem.
5. Benefits are determined on a five (5) day 40 hour workweek. For those employees who work shift work, their days will be converted as the same.

#### Coordination of Leave Benefits:

1. A covered employee must file a claim with the County's third party administrator when the use of short-term disability is needed. The duration of time that can be used will be determined by the employee's physician, VACORP and the County's third party administrator. Only one claim will be filed for the initial maternity leave, injury or illness. The employee's leave needs to be extended, they will have to file a second claim with the County's third party administrator for the additional time. It is the employee's responsibility to make sure all paperwork and documentation requested from the County's third party administrator is filed in a timely manner, whether for the initial claim request or an extension of a claim if the employee's physician feels the employee is still incapable to return to work. This is to ensure no delay in a claim decision and the processing of an employee's payroll benefit if approved. Failure by the employee to file the necessary paperwork requested by the County's third party administrator could lead to a closed claim resulting in a non-active employee status. If all FMLA leave has been exhausted at such time an employee has a closed claim, no job protection is guaranteed and could result in separation of employment with Pulaski County.

2. Qualified Family Medical Leave will run concurrent with short-term disability only up to the full twelve weeks.
3. The usage of sick and annual leave is allowed to make up the percentage of an employee's normal income to equal 100%, if the employee has leave time available to use.
4. The employee is required to keep Human Resources updated on a weekly basis of their condition. The employee is also responsible for providing current physician's notes and reporting any changes in their disability to their supervisor, Human Resources and the third party administrator.
5. If an employee is approved for a claim and is currently on short-term disability benefits, they are not allowed to volunteer or work in another full-time/part-time position that is a like position from which you are disabled from with Pulaski County. Doing so could result in separation of employment with Pulaski County and loss of benefits from Anthem.

#### Status of Benefits:

1. Pulaski County and the employee will continue to contribute their portion to the health insurance premiums while on short-term disability.
2. For any employee on an approved short-term disability claim, Pulaski County will continue to pay the VRS Group Term Life, health insurance premiums and the employer's portion of the VRS contribution. The employee will be responsible for their portion of the VRS contribution while an employee is on an approved short-term disability claim.

#### Returning from Leave:

An employee who takes leave because of their own serious health condition will be required to provide medical certification that they are fit to resume work, at least seven (7) days prior to the date to return to work if possible. An employee failing to provide the requested medical certification will not be permitted to resume work and could result in termination of employment. Medical certification shall be on a form provided by the County and should be returned to Human Resources.

#### Restoration to Position:

1. At the end of family/medical leave and/or a short-term disability claim an employee may be reinstated as follows:
  - a. Original position - Pulaski County must restore an employee to the position, which they held when the leave began unless they held a key position which needed to be filled during the absence.
  - b. Equivalent position - if the previous position has been filled, an employee is entitled to restoration to an equivalent position.
2. If an employee's position is determined to be a key position, they may be denied restoration when:
  - a. Pulaski County shows that denying restoration is necessary to prevent substantial economic injury to its operations.
  - b. Pulaski County notifies the employee that restoration will be denied at the time it determines that substantial economic injury would occur; and
  - c. The employee has already begun the leave and elects not to return to employment within a reasonable time after receiving the notice from Pulaski County.

### **C. Long-Term Disability – VRS Hybrid Employee Only**

Long-term disability is a physical disease, injury, pregnancy or mental disorder that prevents you from performing the material or essential duties of your occupation with reasonable continuity for the first 24 months after the benefit waiting period and from performing any other occupation thereafter. Long-term disability benefits are payable after a seven (7) calendar day benefit waiting period plus 125 contract workdays. If you are receiving short-term disability benefits from the County's third party administrator and progress to a long-term disability claim, you will not be required to complete a full long-term disability claim application.

#### Procedures

1. Pulaski County is removed from the process and payments, if the employee is approved for the LTD claim. All claims will be paid through the County's third party administrator.
2. It is the employee's responsibility to provide all documentation to the County's third party administrator that is requested of them in a timely manner to proceed with the claim to be submitted for review and a decision to be made. It is imperative that all request and direction from the County's third party administrator are followed to avoid any issues or a closed claim.
3. Once an employee has begun receiving LTD benefits, they may be separated from County service as an active employee. At that time, they will be eligible to continue health insurance under COBRA guidelines and time frames with no County contribution to the premium. The employee is responsible for 100% of the premium plus a 2% administration fee for the plan on which they were enrolled at the time of being separated.
4. It is the employee's responsibility to file all COBRA paperwork in the time frame requested to avoid a lapse in coverage or no coverage due to a missed requirement date.

If an employee is approved for a claim and is currently on Long-Term Disability benefits, they are not allowed to volunteer or work in another full-time/part-time position that is a like position from which you are disabled from with Pulaski County. Doing so could result in loss of benefits from the County's third party administrator.

### **D. Retirement (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Pulaski County's retirement benefits are provided through the Virginia Retirement System. This benefit is offered to permanent full-time employees of Pulaski County. An employee is vested in the retirement system after successfully completing 5 years of service. As a vested member of VRS, an employee is eligible to receive retirement benefits as early as age 55 or 65 with at least 5 years of service. Full retirement benefits are granted at the age of 50 with 30 years of service to Plan 1 employees. Plan 2 employees must have the sum of their age and years of service equal 90 to receive full retirement benefits. Virginia designated Hazardous Duty employees are provided with a special retirement supplement and may retire as early as age 50 with 25 years of service. All employees designated as Hazardous Duty must fall under VRS Plan 1 or Plan 2 retirement benefits. Reduced retirement benefits are also available at age 50 with at least 10 years of service.

Plan 1 and Plan 2 employees are eligible for permanent disability benefits through VRS. The cost of this benefit may be shared by the employee at the direction of the Board of Supervisors.

Full-time employees hired after January 1, 2014 are designated as participating in the VRS Hybrid Retirement Plan. Employees participating in this plan have the same vesting and retirement age as those participating in Plan 2. VRS Hybrid Plan participants are able to contribute up to 4% of their salary towards their retirement account as part of a defined contribution plan component.

All VRS participants must contribute the minimum 5% into their account based on their current salary. VRS service credit will begin based on the employee's hire date. Those hired the first working day of the month shall earn credit for that month. Employees who start work after the first of the month will begin receiving credit the following month.

#### **RETURNING TO WORK AFTER VRS RETIREMENT:**

Pulaski County follows the Virginia Retirement system policies and procedures as it relates to an employee returning to work after retirement from VRS as follows:

After an employee retires from the County under VRS retirement service, the employee may work for any employer that does not participate in the Virginia Retirement System and continue to receive full VRS retirement benefits. However, if the employee returns to work for another VRS participating employer, the employee will then become active as a member in VRS again and the VRS retirement will stop. This does not apply to Sheriff's Resource Officer's (SRO's) who may retire and work full-time and still receive benefits.

The Commonwealth of Virginia, including all local and state agencies, public colleges and universities are considered one employer. Public school divisions are considered a separate employer. Pulaski County, Pulaski County Public Service Authority and the Pulaski County Department of Social Services are considered one VRS employer since these employees are reported to VRS under one VRS employer code.

In some cases, an employee may work in a non-covered position with a VRS participating employer and continue to receive VRS retirement benefits. If an employee does return to non-covered employment with the employer from which the employee retired, the employee must have a bona fide break in service of at least one full calendar month from the employee's retirement date. This break must occur over a period of the employee would normally work. Periods of leave with or without pay do not count toward satisfying this break in service. Further, a VRS participating employer can make no verbal or written offer of reemployment before an employee retires under VRS. The employer and the employee must certify that no such pre-arrangement has been made on the Application for Service Retirement (VRS-5).

#### **Definition of Covered vs Non-Covered Employment:**

Covered employment is a full-time permanent, salaried position with an employer that participates in VRS. Some part-time permanent, salaried state positions are also covered under VRS.

Non-covered employment is a part-time position with a VRS participating employer. Non-covered positions do not provide eligibility for VRS benefits. Part-time positions typically require less than 80% of the hours of comparable full-time permanent positions. Some full-time positions may be considered non-covered if they are temporary and require less than 80% of the hours per year that would be considered full-time and permanent for that position.

#### **Interim Appointments:**

In some cases, retirees can work in an interim position for up to six months without interruption to VRS retirement benefits. Examples include working in a vacant position while the employer recruits for a full-time permanent employee or while the incumbent is on leave. VRS requires that the employer discuss with VRS any possible interim appointment of a VRS retiree prior to their hiring. Further, the requirement of a bona fide break in service as described also applies to interim appointments.

#### **Approval of Hiring Retirees:**

Prior approval from the County Administrator is required before the hiring of a VRS retired employee.

#### **Maximum Hours a Retired VRS Employee May Work:**

A retired VRS employee returning to work for the County, shall be paid on an hourly basis and shall only be allowed a maximum of 80% of the comparable hours of a full-time employee or no more than 32 hours per week INCLUSIVE of any leave time or hours worked on a holiday that the employee may have taken or earned during that work week. In any situation, PAID hours for a VRS employee shall not exceed 32 hours per week. This does not apply to School Resource Officers (SRO's) who may retire and work full-time and still receive benefits.

#### Annual Leave & Sick Leave Benefits for a Retired VRS Employee

Annual leave and sick leave benefits may be allowed to a retired VRS employee. The accrual rates shall be based on the number of hours the retired VRS employee works and pro-rated at the same rates of other employees not working forty hours per week.

#### **VRS PLAN I, PLAN II & HYBRID RETIREE SICK LEAVE PAYOUT (Approved 07-22-2024)**

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11-15 Years</b>	<b>16-20 Years</b>	<b>21-25 Years</b>	<b>26+ Years</b>
Sick Leave Payout	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
VRS Plan I & II Max Payout	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$40,000
Hazard Duty Max Payout	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,00	\$40,000	\$40,000

#### **Eligibility Requirements**

- Minimum age of 50 years per VRS requirements
- Must have at least 6 years of service with Pulaski County
- Eligible and must apply for VRS service or disability retirement
- Years of service must be strictly with Pulaski County and must be consecutive with no break in service
- Must have the maximum number of sick leave days as a Hybrid employee (60 days) at retirement

#### **Other**

- Program begins August 1, 2024
- Health insurance eligibility ends at age 65
- Retiree must provide a minimum of a 90 day notice of retirement (unless its disability retirement)
- If retiree doesn't elect retiree insurance at the time of retirement, they cannot return to the County plan at a later date

#### **RETIREE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE: (Updated 07-22-2024)**

#### Health Insurance Benefits for a Retired VRS Employee

Affordable Health Care Act (ACA) regulations require former full-time employees who retire or resign from employment who wish to be rehired in a part-time or temporary position must meet a break in service requirement of at least 13 weeks before being rehired. The ACA separation period of 13 weeks is required for retirees and former full-time employees meeting the ACA definition of an "ongoing" employee, even if they are re-hired into a part-time position. Former employees returning from a break in service of 13 weeks or more shall be classified as newly hired under the ACA. It shall then be County policy that a retired VRS employee shall be eligible for County health insurance coverage only if they are scheduled

to work more than 29 hours per week. All health insurance benefits awarded to a retired VRS employee shall be in accordance with the Affordable Care Act rules and regulations.

Employees retiring on or after July 1, 1997, may remain on the County of Pulaski's employee health care insurance plan beyond the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Act of 1985 (COBRA) regulations. This will apply to both service and disability retirements. Once a retired employee is eligible for Medicare, the retiree will be required to enroll under the Medicare Supplement Plan. Once the employee becomes Medicare eligible, the employee and their dependents are no longer eligible for the County's insurance plan. Employee's spouses will not be allowed to remain on the plan after the employee is no longer eligible. COBRA term expires as a retiree.

In addition, once a retired employee has terminated or canceled their health care coverage under the County's health care plan, the retired employee shall not be eligible for enrollment under the County's health care or dental plan at any time in the future unless the retired employee returns to work in a classified position in a state agency, or is the dependent of an active state employee and covered under his or her state health benefit plan. The retired employee's cancellation also cancels coverage for your covered dependents.

Payments for health care and dental coverage after retirement shall be made directly to Innovative Insurance Group. Failure to remit payment by the deadline may result in termination of insurance.

Retirees may also elect to remain on the County's dental plan. There is no age limitation on dental; however, should the employee cancel the dental plan, the dependent shall be deemed no longer eligible.

The following guidelines must be met by the employee in order to be eligible for benefits:

1. The employee must have been on the County's health care plan for a minimum of twelve (12) continuous months prior to the last day of employment; and
2. The employee must pay 100 % of the total premium for said coverage of both health and dental premiums after retirement; and
3. Service retirement is defined as an employee's permanent separation from full-time employment and immediate receipt of retirement benefits on a regular monthly basis through the Virginia Retirement System; and
4. Disability retirement is defined as an employee's permanent separation from full-time employment and immediate eligibility for disability payments from the Virginia Retirement System and/or Social Security Administration. In lieu of a disability award and with a pending application for disability benefits, a complete medical report documenting a permanent disability will meet requirements of this paragraph for a period of twelve (12) months or until a disability award decision is received.

#### Other Benefits for a Retired VRS employee:

Other benefits such as paid holidays, birthday leave, etc. may be allowed for retired VRS employees per the same benefit policies as for other part-time employees.

### **E. Child Care Benefits**

Pulaski County provides childcare assistance to all eligible employees as a benefit of employment. Eligible employee classifications are:

\* Regular full-time employees

Given below is a brief description of childcare assistance that may be provided when feasible. For more detailed information, please contact the Human Resources Director.

\* CAFETERIA PLAN/FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT: Employees choose benefits (including childcare) from a list of options and contribute a part of pretax salaries to a child care account. This option allows employees to minimize the federal tax they must pay on childcare dollars.

\* SICK LEAVE BENEFITS: Employees may use accrued sick leave benefits in the event of the illness of a child.

## **F. Employee Assistance Program (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Pulaski County provides confidential access to professional counseling services for help in confronting such personal problems as alcohol and other substance abuse, marital and family difficulties, financial or legal troubles, and emotional distress. The EAP is available to all employees and family members living inside the home offering problem assessment, short-term counseling, and referral to appropriate community and private services.

Supervisors may request a formal referral of the employee to an EAP program. There are many reasons a formal referral may be required. Supervisors may speak with Human Resources to determine if the employee is eligible for a formal referral. Failure by an employee to participate in a formal referral may result in progressive or immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The EAP is strictly confidential and is designed to safeguard your privacy and rights. Information given to the EAP counselor may be released only if requested by you in writing. All counselors are guided by a Professional Code of Ethics.

Personal information concerning employee participation in the EAP is maintained in a confidential manner. No information related to an employee's participation in the program is entered into the personnel file.

The first three visits with an EAP counselor are free (VRS Hybrid members receive six free visits). If further counseling is necessary, the EAP counselor will outline community and private services available. The counselor will also let employees know whether any costs associated with private services may be covered by their health insurance plan. Costs that are not covered are the responsibility of the employee.

Minor concerns can become major problems if you ignore them. No issue is too small or too large, and a professional counselor is available to help you when you need it. Call the EAP at 1-877-552-7401 to contact an EAP counselor.

Safety sensitive positions require assessment by a Substance Abuse Professional. The following is a list of positions that are considered safety sensitive; however, other positions within the County and PSA may also be deemed by their supervisor as safety sensitive that may not be listed below:

- CDL drivers
- Grounds Maintenance Crew Workers
- Public Safety
- E-911 employees
- Sheriff's Deputies

If an employee in a safety sensitive position tests positive OR admits to substance abuse, they will be referred to an SAP program. A SAP professional will evaluate the employee; provide case management and return to work planning. The employee will be placed on administrative leave pending the status of the SAP assessment. Failure to abide by an SAP may result in termination of employment. DOT & Federal Motor Carrier Regulations also specify rules before a CDL driver may return to work. Additional drug testing, at the expense of the employee, may also be a requirement.

In addition, failure to participate in any formal referral may result in progressive or immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.



## **G. Flexible Spending Account (FSA)**

Pulaski County provides a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program that allows employees to have pre-tax dollars deducted from their salaries to pay for eligible out-of-pocket expenses. The pre-tax contributions made to the FSA can be used to pay for predictable non-reimbursed health care expenses and dependent care expenses during the plan year. Through the FSA program, you can reduce your taxable income without reducing your real income, so that you can keep more of the money you earn.

Employees in the following employment classifications are eligible to participate in the Flexible Spending Account program:

- \* Regular full-time employees
- \* Regular part-time employees eligible for health insurance benefits

Participation in the Health Care and/or Dependent Care FSA is optional and determined on an annual basis for the plan year. You must enroll each plan year. You determine how much to contribute to the account, up to a specified maximum, based on anticipated expenses during the plan year. The maximum contribution for your health care expenses and/or Dependent Care FSA is established annually by the IRS. Contributions are directed to the account through salary reduction on a pre-tax basis. This tax-free money is then available to you for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses. Since the amounts that remain in the account at the end of the plan year are forfeited, you should take care not to over-fund your account.

Contact the Human Resources Director for more information on the Flexible Spending Account program and to obtain enrollment and reimbursement forms and worksheets with examples of reimbursable and non-reimbursable expenses.

## **H. Health Insurance**

Pulaski County's health insurance plan provides employees and their dependents access to medical, dental, and vision care insurance benefits. Employees in the following employment classifications are eligible to participate in the health insurance plan:

- \* Regular full-time employees
- \* Regular part-time employees eligible under Affordable Health Care Act guidelines

Eligible employees may participate in the health insurance plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between Pulaski County and the insurance carrier. The County pays a percentage of the costs. Premiums and plan designs may vary from year to year.

Dental and Vision insurance is not governed by the Affordable Care Act. Dental insurance may be purchased with or without participation in the health care plan. Vision insurance is a voluntary benefit; however, certain vision benefits are embedded into the health insurance plan. Health, Vision and Dental plan designs and premiums may vary from year to year.

A change in employment classification that would result in loss of eligibility to participate in the health insurance plan may qualify an employee for benefits continuation under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). Refer to the Benefits Continuation (COBRA) Policy for more information.

Details of the health insurance plan are described in the Summary of Benefits and Coverages (SBC). An SBC and information on cost of coverage will be provided in advance of enrollment to eligible employees. Contact the Human Resources Director for more information about health insurance benefits.

### **OTHER INSURANCES:**

A number of other voluntary insurance policies are available to employee through payroll deduction that include cancer, accident, critical insurance and life. The premium for voluntary benefits is born solely by the employee.

## **I. Sick and Vacation Leave**

### **1. Sick Leave (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Pulaski County provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries. Eligible employee classification(s):

- \* Regular full-time employees
- \* Part-time employees

Sick leave shall be defined as leave with pay granted for an illness; bodily injury resulting in a temporary disability, medically required confinement, medical, dental and vision appointments or an illness in the home requiring the employee not to report to work. Leave shall also be granted for an immediate family member defined as spouse, parent, son, daughter, grandchild, stepchildren or stepparents. Paid sick leave can be used in minimum increments of 15 minutes.

#### **REGULAR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES:**

VRS Plan I and VRS Plan II employees (those hired or time earned with the Virginia Retirement System before July 1, 2014) shall earn sick leave at a rate of 1.25 days/10 hours per month. Sick leave if not exhausted in the year, in which it accrues, may be carried over from year to year without limit. Employees shall retain all benefits and seniority while out on approved sick leave.

VRS Hybrid employees (those hired or time earned with the Virginia Retirement System after July 1, 2014) shall accrue sick leave on the following basis:

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Sick Leave Credit Earned Per Month</u>
0 through 4	.67 days/5.36 hours
5 through 9	.75 days/6.00 hours
10 +	.83 days/6.64 hours

Sick leave not exhausted in the year in which it accrues, may be carried over from year to year; however, Hybrid members will be capped at 60 days accrual.

#### **REGULAR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES:**

Sick leave shall also be extended on a pro-rated basis to part-time employees who work at least 20 hours per week as follows:

<u>Time Worked</u>	<u>Amount Earned Per Month</u>
20-25 hours per week	.63 day/5.04 hours
26-30 hours per week	.94 day/7.52 hours
31-35 hours per week	1.10 days/8.89 hours
36-40 hours per week	1.25 days/ 10 hours

In cases where employees who move from regular full-time status to a regular part-time status may resume earning sick leave at the regular full-time status rate when returning to full-time employment.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should notify their direct supervisor at least one hour prior to the scheduled start of their workday. The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. Failure to do so may result in termination of employment.

Employees may be required to furnish a physician's statement at any time; however, if an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, a physician's statement must be provided verifying the disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. Documentation may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits.

This statement shall include:

- a. the expected date on which the employee will be able to return to normal duties or light/modified duty; and
- b. the approximate date of medical release by the physician.

Before returning to work from a sick leave absence of 3 calendar days or more, an employee must provide a physician's verification to Human Resources that he or she may safely return to work.

Sick leave benefits will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or shift differentials.

As an additional condition of eligibility for sick leave benefits, an employee on an extended absence must apply for any other available compensation and benefits, such as workers' compensation. Sick leave benefits will be used to supplement any payments that an employee is eligible to receive from state disability insurance, workers' compensation or Pulaski County-provided disability insurance programs. The combination of any such disability payments and sick leave benefits cannot exceed the employee's normal weekly earnings.

Sick leave benefits are intended solely to provide income protection in the event of illness or injury, and may not be used for any other absence. Unused sick leave benefits will not be paid to employees while they are employed or upon termination of employment. However, employees who retire from Pulaski County shall be paid 50% of any unused sick leave upon VRS service or disability retirement.

If an employee no longer has sick leave available, other appropriate leave policies would then be available (example: vacation leave, comp-time, leave without pay, FMLA, etc.).

An employee's abuse of this policy may result in the employee's immediate dismissal or such other disciplinary actions as appropriate.

Employees on approved sick leave shall be paid their prevailing wage based on their usual scheduled workweek not to exceed 40 hours. Public Safety Department employees on approved sick leave shall be paid their prevailing wage based on their usual prevailing scheduled workweek.

#### **Sick Leave Bank Policy: (Updated 12/18/2023)**

The intent of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide some protection for beginning employees who have not had time to accrue sick leave time and for those employees who may experience a catastrophic or long-term illness. This policy also applies to pregnancy leave.

#### **Regular Membership: (Updated 3/7/2024)**

1. Membership shall be on a voluntary basis only.
2. Membership may be renewed in writing prior to July 1 of each year.
3. Membership is available to employees who earn sick leave benefits monthly.
4. VRS Hybrid employees are eligible, however:
  - they are only eligible during their first year of employment
  - only after they have fulfilled their first 30 workdays of employment
  - and may only receive up to fifteen days or 120 hours of sick leave donation

#### **Enrollment:**

1. An eligible VRS Plan 1 or Plan II employee may enroll by donating a minimum of one day or 8 hours annually or .67 for VRS Hybrid employees of his/her accumulated sick leave to the bank.

2. A Sick Leave Bank Enrollment Form must be submitted to Human Resources.
3. New hires must enroll within the first thirty (30) calendar days of employment.

All employees must be employed at least thirty (30) days before becoming eligible for the Sick Leave Bank. VRS Hybrid employees are capped at a maximum of fifteen (15) days of total sick leave bank time. VRS Plan I and II employees are limited to ten (10) days or 80 hours during their orientation period (first six months); however, following the orientation period, they may be granted up to thirty (30) days or 240 hours.

#### Use of Sick Leave Bank:

1. The employee must make application for the benefit, it is not automatic.
2. No member of the bank shall be granted sick leave until his/her own sick, vacation and comp leave has been exhausted.
3. Once the employee has exhausted all leave time available, there is a five-day waiting period in which the employee must go without pay.
4. A maximum of 30 days or 240 hours each fiscal year may be withdrawn by a member meeting the requirements. VRS Hybrid employees may only withdraw ten days or 80 hours from the bank and only during the first year of employment.
5. Participating members must meet the requirements of statements two (2) and three (3) at the beginning of each fiscal year before borrowing from the bank again.
6. Members utilizing sick leave days from the bank will not have to replace these days except as a regular contributing member of the bank.
7. Termination of membership from the bank, termination of employment, resignation or retirement from the County will not permit an employee to withdraw his/her previously contributed days.
8. The Sick Leave Bank may also be used by an enrolled employee for an illness or injury of an immediate family member of the enrolled employee. Immediate family members consist of spouse, parent, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, grandchild, stepchildren, stepparents, legal guardian and same relatives of the spouse. Said illness or injury shall be certified by a doctor as FMLA for a family member's serious health condition.
9. Extenuating circumstances and approval of all Sick Leave Bank usage shall be considered by the Supervisor, County Administrator and Human Resources.
10. Days in the Sick Leave Bank that are not utilized will be carried over to the next year.
11. All Sick Leave Bank usage for employees will run concurrently with FMLA and the appropriate doctor's certification will be required for both the employee and the family member.
12. Employees are required to have ongoing communication with their supervisor and Human Resources regarding their intention to return to work and must establish a return to work date.

#### Additional Sick Leave Bank Days: Additional Sick Leave Bank days may be requested under the following conditions:

1. An employee who is an existing participant must complete the Request for Additional Sick Leave Days form and submit it to the Human Resources Department.
2. The employee must have already exhausted the maximum thirty (30) days allowed as a VRS Plan I or Plan II employee. Hybrid Plan members are capped at fifteen (15) days.
3. The maximum number of days allowed from the bank shall be capped at sixty (60) days.

#### Retention of Sick Leave Bank Days:

Once an employee returns to work, either in a full-time or a part-time capacity, the maximum number of days allowed to be retained by the employee from sick leave days remaining from either the Sick Leave Bank or days donated by employees from the Sick Leave Bank shall be five (5).

#### Transfer of Sick Leave Days Upon Resignation of Employment:

An employee who is a member of the Sick Leave Bank that resigns employment may transfer up to 50% of their unused sick leave balance to the Sick Leave Bank upon resignation of employment and must notify HR of the request.

## **2. Vacation Leave (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Vacation time off with pay is available to eligible employees to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. Employees in the following employment classification(s) are eligible to earn and use vacation time as described in this policy:

- \* Regular full-time employees
- \* Regular Part-time employees

The employee must request time off in advance. In most cases, a two weeks' notice is required for extended vacation requests unless otherwise specified by the department head. During times of staff shortages, emergency situations, etc., vacation benefits may be denied. An employee is not allowed to take more than seven (7) consecutive working days of vacation leave unless specifically authorized by the supervisor or department head. Emergency requests will only be considered if it does not create a hardship on the department. Any leave request depends upon the availability of leave time the employee has remaining. Paid vacation time can be used in increments of 15 minutes.

The amount of paid vacation time employees receive each year increases with the length of their employment as shown in the following schedule:

### **REGULAR FULL TIME VACATION LEAVE SCHEDULE**

<u>Yrs of Service</u>	<u>Amt. Earned Per Month</u>	<u>Amt. Earned Per Year</u>	<u>Max. Accumulation</u>
0-4	1.00 day/8 hrs	12 days/96 hrs	24 days/192 hrs
5-9	1.25 days/10 hrs	15 days/120 hrs	30 days/240 hrs
10-19	1.50 days/12 hrs	18 days/144 hrs	36 days/288 hrs
20 +	1.75 days/14 hrs	21 days/168 hrs	42 days/336 hrs

### **REGULAR PART TIME VACATION LEAVE SCHEDULE**

<u>Hours Worked</u>	<u>Amt. Earned Per Month</u>
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20-25 hours per week - .50 day per month/4 hours  
26-30 hours per week - .75 day per month/6 hours  
31-35 hours per week - .88 day per month/7.04 hours  
36-40 hours per week - 1.00 day per month/8 hours

Vacation time for part-time employees shall increase on a pro-rate basis as outlined above and the same maximum accruals shall apply for both full-time and part-time employees.

Public Safety Department employees whose salaries are based on a 48-hour workweek are placed on the "Days Earned per month" schedule one-step ahead of where their current years of service indicates. This is due to their length of shifts are often 16 to 24 hours in duration and salaries are based on additional work hours per week. Public Safety Department employees follow the standard "Maximum Accumulation" table as all other County employees.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY AND SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT FULL-TIME VACATION LEAVE SCHEDULE (Sheriff's Department Effective July 1, 2024)**

<u>Yrs of Service</u>	<u>Amt. Earned Per Month</u>	<u>Amount Earned Per Year</u>	<u>Max. Accumulation</u>
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0-4	1.25 days/10 hours	15days/120 hours	30 days/240 hours
5-9	1.50 days/12 hours	18 days/144 hours	36 days/288 hours
10-19	1.75 days/14 hours	21 days/168 hours	42 days/336 hours
20 +	2.00 days/16 hours	24 days/192 hours	42 days/336 hours

**PUBLIC SAFETY REGULAR PART-TIME VACATION LEAVE SCHEDULE (added 8/28/2023)**

<u>Yrs of Service</u>	<u>Amt. Earned Per Month</u>	<u>Amount Earned Per Year</u>	<u>Max. Accumulation</u>
0-4	.625 days/5 hours	7.5 days/60 hours	30 days/240 hours
5-9	.75 days/6 hours	9 days/72 hours	36 days/288 hours
10-19	.875 days/7 hours	10.5 days/84 hours	42 days/336 hours
20 +	1.00 days/8 hours	12 days/96 hours	42 days/336 hours

The length of eligible service is calculated on the employee's anniversary date. An employee's benefit year may be extended for any significant leave of absence except military leave of absence. Military leave has no effect on this calculation.

Once employees enter an eligible employment classification, they begin to earn paid vacation time according to the schedule. They can request use of vacation time after it is earned.

Vacation time off is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of vacation. It does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or shift differentials.

Upon separation, termination or reclassification of employment from full-time to part-time status or vice versa, employees will be paid for unused vacation time that has been earned through the last day of work up to the maximum accrual based on their years of service. Employees who move from full-time to part-time and back to full-time will lose their original hire date status and will begin earning leave time at a full-time rate based on the current full-time hire date. Upon the death of an employee, the employee's estate will be paid for accumulated vacation leave also up to the maximum accrual based on years of service. Under normal circumstances, when an employee exceeds the maximum number of vacation time allowed at the time the transfer occurs, it will be the responsibility of the employee and the supervisor to utilize such leave prior to the transfer to reduce the burden on the new department. Leave may be paid out to the employee by the original department if the time cannot be reduced or short staffing is an issue.

Vacation leave accrued above the maximum rate above shall be lost by full-time and part-time employees if it is not used by December 31st of each year unless specifically approved by the County Administrator in situations where unexpected departmental vacancies make it difficult for remaining employees to take time off; however, the maximum amount that shall be allowed to carry over shall not exceed ten days.

### **3. Birthday Leave**

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are provided birthday leave. Full-time employees receive eight hours of pay and regular part-time employees receive four. The time may be used anytime during the month in which the employee's birthday falls. If the employee does not take the time, it may not be carried over to the next month. Public Safety Department (non-administrative) employees shall receive eight hours of holiday bonus in lieu of time off during the month of their birthday. Public Safety Administrative employees shall follow the policy as written for all other County employees.

## **J. Paid Holidays (Updated 07-22-2024)**

The County normally recognizes the following holidays; however, the County may decide to schedule work on a holiday depending upon job requirements.

- \* New Year's Day (January 1)
- \* Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
- \* President's Day (third Monday in February)
- \* Good Friday (Friday before Easter)
- \* Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- \* Juneteenth (June 19th)
- \* Independence Day (July 4)
- \* Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- \* Columbus Day (second Monday in October)
- \* Election Day (Second Tuesday in November)
- \* Veterans' Day (November 11)
- \* Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
- \* Day after Thanksgiving
- \* Christmas (December 25)

In order to remain consistent with the State of Virginia holiday schedule, all additional holidays that are granted by the Governor shall also be designated as additional holidays by the County. Employees shall be notified of additional holidays via email each year.

Pulaski County will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees. Eligible employee classification(s):

- \*Regular full-time employees (Non-Public Safety Department)
- \*Regular part-time employees (Non-Public Safety Department)

### Full-Time Holiday Pay:

8 hours for full day and 4 hours for half day

Non-Exempt Sheriff's Deputies that work 8 hours earn 1.5 hours of holiday time, Deputies that work 12 hours also earn time at 1.5 Exempt Sheriff's Personnel would earn straight time as holiday pay.

### Part-Time Holiday Pay:

<u>Hours Worked</u>	<u>Amt. Earned Per Month</u>
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20-25 hours per week - .50 day per month/4 hours	
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26-30 hours per week - .75 day per month/6 hours	
--	--

31-35 hours per week - .88 day per month/7.04 hours	
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36-40 hours per week - 1.00 day per month/8 hours	
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The following provisions apply with regard to holidays observed by the County:

When a recognized holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, its observance will be at The County Administrator's discretion, but typically paid holiday that fall on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday and paid holiday that fall on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.



To be eligible for holiday pay, an employee must work the last regularly scheduled workday preceding the holiday and the first regularly scheduled workday following the holiday. An employee on Leave Without Pay status the day before and/or the day after a holiday will not be paid for the holiday. However, an employee on approved sick leave or annual vacation leave would be eligible for holiday pay.

Non-Exempt staff who work County recognized holidays shall be paid at the rate of time and one-half for all hours worked during the recognized holiday. Exempt Executive, Professional & IT employees receive straight time compensatory time. Exempt Administrative employees receive hours worked at time and one-half. County and PSA employees who are scheduled off on recognized holidays receive 8 hours pay for full holidays and 4 hours when the holiday is only a half day. Part-time employees working more than twenty hours that earn leave time are pro-rated based on the average number of hours they work in a week.

#### **Public Safety Department Employees:**

Public Safety Department Administrative Staff and Sheriff's Department Administrative Staff follow County policy as "Regular full time employees" in regards to Holidays

Public Safety Department salaried and hourly employees who work on a holiday shall be compensated by paying time and a bonus pay rate for all hours worked.

No pay will be given for the holiday if the employee does not work the holiday.

#### **PSA Sanitation Department Employees:**

At the choice of the employees, only 4 holidays are observed in the Sanitation Department (New Years, July 4th, Thanksgiving, and Christmas). All other holidays are worked. Only one day is observed for each of these holidays.

Unlike regular workdays, early release before 3 p.m. will be allowed on holidays with supervisor approval, however, should an accident occur, no early release will be allowed. The supervisor shall sign off on all schedule changes.

#### **Alternate Holidays**

Agencies or departments that are required to remain open during a holiday as outlined above may establish alternate schedules that must provide the same number of holidays as required above.

#### **Religious Holidays**

Supervisors should make reasonable accommodation in granting leave requests for the religious holiday needs of employees unless the accommodation will result in undue hardship for the department. Employees may use accrued vacation leave or comp-time if needed. Employees should make their requests known in advance to allow the department to accommodate the request.

### **K. Employee Tool Allowance**

#### **Garage Personnel**

The County may require that designated positions provide tools to perform their job duties. In an effort to diminish a hardship on the employee and provide the best working conditions and productivity, the County provides a tool allowance to the garage department personnel.

Salaries for these positions will be augmented with a supplement of \$1,420 annually to be used to provide the needed tools required for those positions. When filling one of these positions, the employee will be instructed that a portion of their salary is designated for the purchase of tools. The quantity and type of tools, as well as the amount of the added benefit will be determined by the position being filled. Tools purchased through this allowance are the property of the employee;



however, the employee must retain all receipts and provide them to Human Resources upon departure from employment to retain the tools purchased.

#### General Services Personnel

The County will furnish all tools required by the General Services Department personnel, they will not receive a salary supplement, and all tools of this department shall remain the property of Pulaski County.

As jobs are reclassified or responsibilities change, additional positions may be added or removed from this policy and/or the supplement for tools may be eliminated.

### **L. Family and Medical Leave**

In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended ("FMLA"), the County provides family and medical leave to employees as follows:

#### **Reasons For Taking Leave**

1. An eligible employee shall be entitled to a total of 12 workweeks of leave during a rolling 12-month period measured from the date an employee uses FMLA leave for one or more of the following:
  - (a) Because of the birth of a child of the employee and in order to care or bond for such child or for the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
  - (b) In order to care for the spouse, son, daughter, or parent, of the employee, if such spouse, son, daughter, or parent has a serious health condition.
  - (c) Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the position of such employee.
  - (d) Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.
2. An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a member of the Armed Forces 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 is entitled to a total of 26 workweeks of leave during a 12-month calendar year measured from the date an employee uses FMLA leave to care for the service member. The leave described in this paragraph shall only be available during a single 12-month period.
3. During the single 12-month period described in paragraph 2, an eligible employee shall be entitled to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave under paragraphs 1 and 2. Nothing in this paragraph will limit the availability of leave under paragraph 1 during any other 12-month period.
4. Employee's entitlement to FMLA leave for birth or placement of a child expires 12 months after the birth or placement of the child. Also, leave must be taken as a block of time only and intermittent bonding/birth leave is not allowed unless specifically approved by the department head.

#### **Eligibility Requirements**

An employee must be employed by the County at least one year and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months.

#### **VRS Hybrid Employees**

Employees that are covered under the VRS Hybrid plan may be eligible for short-term disability while on FMLA, if they have met the one year waiting period and if the leave is related to the employees own serious health condition, which includes pregnancy.

### **VRS Contributions**

Pulaski County will continue to pay VRS Life Insurance contributions on behalf of the employee while on FMLA leave. If the employee is utilizing paid leave, VRS contributions will continue to be made; however, if the employee is designated on Leave Without Pay (LWOP), VRS contributions cannot be made.

### **Workers Compensation**

Employees who sustain a work related illness or injury that is deemed compensable by Workers Compensation shall have their FMLA leave run concurrently with any Workers Compensation benefits.

### **Leave Taken Intermittently or on a Reduced Leave Schedule**

1. An employee may take intermittent leave or may work a reduced leave schedule due to health or health care reasons when medically necessary.
2. Normal call in procedures must be followed as established by the department head.
3. A new parent may not take intermittent leave or work a reduced schedule.
4. If an employee is taking intermittent leave, or leave on a reduced leave schedule, the County temporarily may reassign such employee to an alternative position for which the employee is qualified and that has equivalent pay and benefits and better accommodates recurring periods of leave than the regular position of the employee.

### **FMLA Leave for Spouses employed by the County**

1. In any case in which a husband and wife are both entitled to leave, the combined total number of workweeks of leave both may take is limited to 12 workweeks during a 12-month period, if such leave is taken for the birth or placement of a new child or to care for a sick parent.
2. The combined total number of workweeks of leave that a husband and wife may take is limited to 26 workweeks during the single 12-month period if the leave is to care for a service member or is a combination of caring for a service member and for the birth or placement of a new child or to care for a sick parent.

### **Notice of Need for FMLA Leave**

1. An employee must provide a minimum of 30 days' advance notice when the need for leave is foreseeable.
2. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide as much notice as is practicable under the circumstances.
3. In any case, in which the necessity for leave for a qualifying exigency is not foreseeable, whether because the employee's family member is on active duty, or because of notification of an impending call or order

to active duty in support of a contingency operation, the employee must provide such notice to the County as is reasonable and practicable.

### **Medical Certifications**

1. All employees who are taking FMLA leave are required to submit an appropriate Certification form, which is available from Human Resources.
2. The Certification must be returned within 15 days. Failure to return the Certification in a timely fashion may result in the delay or denial of the leave.
3. Employees may be required to re-certify from time to time such as when the employee requests or requires an extension of the leave, if the circumstances of the leave change, or for other justifiable reasons.
4. The County reserves the right to require at County expense a second Certification. If the first and second Certifications differ, the County may require a third Certification at County expense, which will be controlling.

### **Benefit Protection**

1. If an employee is currently covered under the County's health benefits plan, these benefits will be maintained during the approved FMLA leave. Employees will be required to pay their portion of all benefit premiums on a monthly basis. Payment must be received by the Human Resources Department no later than the 20th day of the month. Non-payment of more than 30 days may result in termination of coverage.
2. Employees on FMLA leave will not lose eligibility/entitlement to any benefits/employment programs accrued prior to the day the leave commenced.
3. Vacation, sick leave and holiday pay shall continue during FMLA leave. Jury duty and bereavement leave will not be granted while on FMLA leave.

### **Paid and Unpaid FMLA Leave**

The County will require the use of all accrued but unused paid leave (vacation, sick leave, personal leave, if applicable to the case, etc.) prior to any unpaid leave. The FMLA leave time frame will not be increased by the length of any paid leave (paid leave and unpaid FMLA leave cannot be stacked to increase leave time; instead, such leave must run concurrently). Any paid sick or other leave due to a serious health condition will be designated as FMLA leave and will be counted against the employee's annual FMLA entitlement. In addition, any workers' compensation or other disability leave resulting from a serious health condition will be designated as FMLA leave. In other words, all FMLA-qualifying paid leave will be designated as FMLA leave and count against an employee's entitlement.

### **Return to Work**

1. All employees on FMLA leave must notify his/her immediate supervisor and Human resources prior to returning to work.
2. Employees who are on FMLA leave for their own serious health condition must submit a fitness for duty report to his/her supervisor and Human Resources prior to returning to work.

3. Upon return from an approved FMLA leave, an employee will be restored to his or her original or an equivalent position with equivalent pay and benefits.
4. Certain “key employees” may be denied job restoration at the conclusion of the leave.
5. Failure of an employee to return to work after the exhaustion of leave will be addressed in accordance with the County’s attendance policies.

#### **Initiating a Request For FMLA Leave:**

As soon as an employee is aware of the possibility of an FMLA leave request, they should notify their supervisor (employees do not have to disclose the reason of their leave request) and Human Resources to complete the required FMLA paperwork. If the employee provides sufficient notice of the need for leave, the County may conditionally designate the leave as FMLA-qualifying pending the receipt of a Certification from the employee’s health care provider. The final determination as to the request for leave will be made upon receipt of the Certification by Human Resources.

#### **Leave Accrual:**

Benefit accruals such as sick leave or vacation will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

#### **Restrictions While on FMLA:**

Employees may not work subsequent jobs on the side while on FMLA leave.

Employees who are designated as taking FMLA for the care of a family member must be providing care while taking FMLA.

### **M. Sabbatical Leave**

Sabbatical leave rewards long-term Pulaski County employees with time off from work to pursue personal interests, further their education through specialized training, or to relax and renew their work dedication and commitment. Sabbatical leave is considered unpaid leave. All regular full-time employees are eligible for a sabbatical leave after completing 5 years of continuous service.

Sabbatical leave may be taken for a period of six months. It does not vest or accumulate. Sabbatical leave will not be paid out if the employee terminates from employment with Pulaski County before becoming eligible, nor will it be paid out in lieu of taking the sabbatical. The business needs of Pulaski County will take priority over the scheduling of sabbatical leave. Requests will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated workload requirements, staffing considerations during the period of the sabbatical and must be approved by the supervisor and/or department head and the County Administrator.

During a sabbatical leave, an employee may not accept paid employment with another employer. Employees taking a sabbatical leave must sign a written agreement obligating them to return to Pulaski County for at least a period of 365 days of employment after expiration of the term of the leave.

Employees are required to pay 100% of their insurance premiums for the entire time of the sabbatical. Employees leave time will also be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

When a sabbatical leave ends, the employee will be reinstated to the same position, unless either the job ceased to exist because of legitimate business reasons or each means of preserving the job would substantially undermine the ability to operate Pulaski County safely and efficiently. If the same position is not available, the employee will be offered a comparable position in terms of such issues as pay, location, job content, and promotional opportunities.

Employees requesting sabbatical leave are aware that the leave will not be paid leave. The leave request must be documented and articulated in writing to the supervisor and County Administrator as to the reason for the request, the start and end date of the request, whether the leave will be intermittent or full-days, etc.

This specific leave does not apply to Military Leave.

## **N. Travel Policy (Updated 07-22-2024)**

### **CONFERENCE TRAVEL COSTS POLICY:**

Costs for conference attendance should be submitted with annual budget requests. The County Administrator in developing the budget shall indicate any conference that is not approved. Travel funding in whole or in part by the County shall be subject to advance notice to the Board of Supervisors, through notification of the County Administrator. Attendance, lodging, and registration shall be at the lowest reasonable cost. Lodging provided at the facility where the conference is held shall be deemed appropriate. Government discounts shall be requested for all lodging, unless the conference arrangements include such discounts.

### **MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

Employees are required to request a County vehicle for business travel; however, should a County vehicle not be available, the employee shall receive mileage reimbursement at the current state approved rate. Personal vehicle usage will be based on:

1. The personal vehicle use policy only applies when an employee's supervisor either requests the employee use their own vehicle as a means of transportation in the performance of their job duties;
2. In the situation that a County vehicle is unable to be driven (broken down, requires maintenance, etc.), the employee may use their own personal vehicle.
3. When using his/her own personal vehicle, the employee will be entitled to compensation for mileage as follows:

A travel reimbursement form should be submitted by the employee for this reimbursement and include specific dates and locations of traveled miles. The state mileage reimbursement rate may change from time to time. The travel form must be submitted by the employee and signed by the employee's immediate supervisor to receive reimbursement.

### **MEALS REIMBURSEMENT (updated 04/03/2023)**

Pulaski County reimburses employees for out of County meal expenses at the following per diem basis of \$13.50 for breakfast, \$16.50 for lunch and \$29.00 for dinner. Reimbursement for breakfast is allowed if travel requires leaving home before 6:00 a.m. and for dinner if returning home after 7:00 p.m. Exceptions are for meetings where meals are provided as a part of the meeting program. A travel reimbursement form must be submitted by an employee and signed by the employee's immediate supervisor to receive reimbursement. Per IRS Taxable Fringe Benefit Regulations, employees are subject to taxable meals if the meals are not a result of an overnight stay.

County of Pulaski shall reimburse an employee for travel expenses after said expenses have been incurred by the employee. Said travel expenses must be for County related business and include meals, motel/hotel expenses, mileage, and transportation fees. Employees may submit said expenses on the appropriate travel expense forms. All expenses must be submitted on a travel reimbursement form and signed by the employee's immediate supervisor.

If *per diems* don't exceed the fed's rates, the reimbursement is tax-free and employees don't have to account for the amount of the expenses the *per diems* cover. However, they must still document the time, place and business purpose of their trips and submit receipts for expenses the *per diems* don't cover.

If *per diems* exceed the fed's rates, you can still reimburse employees tax-free, but they must substantiate their excess expenses. If adequate substantiation is not provided, reimbursements must be taxed.

Employees utilizing a County issued credit card will not be eligible to receive any additional reimbursement for meals or travel expenses above the amount charged to the credit card. Please see the County credit card policy for additional information.

Advance travel expenses to an employee shall only be made in an unusual situation and only upon approval of the County Administrator. Advance travel expenses must be requested on a travel expense form and signed by the County Administrator.

Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business time must promptly report the incident to their immediate supervisor. Vehicles owned, leased, or rented by Pulaski County may not be used for personal use without prior approval. Employees must also have a signed driver alert form on file to be eligible to drive a County vehicle.

With prior approval, employees on business travel may be accompanied by a family member or friend, when the presence of a companion will not interfere with successful completion of business objectives. Generally, employees are also permitted to combine personal travel with business travel, as long as time away from work is approved. Additional expenses arising from such nonbusiness travel are the responsibility of the employee.

When travel is completed, employees should submit completed travel expense reports within 10 days. Failure to submit receipts may result in denial of payment.

Employees should contact their supervisor for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

The Economic Development Authority voted on May 16, 2017 to approve international travel reimbursements based on the State per diem rate.

Abuse of this business travel expenses policy, including falsifying expense reports to reflect costs not incurred by the employee, may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **O. Employee Service Awards (updated 07/24/2023)**

### Purpose

The purpose of the Employee Service Awards Program is to commend faithful service performed by County employees, to emphasize that each individual plays an important role in the County's progress, to recognize that an employee's contribution grows with each additional year of service and to encourage career employment with Pulaski County.

### Basis of Awards

1. Determination of Awards - Service awards will be based on continuous service through October 31st each year as defined below by eligible employees.
2. Continuous Service - Any break in service for a period of thirty (30) or more consecutive calendar days shall destroy the continuity of service of the employee. However, authorized leaves of absence such as vacation, sick leave, military leave, FMLA or other approved leaves of absence shall not destroy continuity of service and credit to that time will be granted. Any regular full-time employee that moves to a regular part-time position and back to a regular full-time position will not lose their continuous service basis for the award since the employee was fully employed in some capacity for the entire duration without an actual break in service.

3. Dismissal - No credit shall be given for employment when the employee is terminated from employment. Any employee that is terminated and is later re-employed by the County shall not receive credit for previous employment.
4. Transfer - The original employment date is used to determine continuous service by the employee; however, employees transferring between the departments of the PSA or County would be included in continuous service.
5. Seasonal & Part-Time Employees - will be recognized but with certificates of service only (no monetary awards). Permanent part-time employees will receive pro-rated monetary awards. Part-time employment will count towards full-time credit if there has been no more than a thirty (30) day break in service.

### Awards

Eligible full-time employees will be given a service recognition certificate and a gift with each five years of continuous employment with Pulaski County.

The following awards/recognitions are awarded to Pulaski County employees and will be grossed up to net the following amounts:

5 years - \$150  
10 years - \$200  
15 years - \$250  
20 years - \$300  
25 years - \$350  
30 years - \$400  
35 years - \$450  
40 years - \$500  
\$100 for each additional five years of service after 40 years

Employees who are considered part-time who work more than 600 hours AND are scheduled to work 12 months out of the year with other agencies or departments (subjected to approval and reimbursement by those agencies) shall be eligible to receive the annual award. In order to receive the award, the employee must still be employed as of November 15th of that year.

### Service Side Arm in Lieu of Retirement Gift

Per Virginia Code Section 59.1-148.3, as amended and outlined in the Code, the Board of Supervisors allows Sheriff's Deputies with a minimum of 10 years of service the option to purchase their side arm at a price that is equivalent to or less than the weapon's fair market value on the date of the purchase by the deputy.

### Retiree Gifts & Bonuses

It shall be the policy of Pulaski County to recognize retirees in the following manner, based on years of service:

5-9 Years	A County shaped wooden plaque and County lapel pin.
10 - 15 Years	A County shaped wooden plaque, a County lapel pin and a county logo shirt.
16 - 20 Years	A County shaped wooden plaque, a County lapel pin, a County logo shirt a courthouse print and a cash bonus of \$600.
21 - 29 Years	A County shaped wooden plaque, a County lapel pin, a County logo shirt, a courthouse print, a reception by the County OR a cash bonus of \$1,000. At the discretion of the employee, based on the cost of a reception, the employee may request the difference as a cash bonus up to a combined maximum of \$1,000.

30 Years & Above      A County shaped wooden plaque, a County lapel pin, a county logo shirt, a courthouse print, a resolution signed by the Board of Supervisors, a reception by the County OR a cash bonus of \$1,500. At the discretion of the employee, based on the cost of a reception, the employee may request the difference as a cash bonus up to a combined maximum of \$1,500.

The above policy as it pertains to years of service, shall only apply to years of service worked at Pulaski County and will not be based on service in the VRS system that may reflect time served with other VRS covered employers.

Cash awards or receptions will not be provided by the County where the County is only providing payroll services or service as a fiscal agent to non-County agencies or departments such as FOCL, NRV Airport and New River Community Corrections.

#### **GED Bonus**

Employees who obtain their GED Certificate are awarded a \$100 cash bonus. A copy of the GED certificate should be provided by the employee to Human Resources in order to receive the \$100 bonus.

*All bonuses are subject to tax as an IRS Taxable Fringe Benefit.*

#### **Public Service Authority Safety Award Bonus – See Appendix A**

#### **Public Service Authority CDL Incentive Bonus – See Appendix B**

#### **Public Service Authority Water Treatment Plant License Incentive – See Appendix C**

### **P. Employee Fitness Program**

In recognition of the importance of the health of County employees, the Board of Supervisors establishes the following policy applicable to Regular Full-time (to include introductory) employees.

Primary Purpose: To encourage improved physical fitness that can protect from heart attacks, strokes, high blood pressure, obesity, back pain, osteoporosis and improve mental health and reduce stress among employees. Poor physical condition affects all aspects of the life of an employee, including the quality of their lives both while at work and on their personal time.

Secondary Purpose: To help maintain affordable health insurance costs for employees. The fiscal impact of improved health is clearly secondary to the personal and professional benefits but must be recognized as one of the reasons for this initiative.

Benefits – Employees will be given **30 minutes up to three times per week** on the following conditions:

1. Service to the public is not to be impacted or adversely affected through approval by their immediate supervisor.
2. Employee participates in a group activity (two or more public employees) designed to increase cardio vascular health.
3. Employees pair up with at least one other public employee in walking, running, cycling, swimming, or other exercise program increasing the heart rate for a 20-minute period of time, with a measurement of pulse rates after a five-minute walk.
4. Minimum impact on normal County functions and the employee's workload.
5. Ability to schedule exercise times to avoid personal and professional conflict with other work related demands.



6. Employees would remain on the County time and may be contacted or interrupted during their workout time.
7. Exercise break time must be taken during normal working hours and must be in proximity to the normal working environment, office or place of employment.

\*Employees are encouraged to consult a physician before participating in any rigorous exercise-training program.

### **Q. Vehicle Fringe Benefit (Updated 07-22-2024)**

**Take-Home Vehicle Assignment:** A take-home vehicle will be provided to those employees who have management or supervisory duties/responsibilities and are routinely expected to respond to operational emergencies or business related events from the employee's residence during off duty hours. These vehicles are provided for use while commuting between a residence and a work location, in addition to using them for business purposes during the normal workweek. Typically, these employees occupy positions where it is impractical to implement a requirement to proceed to the Central Garage or County Administration Building to obtain a County vehicle, particularly in the event of an emergency.

Employees assigned a Take-home vehicle are authorized to drive such vehicle to and from work. Such employees are prohibited from using these vehicles during non-work hours for personal use, except in response to an operational emergency or business related event. However, because they have no other form of transportation during the normal work hours, the following exception is authorized - travel to and from lunch or incidental/personal errands - pursuant to the "de minimis" usage exemption in IRS Publication 15-B, Employers Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits.

The use of a County-owned take-home vehicle used to commute is a taxable, non-cash fringe benefit of \$1.50 per one way per day commute (\$3.00 for a round trip commute per day), under federal tax regulations. As such, this must be included as taxable income on employee wage and tax statements. The taxable benefit for commutes will be based on 245 working days per year (2,080 hours/8 hours per day = 260 days per year, less 15 days for approximate vacation/holiday time) X \$3.00 per day. These calculations equate to a taxable benefit of \$735 annually.

Employees who are provided a take-home vehicle should not house their vehicles outside of the County, even if their residence is located in another County. However, the County Administrator may grant an exception to this rule, if operational requirements necessitate.

The take-home vehicle use agreement will be required to be on file for each employee assigned a take-home vehicle.

This policy does not regulate public safety vehicles assigned to public safety employees and does not apply in emergency declarations and pending severe weather events. Finally, the taxable benefit does not apply to IRS approved utility or safety vehicles that are otherwise exempted by the IRS. Sheriff's Officer's are exempt from this policy.

### **R. Educational Assistance**

Pulaski County recognizes that the skills and knowledge of its employees are critical to the success of the County Government. The educational assistance program encourages personal development through formal education so that employees can maintain and improve job-related skills that enhance their contributions to the County.

Pulaski County will provide educational assistance to all eligible employees who have completed 180 calendar days of service in an eligible employment classification. To maintain eligibility, employees must remain on the active payroll and be performing their job satisfactorily. Employees are also required to participate in classes on their own time and it is not to interfere with the employees normal work schedule. Employees must complete an Education Assistance Request Form and have it approved by their supervisor and the County Administrator before classes begin. In addition, supervisors must submit the request for the annual budget process between January and March each year to be eligible for reimbursement. Educational reimbursement will equal to 50% or a maximum of \$2,500 annually and capped at a total of \$10,000. Employees in the following employee classification(s) are eligible for educational assistance:

\* Regular full-time employees

The County will reimburse tuition costs based upon the completion of the class or course and the maintenance of a C average or above. If the course is ungraded, reimbursement will be based upon completion of the class/course. Reimbursement will be made after sufficient documentation of the class/course is received. Classes and course work must be completed on the employee's time. Travel to and from classes are also the responsibility of the employee. Books and materials and/or equipment may be paid by the County; however, must be made subsequently available for other employee's use.

Employees participating in higher education opportunities to receive certificates and/or specific employment designation (i.e.: IPMA, ICMA, CZA, Virginia Waterworks, etc.) will be paid directly by the County and will not be subject to reimbursement.

While educational assistance is expected to enhance employees' performance and professional abilities, Pulaski County does not guarantee that participation in formal education will entitle the employee to advancement, a different job assignment, or pay increases.

Pulaski County invests in educational assistance to employees with the expectation that the investment be returned through enhanced job performance. However, if an employee voluntarily separates or is separated for cause from Pulaski County's employment within two years of the last educational assistance payment, the amount of the payment will be considered only a loan. Accordingly, the employee may be required to repay up to 100 percent of the original educational assistance payment upon separation of employment.

Employees should contact the Human Resources Director for more information or questions about educational assistance.

## **S. Training and Continued Education**

The County provides new and existing employees with mandatory and voluntary paid training opportunities. The County believes that on going and continuing education is important to stay fit in the industry. The success and competence of our employees is directly related to the success of the County as a whole. The 07-0 County encourages employees to partake in training and continued education opportunities relevant to the security system industry. Therefore, if employees discover an opportunity to excel their skills for the County, employees should talk with Their supervisor about including it as a paid training opportunity.

Employees will be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses incurred in prior approved short seminars, conferences, meetings, and other training sessions, coincident with the employee's routine responsibilities with the County. With prior approval of the County Administrator, employees may be reimbursed for the cost of tuition for actual class attendance or for correspondence courses, satisfactorily completed, which are directly job-related and which will enhance the employee's ability to perform the job for which he or she was employed.

Employees will be reimbursed for any prior approved training expenses incurred over and above any advancement of funds provided a reporting is made to the appropriate department head and then to the Accounting Department within five days after completion of training.

If an employee fails to attend or successfully complete any training or certification program or any seminar, conference, meeting, or other training session, except in the event of extenuating circumstances in the discretion of the County Administrator, the employee shall be responsible for any subsequent registration or other related costs and expenses associated with the same training which the employee failed to attend or successfully complete.

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## **OTHER BENEFITS**

### **A. Jury/Witness Duty**

Any employee who is serving on jury duty or any person, except a defendant in a criminal case, who is summoned or subpoenaed to appear in court, will be excused from work during the time they serve or appear in court, including travel time. Such employees are expected to return to work at the conclusion of their service if the employee will be able to work for four (4) hours or more in that regular work day; provided, however, that no person who is summoned and appears for jury duty for four or more hours, including travel time, in one day shall be required to start any work shift that begins on or after 5:00 p.m. on the day of appearance for jury duty or begins before 3:00 a.m. on the day following the day of appearance for jury duty.

The employee will be compensated for the difference between the amount received for service as a juror or appearance pursuant to subpoena as set forth above, and the amount of wages, computed at base rate, for the period of such court duty

upon presentation of proper evidence as to court duty and the amount of compensation received, if any. Vacation, sick leave, and holiday benefits will continue to accrue during paid jury duty leave.

An employee granted witness leave shall be compensated at the regular rate of pay during the court appearance.

A copy of the subpoena should be provided to the employee's supervisor and Human Resources immediately after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate the employee's absence. The employee is expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Court duty pay will not apply to any employee subpoenaed to appear as a defendant in a criminal case.

## **B. Court Appearance Leave**

Employees who are a victim of a crime or a witness to a crime are allowed to attend all criminal proceedings relating to a crime against the employee, as long as the employee has provided proper documentation of the proceedings as documented below pursuant to subsection A of Section 19.2-11.01 of the Code of Virginia and, if applicable, provided the employer a copy of the notice of each scheduled criminal proceeding that is provided to the employee as a victim. However, an employer may limit the leave provided under this section if the employee creates an undue hardship to the employers business.

"Undue hardship" means a significant difficulty and expense or the critical need for the employee.

"Criminal Proceedings" means a proceeding at which the victim has the right or opportunity to appear involving a crime against the victim including:

- The initial appearance of the person suspected of committing the criminal offense against the victim;
- Any proceeding in which the court considers the post-arrest release of the person accused of committing a criminal offense against the victim or the conditions of that release;
- Any proceeding in which a negotiated plea for the person accused of committing the criminal offense against the victim will be presented to the court;
- Any sentencing proceeding;
- Any proceeding in which post-conviction release from confinement is considered;
- Any probation revocation disposition proceeding or any proceeding in which the court is requested to terminate the probation of a person who is convicted of committing a criminal offense against the victim; or
- Any proceeding in which the court is requested to modify the terms of probation or intensive probation of a person if the modification will substantially affect the persons contact with or safety of the victim or if the modification involves restitution or incarceration status.

The employee requesting leave must give advance notice whenever possible of the need for leave to their supervisor and the Human Resources Director, and provide documentation verifying the need for the leave. Acceptable documentation includes:

- a police report indicating that the employee or a member of the employee's family was a victim of a crime;
- a court order protecting or separating the employee from the perpetrator of an act of domestic violence, or other evidence from the court or the prosecuting attorney that the employee has appeared in court; or
- documentation from a medical professional, domestic violence advocate, health care provider or counselor that the employee was undergoing treatment for physical or mental injuries or abuse resulting in victimization from an act of domestic violence, sexual assault or other crime.

Leave may be requested to:

- prepare for and attend court proceedings

- receive medical treatment or attend to medical treatment for a victim who is the employee or the employee's family member
- obtain a court-ordered relief to help ensure the health, safety or welfare of the victim
- procure a restraining order or a temporary restraining order (in the case of victims of domestic violence or sexual assault)

While this leave is unpaid leave, the employee may use accrued leave during the leave period.

Pulaski County will make every attempt to maintain the confidentiality of any information provided as certification of the need for court appearance leave.

### **C. Voting**

Generally, County employees are provided Election Day as a holiday; however, those employees or departments that must work on Election Day will be granted up to 1 hour of paid time off to vote.

Employees should request time off to vote from their supervisor at least two working days prior to the Election Day. Advance notice is required so that the necessary time off can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work shift, whichever provides the least disruption to the normal work schedule.

Employees must submit a voter's receipt on the first working day following the election to qualify for paid time off.

### **D. Community Services (updated 07/24/2023)**

Pulaski County recognizes the importance of building positive relationships within the community. Our business and our employees are interdependent of the service agencies, organizations, educational institutions, and various resources within the community. Pulaski County encourages and supports participation in community service activities that contribute to the community and foster future growth and development needs. Our goal is to help existing community service organizations implement and continue programs and projects that will improve the quality of life for the community at large.

All regular full-time employees may volunteer and take up to a maximum of 5 hours of normal paid work time within every one (1) month period to participate in a pre-approved community service activity in Pulaski County such as:

- Pulaski Community Youth Center
- Pulaski County School Programs
- Pulaski County Parks and Recreation Programs
- Pulaski Adult Daycare
- Pulaski Daily Bread
- Pulaski County Animal Shelter/Humane Society
- NRV Agency on Aging

The activity must be pre-approved utilizing a Volunteer Request Form issued by Human Resources and approved by the departmental supervisor and/or department head. Requests must be scheduled at least one (1) week in advance with your immediate supervisor. Upon completion of your volunteer service, the Human Resources Director must be provided with a statement indicating the date and amount of time volunteered to the community service organization. In order to document and acknowledge your effort and participation, any supporting information, photographs, or materials relating to the service activity should also be provided. Contact the Human Resources Director if you have any additional questions or suggestions about eligible community service activities.

### **E. Political Activity (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Every County employee is entitled to the right to vote and may join or affiliate with civic organizations of a partisan or political nature, attend political meetings, advocate and support the principles and policies of civic or political organizations

in accordance with Federal, State and local laws. An individual's political affiliation, preference or opinion will in no way influence the appointment, hiring, retention or promotion as a Pulaski County employee.

No Employee May:

1. Engage in any political campaigning or electioneering while on duty (excludes current Constitutional Officer)
2. Be required to directly or indirectly give, render, pay, offer, solicit or accept any money, services or other valuable consideration of or on account of any appointment, proposed appointment, promotion or proposed promotion to a position in Pulaski County. Employees of the County will not contribute money to any candidate or political party except strictly on a voluntary basis.
3. Be coerced or compelled to contribute any other employee of the County for political purposes.
4. Employees of the County will not solicit any assessment or subscription intended for political purpose from other employees or the general public.
5. Use any County supplies, materials, equipment or facilities for political purposes or to aid a political candidate, party or cause.

No person may simultaneously be classified as an employee and serve as a member of the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors. An employee wishing to run for political office, which may have a direct bearing on their job such as the Board of Supervisors, must take a leave of absence from their position from the date of filing for candidacy until the date of the election. Employees, excluding current Constitutional Officers, may NOT solicit signatures on petitions while on County time nor display political paraphernalia in their place of work.

It is the policy of Pulaski County to maintain efficiency, responsiveness and productivity in its operations and to prevent the use of County equipment in a fashion inconsistent with the public interest and the law. In accordance with Virginia law, no employee shall use County owned assets, including telephones, computers or related devices for political activities as defined in Virginia Code Section 15.2-1512.2.

**F. Bereavement Leave (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Employees who wish to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their supervisor immediately.

Up to 3 days of paid bereavement leave will be provided to eligible employees in the following classification(s). Bereavement pay shall not exceed three consecutive working days. Working days are defined as the employee's normal schedule for their particular department.

\* Regular full-time employees

\* Regular part-time employees working more than 20 hours per week

Leave is calculated based on the base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or shift differentials. Part-time employees shall receive compensation based on the holiday leave schedule.

Bereavement leave will normally be granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements. Employees may, with their supervisors' approval, use any available paid leave for additional time off as necessary.

Pulaski County defines "immediate family" as the employee's spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparents, grandchild, stepchildren, stepparents, step-grandparents, stepsiblings, guardian and same relatives of the spouse. If leave is required for anyone outside of "immediate family", annual leave or compensatory time must be utilized.

**G. Military Leave (updated 2/14/2023)**

Per Virginia Code §44-93, Leaves of Absence for employees of Commonwealth or political subdivisions. All officers and employees of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision of the Commonwealth who are former members of the armed services or members of the organized reserve forces of any of the armed services of the United States or National Guard shall be entitled to leaves of absence from their respective duties, without loss of seniority, accrued leave or efficiency rating, on all days during which they are engaged in federally funded military duty, or when called forth by the Governor pursuant to the provisions of §44-75.1 or §44-78.1.

There shall be no loss of regular employer pay during such leaves of absence, except that paid leaves of absence for federally funded military duty, to include training duty, shall not exceed 21 work days per federal fiscal year (October 1 – September 30), and except that no officers or employees shall receive paid leave for more than 21 workdays per federally funded tour of active military duty.

When relieved from such duty, they shall be restored to positions held by them when ordered to duty. If the office or position has been abolished or otherwise has ceased to exist during such leave of absence, they shall be reinstated in a position of like seniority, status and pay, if the position exists, or in a comparable vacant position for which they are qualified, unless to do so would be unreasonable.

For the purposes of this section, with respect to employees of the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions who do not normally work approximately equal workdays on five or more days of each calendar week, the term "workday" shall mean 1/260 of the total working hours such employee would be scheduled to work during an entire federal fiscal year, not taking into account any state holidays, annual leave, military leave, or other absences. Where such employee returns from federally funded military duty and the eight-hour rest period required by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (38 U.S.C. § 4301 et seq.) overlaps such employee's scheduled work shift, the employee shall receive paid military leave to the extent of such overlap.

In addition to the provisions of subsection A, any local government may pay such employee when activated for federally funded military duty all or any portion of the difference between his regular pay and the military pay received during all or any part of the term of active federally funded duty.

Continuation of health insurance benefits for persons on federally funded military leave of 30 days or less may retain health insurance coverage and only pay the normal employee share of the premium. Employees on military tours consisting of 31 days or more may be charged up to 102% of the premium. Employees must be reinstated to health insurance coverage upon return to employment.

An employee on extended leave without pay due to active military service shall be treated as though they were continuously employed for the purposes of determining benefits based on length of service, such as annual or sick leave accrual. An employee shall not accrue annual leave or sick leave credits while on military leave without pay. However, upon reinstatement to County service, the leave accrual rate shall be calculated to include the period of military leave without pay.

This policy does not apply to periodic weekend drills or attendance at military schools.

Please contact the Human Resources Director for more information or questions about Military Leave as well as to obtain the required forms to request Military Leave.

## **H. Social Security**

Social Security provides benefits for employees and their families as specified by law in the event of retirement, hospitalization after age 65 (Medicare), total and permanent disability before age 65, and death at any time. The County matches the amount of Social Security Taxes paid by each employee. Contact the local Social Security Office for details. There may be specific forms that require the employee's Social Security number; however, Pulaski County will not post, display or share or otherwise make available to the general public an employee's Social Security number.



## **I. Workers' Compensation**

Employees of The07-0 County are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance, which is purchased by the County. This insurance provides compensation to an employee for lost wages caused by illness, accidental injury, or death suffered in the course of or as a result of his/her employment with the County in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Eligibility:** Eligibility for benefits under Workers' Compensation insurance is automatic and is effective on date of hire.

**Reporting:** A report must be filed within twenty-four (24) hours of the onset of illness or injury to Company Nurse. The employee should notify the supervisor and the employee and/or supervisor should file the report. Failure to report may result in disciplinary action and possible loss of benefits.

**Benefits:** Worker's Compensation benefits provide weekly payments based upon a statutorily specified amount of the employee's regular earnings as well as payments for medical and hospital expenses arising out of an occupational illness or injury.

**Wage Continuation:** On the first day of the accident where injury has resulted and the employee cannot return to work that same day, the County will pay the employee up to eight (8) hours for that day. Any employee that is incapacitated from work due to a work related injury or illness (as designated by a panel physician), will remain on payroll with full pay by the County/PSA for the first seven working days of the absence. If the incapacity is deemed compensable by VACORP and extends beyond the initial seven days, Workers Compensation payments of 66 2/3% of the employee's gross average weekly wage shall commence with the 8<sup>th</sup> day of incapacity. If the employee is incapacitated for more than 21 days, VACORP will go back and pay the first seven days and the County/PSA will deduct those seven days either by utilizing leave time or will dock the employee's wages. The employee is required to use sick, vacation or comp time in this particular order of precedence to supplement their compensation up to a maximum of 33 1/3% or the amount required to the cost of fringe benefits.

**Effect on Continuous Service Date:** Any time lost by an employee due to an occupational illness or injury covered by Worker's Compensation insurance will be credited as active service for all County benefits.

## **J. Unemployment Compensation**

In the event of a separation from employment, you may be eligible for unemployment compensation. This benefit is provided in accordance with Virginia law and paid for by the County.

## **K. Continuation of Group Health Insurance (COBRA)**

One your FMLA is exhausted, you and/or your covered dependents will have the opportunity to continue medical and/or dental and vision benefits for a period of up to thirty-six (36) months under the provisions of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) when group medical and/or dental and vision coverage for you and/or your covered dependents would otherwise end due to your death or because:

- your employment terminates for a reason other than gross misconduct;
- your employment status changes due to a reduction in hours;
- your child ceases to be a "dependent child" under the terms of the medical and/or dental and vision plan;
- you become divorced or legally separated; or
- you become entitled to Medicare.

In the event of divorce, legal separation, or a child's loss of dependent status, you or a family member must notify the plan administrator within sixty (60) days of the occurrence of the event.



The plan administrator will notify the individuals eligible for continuation coverage of their right to elect COBRA continuation coverage.

If an employee refuses a light/modified duty assignment that is within his/her capabilities, the County shall contest the employee's entitlement to further workers' compensation benefits before the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission.

Employees whom after six months have not returned to employment may have their position eliminated.

benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by Pulaski County.

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## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE**

As an integral member of The07-0 County team, you are expected to accept certain responsibilities, adhere to acceptable business principles in matters of personal conduct, and exhibit a high degree of personal integrity at all times. This not only involves sincere respect for the rights and feelings of others but also demands that you refrain from any behavior that might be harmful to you, your coworkers, and/or The07-0 County, or that might be viewed unfavorably by current or potential clients or by the public at large. You are, consequently, encouraged to observe the highest standards of professionalism at all times.

Types of behavior and conduct that The07-0 County considers inappropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Falsifying employment, timekeeping or other County records
2. Violating the County's nondiscrimination and/or harassment policy
3. Soliciting or accepting gratuities from clients
4. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
5. Engaging in excessive, unnecessary, or unauthorized use of County supplies and/or equipment, particularly for personal purposes
6. Reporting to work intoxicated or under the influence of non-prescribed drugs
7. Illegally manufacturing, possessing, using, selling, distributing, or transporting drugs
8. Bringing or using alcoholic beverages on County property or using alcoholic beverages while engaged in County business off County premises, except where authorized
9. Gossiping, engaging in rumors, fighting or using obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures or other acts of violence
10. Stealing property from coworkers, vendors, clients or The07-0 County
11. Having unauthorized firearms or weapons on County premises or while on County business
12. Disregarding safety or security regulations

13. Engaging in insubordination
14. Failing to maintain confidentiality of County or member information
15. Any other act or circumstance, which, in the judgment of Management, is harmful or detrimental in any way to the morale, safety, health, or work environment of any other employee or the operation of The07-0 County

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Employees are encouraged to speak with Human Resources should employees have any questions about these guidelines. Corrective discipline may be used (but is not required) where the County determines in its discretion that corrective discipline is appropriate. Corrective discipline may include verbal warnings (a record of which will be kept in the employee's personnel file) and written reprimands (which will be kept in the employee's personnel file).

These rules do not constitute the sole reason for termination of employment and should not be construed in any way as constituting a contract of employment. Employment is on an at-will basis, and either employees or the County may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause.

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## **WORKPLACE POLICIES**

### **A. Ethics and Conduct**

The successful business operation and reputation of Pulaski County is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of Pulaski County is dependent upon our citizen's trust and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees have a duty to Pulaski County, its customers and citizens and each other to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public and your coworkers.

Pulaski County will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct. Employees are also expected to work safely and look out for the safety of others.

In general, the use of good judgment and a good work ethic based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with your immediate supervisor and, if necessary, with Human Resources for advice and consultation.

Employees are encouraged to report all unethical concerns to their supervisor and Human Resources and may do so in a confidential manner by calling or e-mailing the supervisor or Human Resources with the concern or providing a written statement.

Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every Pulaski County employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

## **B. Progressive Discipline**

The County adheres to a general philosophy of Progressive Discipline, whereby the seriousness of the discipline escalates upon the occurrence of further conduct warranting discipline. Supervisors or department heads typically will apply discipline in the following sequence, but may skip steps or advance directly to termination, when the circumstances warrant such action:

1. the first disciplinary action is a verbal warning,
2. the second disciplinary action is a written warning,
3. the third disciplinary action is a suspension or probation, and
4. the fourth disciplinary action will result in termination.

Disciplinary action will be administered at supervisors or department heads discretion. Twenty-four (24) months after the first disciplinary action, an employee's disciplinary record will be wiped clean if he/she does not receive any other disciplinary actions during that time period. Disciplinary action can be taken for any violations of policies within this Handbook or for any unaddressed or unrelated problems involving job performance. There are situations in which more serious discipline is warranted immediately, and supervisors or department heads may impose any level of discipline it determines is appropriate under the circumstances. A supervisor or department head may take disciplinary action against an employee. Employees concerned that a supervisor's actions should result in disciplinary action should contact the department head or Human Resources with their concerns.

This policy is not a contract and does not entitle the employee to any particular level or sequence of discipline before termination. Pulaski County retains the right to administer discipline in any manner it sees fit. The County's progressive discipline policy does not alter the "at-will" nature of employment. Irrespective of the progressive discipline policy, either party may terminate the employment relationship at any time for any lawful reason, with or without cause or advance notice.

## **C. Suspension**

Department heads shall have the authority to suspend an employee for a period not to exceed fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days. Suspensions for a period that exceeds fifteen (15) consecutive calendar days or more shall require the approval of the County Administrator.

- a. A written notice of suspension, including the items listed below shall be hand delivered, signed and returned to Human Resources or mailed certified mail, return receipt requested to the employee and the receipt and letter must be sent to Human Resources for inclusion on the personnel file.
  1. A statement of the reason for the suspension
  2. A warning of further disciplinary action should the situation not be corrected
  3. A statement of the employee's right to appeal (if any) in accordance with the County's grievance policy

## **Administrative Decrease**

An administrative decrease shall require a letter of justification submitted by the department head to the County Administrator and such decreases shall be subject to the approval of the County Administrator.

- a. Once an administrative decrease has been authorized, a written notice of the decrease including the items listed below shall be hand delivered and signed received or mailed certified mail (return receipt requested) to the employee.
  1. A statement of the reasons for the decrease.
  2. A warning of what further disciplinary actions could result, if the situation is not corrected.

3. A statement of the employee's rights to appeal (if any) in accordance with the County's grievance policy.
- b. A copy of such written notice shall be forwarded to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

### **Demotion**

- a. A written notice of the demotion including the items listed below shall be hand delivered to the employee or mailed certified mail (return receipt requested).
  1. A statement of the reasons for the demotion.
  2. In cases where a demotion is not voluntary, include a warning of what further disciplinary action could result, if the situation is not corrected.
  3. A statement of the employee's right to appeal (if any) in accordance with the County's grievance policy.
- b. A copy of such written notice shall be forwarded to the Human Resource office for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

### **Unsatisfactory Work Performance or Misconduct**

Each need for discipline has varying circumstances and requires the exercise of discretion on the part of the supervisor. Disciplinary action may be taken against an employee for any of the following examples of unsatisfactory work performance and misconduct. These examples are not in any way to be construed as a comprehensive list of possible violations nor are they to be considered rigid guidelines:

- a. Recurring tardiness without reasonable explanation
- b. Absence without leave
- c. Violation of policy on intoxicants
- d. Sleeping on the job (does not apply to public safety department employees)
- e. Serious neglect of work
- f. Serious neglect of duty or refusal to comply with the instructions of the supervisor
- g. Insubordination
- h. Deliberate or careless conduct endangering the safety of oneself or other employees.
- i. Negligence in the care and handling of County property
- j. Theft of County property or of another employee's property
- k. Incompetence or inefficiency in the performance of the required job duties
- l. Use of offensive, abusive, threatening, coercive, indecent or discourteous language or behavior toward supervisors, other employees or members of the public
- m. Intentional falsification of personnel records, time records or any other County records or reports
- n. Provoking, instigating or participating in a fight while on duty or on County property
- o. Unauthorized carrying of a concealed weapon during work hours or on County property
- p. Any violations of County policies
- q. Being charged with or convicted of criminal activity

### **County Administrator's Review**

The County Administrator may review disciplinary actions to ensure that they conform with the intent of this policy.

### **Due Process**

Certain County employees are entitled to due process in relation to disciplinary action or investigations. Those department supervisors shall follow Virginia Code Section 9.1-301 where applicable.

## **D. Telework/Telecommute Policy**

### **Applicability:**

The language utilized in this policy does not create any employment contractual rights or entitlements, but, instead, establishes procedures for permitting an employee to qualify for the privilege of teleworking. The County of Pulaski reserves the right to revise the content of this policy or its terms in whole or in part, at its discretion. No promises or assurances, whether written or oral, which are contrary to or inconsistent with the terms of this paragraph are binding upon the County of Pulaski. This policy does not encourage telework by employees but rather establishes rules and guidelines should a medical necessity exist or should the County Administrator approve telework during inclement weather, business travel, special projects, pandemics or extenuating circumstances. All telework arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the organization. Telework is NOT intended to replace the usage of sick or vacation leave and employees should NOT be granted telework during these times unless it meets the requirements below.

### **Definitions:**

**Regular Telework** – Regular telework, also known as telecommuting, is defined as a mutually agreed upon work option between the County of Pulaski and the employee where the employee works at a telework site (home or alternative work site) on specified days or hours, and at the central work station the remainder of the time, remaining flexible as necessary to meet the directed needs of the department or organization. Telework is only granted at the discretion of the department head.

**Medical Telework** – is defined as temporary work at home on a full or part-time basis, with physician's documentation. Examples include recovery from an injury, surgery, prolonged illness or communicable disease under an American's with Disabilities Act reasonable accommodation. This policy complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

**Central Work Site** – The central work site means the employee's officially assigned workstation.

**Telework Site** – The telework site means a work site alternative to the official workstation as specified in the Telework Agreement.

**Remote Access** – Remote access is defined as an employee's ability to access the appropriate LAN server(s) from the employee's telework site to retrieve and store computer files. Remote access should also be approved in the telework agreement.

**Telework Agreement** - The Telework Agreement shall be signed by the County Administrator and the employee specifying the terms and conditions of telework.

**Telework Application** – A Telework Application must be completed by the employee and submitted to the employee's supervisor when the reason for the request is due to a medical condition.

**Telework Office Checklist** – A guide is used in assessing the suitability and safety of a proposed home office or other telework site submitted to the employee's supervisor for either medical or non-medical purposes.

### **General Requirements:**

1. Employees who are granted telework must be approved by the County Administrator.
2. Consideration will be given to leadership employees or those that may require ADA reasonable accommodation who have demonstrated exceptional work habits and performance well suited to successful telework. The following guidelines will be considered:

- a. Work habits: Teleworkers must have demonstrated self-motivation, self-discipline, the ability to work independently, the ability to manage distractions and the ability to meet deadlines.
  - b. Position: The teleworker's position must have minimum requirements for direct supervision or contact with the public and must be arranged so that there is no difference in the level of service provided to the public.
  - c. The location of the work must not significantly alter the teleworker's job content or the job content of co-workers.
  - d. The teleworkers needs for IT support must be minimal and any equipment and software used must meet the County's standards.
3. In case of injury, theft, loss, or tort liability related to telework, the teleworker must allow agents of the organization to investigate and/or inspect the telework site. Reasonable notice of inspection and/or investigation will be given to the teleworker.
  4. Where telework sites are located in the home, the teleworker is responsible for establishing and maintaining the work site.
  5. Supervisors must review the Telework Agreement with the employee. Employees shall sign and abide by the Telework Agreement signed between the teleworker and the County Administrator.

#### **Terms of Employment:**

1. The teleworker's conditions of employment shall remain the same as for non-telework employees. Employee salary, benefits and employer-sponsored insurance plans shall not change as a result of telework.
2. Pulaski County policies, procedures and practices shall apply at the telework site. Failure to abide by County policies, procedures or practices may result in termination of the telework arrangement and/or disciplinary action.
3. Behavior and speech that harasses or demeans co-workers will not be tolerated, whether it occurs face-to-face or remotely.
4. The teleworker will not be paid for time involved in travel between the telework site and the central work site.

#### **Work Schedule and Accessibility:**

1. The number of hours worked will not change because of telework. A consistent schedule of telework days and hours is required to ensure regular and predictable contact with the County of Pulaski, staff and the public.
2. The Telework Agreement will specify work schedules that are in compliance with the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulations.
3. The teleworker must obtain the supervisor's advanced written approval before working overtime or may be subjected to disciplinary action.
4. While teleworking, the teleworker must be accessible via phone or email during the scheduled work hours.
5. During inclement weather conditions, Leadership Team members may be requested to telework in their home. There may also be times an emergency operations center will be established during which time the employee must report to the established site.

#### **Dependent Care:**

Teleworkers will not act as primary caregivers for dependents during the agreed upon work hours. This does not mean that dependents need to be absent from the home during telework hours. It means they will not require the teleworker's attention during the work hours. Teleworkers must make dependent arrangements to permit concentration on work assignments. During inclement weather conditions, it is recognized that alternate arrangements may not be available and during that time employees must not count any time spent with dependents as work time.

#### **Telework Site:**

**Safety** - The teleworker will maintain a designated workspace that is clean, safe, and free from distractions. The employee will verify the safety of the alternate worksite by completing the Safety Checklist.

**Workers Compensation** – The employee is covered under Pulaski County’s Workers Compensation Program. In the event of a job-related incident or accident during telework hours, the teleworker must immediately report the event to the supervisor and Company Nurse. The County of Pulaski does not assume responsibility for injury to any persons other than the teleworker at the telework site.

**Confidentiality** - The teleworker will not conduct business meetings with clients, customers or employees at his or her residence and shall maintain confidentiality of records, equipment, passwords, etc. at the telework site.

#### **Supplies, Equipment and Furniture:**

1. Teleworkers are responsible for providing all telework site furniture at the site. Use of personal equipment such as computer systems are not allowed. Laptop computers must be issued by the Pulaski County IT Department, approved by the County Administrator and documented in the Telework Agreement.
2. The following conditions will apply to the use of supplies, organizational records, computer and other County owned equipment:
  - a. Use of equipment in the home shall be the same as the central work site.
  - b. Restricted materials shall not be taken out of the central work site or accessed through a computer unless approved in advance by the employee’s supervisor.
  - c. Teleworkers must be in compliance with all Pulaski County guidelines for uses of computer software and hardware including software-licensing provisions, access to files, maintaining system security, etc.
  - d. All costs associated with teleworking such as phone/internet/electricity, etc. are to be paid by the employee.

**Surroundings** – Employees are reminded to check their surroundings before logging into video conferences for any offensive objects in view of laptop cameras.

**Dress and Behavior** – Employees must dress and conduct themselves appropriately for telework while on camera as inappropriate dress and behavior could be considered offensive if caught on camera.

#### **Application Process:**

**Employee:** Reviews the County of Pulaski’s Telework/Telecommuting Personnel Policy, completes a Telework Application and a Safety Checklist. When requested by the employer, the application is not required; however, the Safety Checklist is required.

**Employee Department Head or Designee:** Reviews the Telework Application and Safety Checklist, determines if Telework Application meets the general requirements for telework and that the work schedule, accessibility issues, safety issues, dependent care and equipment issues are satisfactorily addressed.

Requests review by IT to determine if proposed Telework Application meets Pulaski County’s equipment and software standards and level of IT support needed.

Informs Human Resources of the request for telework and consults on any issues regarding the request. If the telework request is accepted, refer below to the Implementation of Telework.

#### **Implementation of Telework:**

**Employee’s Department Head or Designee** – Advises the telework applicant that the Telework Application is under review.

**Employee and Employee's Supervisor** – Schedules a time to review the telework arrangement and complete the telework agreement.

**Employee Supervisor** - Contacts IT staff to determine if computer access is needed. Meets with teleworker and co-worker's to address how the arrangements will work. Discusses concerns and problems and revises Telework Agreement as needed based on the discussion.

**Employee and Supervisor** – Signs final Telework Agreement. The supervisor forwards the telework agreement to Human Resources for review.

**Human Resources** – Discusses the Telework Agreement and Safety Checklist with the employee and supervisor and forwards the agreement to the County Administrator for review and formal approval.

**County Administrator** – Reviews and if approved formally signs the Telework Agreement and returns to Human Resources.

**Employee Supervisor** – The supervisor will be notified by Human Resources as to approval or denial of the request. If approved, the supervisor notifies the employee and co-workers and others with whom the employee interacts regarding the telework schedule and ensures that equipment and supplies needed are available. Ensures that the Telework Application, Safety Checklist and other related information is sent to Human Resources. If denied, the supervisor shall explain the reason for denial such as a creation of hardship on the employer. Determines if other options are available if due to medical reason.

#### **Termination of Agreement:**

The County of Pulaski may terminate the Telework Agreement at any time. The agreement may be terminated for reasons to include but not limited to hardship on the employer, declining performance, breach of County Policies and Procedures, etc.

A copy of the Telework Application, Safety Checklist and Telework Agreement will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

### **E. Attendance (updated 07/24/2023)**

Dependability is one of the most important characteristics we look for in our employees. Regular and on-time attendance is expected for efficient operations at The07-0 County. Excessive absenteeism and tardiness is not only inconvenient but also causes costly problems. While it is recognized that an occasional illness or extenuating personal reason may cause unavoidable absence from work, tardiness or early departure, regular on-time attendance is required.

Supervisors will require employees to give at least 24 hours advance notice, whenever possible, of lateness or absence. If advance notice is not possible, notification by phone (call in) must be given by the employee personally and directly to their supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable, the employee must notify the next level supervisor. Notification calls must be made at least one hour before the employees work schedule.

Days missed for being out sick with a doctor's excuse, jury duty, bereavement leave, severe weather, and/or any other reason that Pulaski County deems excusable will be excused absences. All other days missed will be considered unexcused.

Any employee who fails to maintain an acceptable attendance record may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Excessive absenteeism is defined as two or more occurrences of an unexcused absence in a 30-day period and will result in disciplinary action. Three occurrences of unexcused absence in a 12-month period are considered grounds for termination.

Employees with no leave time available are subject to the following disciplinary action:



- The first occurrence of absence without leave shall result in two (2) days of suspension without pay with documentation in the employee personnel file. If the first occurrence is within the employee's six-month orientation period (12 months for E-911 Employees), the employee may be dismissed.
- The second occurrence of absence without leave shall result in suspension of not less than five (5) working days without pay with documentation to the employees personnel file.
- The third occurrence of absence without leave may be grounds for dismissal.

#### JOB ABANDONEMENT:

Any employee who fails to report to work for a period of three days without notifying his/her supervisor will be considered to have abandoned the job and voluntarily terminated the employment relationship.

### F. Orientation

During each employee's first few days of employment, the employee will participate in an orientation program conducted by Human Resources and a Supervisor. During this time, employees will receive important information regarding the performance requirements of their positions, The07-0 County policies and procedures compensation and benefits, plus other information necessary to acquaint employees with their job duties and areas of responsibility. Employees will also be asked to complete all necessary paperwork at this time, such as appropriate federal, state, and local tax forms. At this time, employees will be required to present The07-0 County with information establishing their identity and eligibility to work in the United States in accordance with applicable federal law.

Employees should use this orientation program to familiarize themselves with The07-0 County and our policies, procedures and benefits. The County encourages employees to ask any questions they may have during this program so that they will understand all the guidelines that affect and govern their employment relationship with us.

Full-time employees who undergo background checks and drug/alcohol testing will be compensated at 4 hours of pay for their orientation period. All other employees, including part-time employees will be compensated at 2 hours of pay.

### G. Introductory Period

During the first one hundred eighty (180) calendar days of employment, employees will go through an introductory period where The07-0 County and each new employee are given an opportunity to evaluate the employment relationship. This introductory period also applies to current The07-0 County employees that have transferred positions or were promoted or demoted to a new position. At the end of this period, you will have a six-month review. The introductory period for employees of the E-911 center and Sheriff's Department is set at 365 days. A County evaluation form should be used to document the employee's accomplishments, failures, work performance, continuation of employment, recommended introductory extension, etc. An employee who satisfactorily completes the introductory period will be notified by the supervisor of his/her employment status. The satisfactory completion of the introductory period should not be considered as a guarantee of employment. During the introductory period, an employee may voluntarily terminate employment without notice, or if the performance of the employee is not satisfactory as determined by The07-0 County, the employee may be released with or without notice. The07-0 County evaluates employees on a continuing basis and all employees will work in an at-will capacity at all times. The07-0 County reserves the right to terminate an employee at any time during or after the introductory period.

A salary adjustment may be given to an employee at the end of the introductory period at the recommendation of the supervisor or department head and upon the approval of the County Administrator. **Employment Reference Checks & Bonding:** To ensure that individuals who join the County are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of the County to check the employment references of applicants as well as other information to validate the employees work status. A background check including Social Security verification, prior employment history, educational verification, criminal history, credit history, and motor vehicle operation or DMV records may also be requested, if the position warrants. All validations listed below are checked only by Human Resources.

- a. **Social Security Verification** – validates the applicants Social Security number, date of birth and former address.
- b. **Prior Employment Verification** – confirms applicant’s employment with listed companies, including dates of employment, position held and additional information available pertaining to performance rating, reason for departure and eligibility to rehire. This information will be based on the last two employers OR the previous five years, whichever comes first. The employee must sign a release form for information to be obtained.
- c. **Personal and Professional References** – calls will be placed to individuals listed as references by the applicant.
- d. **Educational Verification** – confirms the applicant’s claimed educational institution, including the years attended and the degree/diploma received. Transcripts may also be required.
- e. **Motor Vehicle Records** – provides a report on an individual’s driving history in the State requested. All positions that may potentially drive a County owned vehicle are mandated to provide permission to access their driving record or otherwise will not be allowed to operate a County vehicle.
- f. **Credit History** confirms candidate’s credit history. This search will be conducted for positions that involve management of County funds and/or handling of cash or credit cards.
- g. **Background Checks/Criminal History:** As a condition of employment, all employees of Pulaski County, shall undergo a criminal background check conducted by a third party vendor as requested by Human Resources. Constitutional Officers conduct their own extensive background checks. Employees must execute a release of information form. Employees may in some circumstances begin work prior to receipt of the results of the background check; however, anyone found to have unacceptable results or anyone who refuses to submit to a background check may be grounds for termination or may be refused employment. The County Administrator must approve all applicants with felony convictions.

The County Administrator may implement a Countywide system requiring random background checks. All employees are required to report to their supervisor and Human Resources all misdemeanor and felony arrests or convictions. Failure to report an arrest or conviction may result in termination of employment.

In the interest of maintaining consistency in the hiring process and fairness to employees and the general public, the Human Resources Director will assess the potential risks and liabilities related to the job requirements and determine whether the individual should be hired. The same shall apply when determining whether an employee is allowed to continue employment following a charge or conviction.

## **CRIMINAL HISTORY**

Includes review of criminal history and probation. The following factors will be considered for applicants with criminal history:

- Nature of the crime and the relationship to the position
- The time since the conviction
- The number (if more than one) of convictions

- Whether the hiring, transferring, promoting, of the applicant or employee would pose an unreasonable risk to the business, it's employees or vendors

## **DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS/CONFIDENTIALITY**

All background search information shall be conducted and retained by Human Resources and shall remain confidential in accordance with applicable law. Human Resources shall destroy such records after a final decision has been made to retain or terminate employment.

## **APPEAL**

If a decision is made not to hire or continue employment based on the results of a background check, there may be certain additional Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requirements that will be handled by Human Resources in conjunction with the employment screening service (if applicable). Employees not hired as a result of their background check shall be provided a copy of the report. Any applicant/employee whose services are rejected by the County as a result of the information received from the background check may appeal such decision to Human Resources if they believe the decision was based on inaccurate background information. It is the applicant/employees responsibility to work with the background agency to correct any inaccurate information in their record. Until such information is proven to be inaccurate, Pulaski County has the right to refuse employment.

**PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT:** Employees and volunteers must maintain compliance with Virginia Code Section 12VAC5-31.

- 1. Employment Applications and Resumes:** The County relies upon the accuracy of information contained in employment applications and resumes, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, immediate termination.
- 2. Internal Applicants:** When there is a sufficient internal applicant pool, or an individual meets the educational and experience requirements, the County may limit the recruitment to non-introductory County employees. County employees may apply for any vacant position once they have successfully completed their six-month orientation period and, if qualified, may be placed in the position without open recruitment.

## **H. Employee Information**

Employees are expected to keep the County informed about any major change that may affect their employment status and must promptly notify Human Resources of any changes in the following personnel data:

- Name
- Address
- Home telephone number
- Marital status
- Number of dependents
- Emergency telephone numbers and whom to notify in case of emergency
- Change of beneficiary
- Driving record (if your job requires that you drive)
- Authorized payroll deductions
- Additional education and special training courses

## **I. Employment of Minors**

All persons employed by Pulaski County must be a minimum of eighteen (18) years of age. However, certain positions such as those associated with Randolph Park lifeguards, pool attendants, camp counselors, etc. may be exempted from this rule. In any case, all employees of this department must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.

Where it is not possible to recruit a qualified applicant who has reached his or her eighteenth (18) birthday, employment of a minor must be conducted in accordance with the Commonwealth of Virginia Child Labor Law and FLSA regulations.

## **J. Trustee Program**

Pulaski County utilizes the Trustee program through the New River Valley Regional Jail throughout various departments. Employees are reminded that under no circumstances are inmates allowed to perform work on privately owned property, either real or personal. Trustees shall remain under supervision at all times. Employees shall not engage in romantic relationships or become sexually involved with inmates. These relationships are strictly forbidden and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and criminal charges. Employees are not allowed to provide any type of contraband to inmates nor provide monetary compensation. Supervisors must adhere to all aspects of the NRV Regional Jail SOP 150 (A) of Local Work Programs/Work Assignment Eligibility. Inmates are provided the appropriate work attire to include shoes from the NRVJR; therefore, the inmate should not be given unapproved clothing or any other apparel while assigned to the Work Program. The exception to this directive would be the issuance of safety equipment, eyewear, hard hats, safety vests, etc. while performing the assigned task.

## **K. Employee Residency Requirements**

Recognizing the need for community involvement by key employees, the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors requires that persons holding the following positions reside within Pulaski County:

- County Administrator
- Assistant County Administrator
- Zoning Administrator
- Emergency Management Coordinator
- E911 Communications Executive Director
- E911 Deputy Directors
- County Engineer
- Finance Director
- Public Safety Department Director
- Public Safety Department Deputy Director
- Library Director
- Economic Development Director
- General Services Director
- PSA Director
- Tourism Director
- Building Official
- Human Resources Director
- Marketing Coordinator/PIO

The Board also recognizes the possibility exists for exemptions, which may be desired in the future by the Board and reserves the right to make exceptions by specific approval. This policy applies to all future hiring and does not retroactively require that existing employees or those later promoted to relocate. Persons residing outside the County at the time of hire will be given one year to establish residency in Pulaski County. The County Administrator has the authority to approve a temporary waiver in the event that difficult housing markets preclude the sale of a home in a neighboring county.

The residency requirement will be made part of each of the above job descriptions.

#### Relocation Benefits:

When the employees listed above are required to relocate to Pulaski County, certain relocation benefits may be provided to facilitate the transition. Relocation may be available to any eligible, newly hired employee that must relocate 100 miles or more. For specific information regarding the requirements for the relocation benefits, please contact the Human Resources Director. Additional forms of relocation assistance include:

- Moving expenses
- Services of a moving company

Employees must request relocation assistance for specific items in advance of the date the expenses are incurred. Pulaski County will only reimburse expenses if the employee has received advance approval by the County Administrator, incurs reasonable expenses and submits satisfactory proof of the expense within 30 calendar days of the date the expenses were incurred.

Pulaski County extends these relocation benefits in an effort to contribute to the success of the employee's relocation. However, if an employee separates from Pulaski County employment within one year of relocation, the amount of the relocation reimbursement will be considered only a loan. Accordingly, the employee will be asked to reimburse up to 75% of the original relocation expense.

All moving expenses shall be counted as income, reported on the employees W2 and are subject to IRS regulations and taxable fringe benefit laws.

#### **L. Personnel Files (updated 07/24/2023)**

The County maintains a personnel file on each employee. The County shall retain employee personnel files based on Local Government Record Retention and Destruction Schedules for personnel files established by the Library of Virginia.

The personnel file includes information such as the employee's job application, records of training, disciplinary forms, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records. Employees who wish to review their own files should submit a written request to Human Resources. Employees may receive copies of certain personnel or medical records, such as their job description, as required by law, within 30 days of making a written request to Human Resources. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their entire personnel file in the presence of Human Resources, but must sign an acknowledgment form provided by Human Resources.

#### **M. Public Safety Department Medical Records Release**

It is the policy of Pulaski County to maintain and store confidential health records as needed. At times, it is necessary to release those records to authorized individuals. The Public Safety Department will establish a lawful method of releasing these records to authorized parties on an as needed basis.

1. The Public Safety Department will establish a Custodian of Records. This individual will oversee all release of medical records within the Public Safety Department agency's control.
2. A written authorization to allow release of a health record shall contain the information required by § 32.1-127.1:03 Health Records Privacy, or the agency's "Authorization to Release Confidential Health Records" form shall be used any time a record is released.
3. It is the responsibility of the releasing party, Custodian of Records, and department head to ensure that the release is handled properly.

4. All confidential health records that are released, must meet the requirements set forth by Code of Virginia section § 32.1-127.1:03 Health Records Privacy.
5. Health records should not be emailed or transferred by a nonsecure medium.
6. Verification of the identity and validity of an individual seeking a health records release shall be performed in accordance with Virginia Code section § 32.1-127.1:03 Health Records Privacy.
7. Length of medical record storage will meet or exceed the requirements set forth by the Library of Virginia.

#### **N. Information Requests and Employment References**

1. Requests for information from employee and/or former employee files from other departments and inquiries from outside the County will be directed to the Human Resources Director. **Supervisors and other employees are prohibited from providing personal or employment references on former employees or current employees.** No information may be released unless both the employee and the requesting individual agency have completed a Voluntary Release of Information Form. Employment references on former employees will be limited to the following:
  - a. date of hire and date of separation;
  - b. job title(s); and
  - c. confirmation of salary stated by requesting agency.
2. After an employee's separation date, personnel records will be retained in accordance with federal, state, and local law.

#### **O. Performance Evaluations**

The County encourages employees and their supervisors to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Supervisors and/or department heads will periodically (generally at the completion of an introductory period and every January thereafter) conduct formal written performance evaluations. The evaluations may consist of a personal interview during which an employee's strengths and weaknesses will be discussed and evaluated and recommendation for improvements may be made. These interviews help identify the short and long-range goals of employees and determine how they interrelate with the County's purpose and objectives.

Each employee shall have the opportunity to review every evaluation made of him or her. Each employee will complete a performance input form to be used by the supervisor or department head in completing the evaluation process. Upon a review of the evaluation, the employee shall note in writing that he or she has read the evaluation.

Any County employee who feels that his or her performance evaluation is not correct, shall have the right to appeal the evaluation through higher levels of authority until the appeal reaches the department head, who will make a final attempt to resolve the problem prior to referring it to the County Administrator, who shall have final administrative authority.

At its discretion, the County may give merit-based pay adjustments to employees that demonstrate superior employee performance. These adjustments are based on a number of factors, including the information within formal performance evaluations.

Any recommendation for a change of duties or an increase in pay must be recommended by the department head and approved by the County Administrator before any changes take effect. Whenever possible, department heads should include salary increase recommendations in the annual budget process. **A performance evaluation does not necessarily mean a change in pay or duties.**

#### **P. Confidentiality**

Employees are not to disclose internal information on the County or its clients to anyone, either inside or outside of County offices, who does not have a legitimate and legal need to know. Confidential information should not be disclosed except on a "need to know" basis within the County itself. The disclosure of non-confidential information about The07-0 County or its clients to outside parties should be avoided where possible. Disclosure of confidential information could lead to discipline up to and including termination.

Employees are not permitted in The07-0 County's offices after scheduled working hours except to perform The07-0 County duties. Employees should not, under any circumstances, bring unauthorized visitors to the office after scheduled working hours.

#### **Q. Conflicts of Interest (Updated 12/18/2023)**

County employees are not to engage in any activity that conflicts with the interests of the County, its clients, or even gives the appearance of such a conflict. The07-0 County respects all individuals' rights to engage in activities outside their employment that are private in nature (e.g., social, community, political, religious, etc.). However, each employee is expected to protect County information and avoid undue outside influence on his or her work-related decisions or activities. Employees must prevent themselves from being put in a situation that would constitute a conflict of interest. To avoid conflicts of interest, employees must observe the following:

1. Maintain a high standard of conduct and disqualify yourself from exerting influence in any transaction where you find your own interests conflict with the best interests of the County, or where you may gain a financial benefit based on your position with the County.
2. Accept no cash, gift or merchandise of a value exceeding \$25.00 from anyone that has a business relationship with the County. Small promotional items, such as pens, pencils, or note pads, are acceptable.
3. Disclose all actual and apparent conflicts of interests in writing to the County Administrator as soon as practicable.

The County supports its employees' participation in community and civic affairs. While participating in community affairs, The07-0 County asks that employees ensure that no apparent or actual conflicts of interest exist with the County or its affairs. Please note that a financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest; the County Administrator will determine whether a financial interest is also a conflict of interest.

Example of activities in which employees may not participate include:

1. Speculating or trade in real estate to take advantage of information gained through their employment with the County.
2. Engaging in employment with or accepting payment for services from contractors or others.
3. Purchasing or offering bids on surplus County property, unless sale of services and goods are offered at uniform prices available to the public by an independent public auctioneer.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. This policy is not intended to interfere with employees' NLRA rights.

#### **R. Nepotism (updated 01/12/2022)**

All employees and applicants for employment who are Immediate Family Members of an employee of the County will be considered with other qualified employees or applicants when personnel vacancies occur or when promotions, demotions, or lateral transfers are considered. However, some restrictions in job placement will apply. No Immediate Family Member shall directly or indirectly supervise or audit another Immediate Family Member. "Immediate family is defined as spouse,



children, parents, brothers and sisters and any other person living in the same household as the employee Virginia Code 2.2-3101. This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender or sexual orientation of the individuals involved.

Relatives or immediate family of current employees may not occupy a position that will be working directly for or supervising their relative or immediate family member. The County defines a relative as any person that is blood related to a spouse of the employee, or the employee not living in the same household as the employee such as siblings, cousins, grandparents, uncles and aunts. Individuals involved in a dating relationship with a current employee may also not occupy a position that will be working directly for or supervising the employee with whom they are involved in a dating relationship.

If a relative relationship or dating relationship is established after employment between employees who are in a reporting situation described above, it is the responsibility and obligation of the supervisor involved in the relationship to disclose the existence of the relationship to the department head or County Administrator. The individuals concerned will be given the opportunity to decide who is to be transferred to another available position. If that decision is not made within 30 calendar days, the County Administrator will decide who is to be transferred or, if necessary, separated from employment.

## **S. Outside Employment**

An employee may hold a job with another organization as long as he or she satisfactorily performs his or her job responsibilities with Pulaski County. Employees are required to notify their supervisor of any outside employment. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to Pulaski County's scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If Pulaski County determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of Pulaski County as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with Pulaski County.

Outside employment will present a conflict of interest if it has an adverse impact on Pulaski County.

If a non-exempt employee, at his/her own option, undertakes employment with the County on an occasional and sporadic basis per FLSA standards in a part-time position in a different capacity than his/her regular position, the hours worked in the additional position shall not be counted as hours worked for overtime pay purposes on the regular job. Should the additional position be scheduled hours and not sporadic or occasional in nature per FLSA standards, the employee will not be permitted to partake in another position where it would require the employer to pay such overtime.

Should an employee become eligible for FMLA and they are also performing outside employment, the employee shall make the County aware of the duties of the other job. Based upon medical restrictions and information included in the FMLA Physician's Certification Form, the employee may receive disciplinary action if outside employment is performed.

## **T. Reclassification of Employment**

Reclassifications may occur in several ways. The most common is the reclassification of an entire class of workers. Reclassification can also take place when the work performed on a particular job changes substantially over a period of time. Often these changes take place when new technology is introduced, or a mission of a section is changed in response to changing legislation. A third type of reclassification is done for individuals whose jobs change through design and evolution. Reclassification is generally initiated through independent outside review, but can be initiated at the request of the individual, supervisor, Department Director or County Administrator.

If an individual, supervisor or Department Director initiates a request for a reclassification it will be accompanied by written supporting documentation. Upon approval by the Department Director, the request will be forwarded to the County Administrator. Reclassifications do not take place independent of consideration of other positions within the overall classification system.



When a request for reclassification is received and approved by the County Administrator, a questionnaire should be completed by the incumbent(s) under review. A job analysis shall be conducted with the individual(s) being considered for reclassification, or with a representative number of people if the reclassification request was for a number of people in the same job title. Key questions concerning the overall pay and classification system. The analysis of all the information is then compared to the current position descriptions for the various classification levels and weighted to determine the correct classification assignment. If it is determined that a reclassification of an individual is justified, the County Administrator will direct appropriate action to finalize the request.

## **U. Transfer of Employees Between Departments**

In the mutual interest of the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors and the Pulaski County Public Service Authority, the need and desires for employees to develop and further their careers for both personal and professional reasons is both acknowledged and encouraged. Therefore, it is the desire of both entities that employees may make a seamless transition as to not negatively affect the organization or the well-being of the transferring employee.

Employees transitioning into new positions within any County/PSA department shall:

Retain any vacation, sick or comp time balance. The balances will be transferred to the new department. The department from which the employee is leaving will be responsible for payment of all accrued leave balances (up to allowed maximum) to the receiving department at the time the transfer takes place. Under normal circumstances, when an employee exceeds the maximum number of vacation time allowed at the time the transfer occurs, it will be the responsibility of the employee and supervisor to utilize such leave prior to the transfer to reduce the burden on the new department. Leave may be paid out to the employee by the original department if the time cannot be reduced or short staffing is an issue.

The employee will retain credit for their years of service in regards to leave tables, service awards and the Virginia Retirement System.

## **V. Salary Grades and Ranges**

Each position in the County has been assigned to a class on the basis of the requirements of the position. Each classification has been assigned a salary range. Positions with similar responsibilities and duty requirements shall be grouped into the same class with a designated salary range as approved by the County. Within each classification, employees will be assigned salary rates related to demonstrated performance. Employees will receive a salary that is within the range limit of the applicable class.

The minimum of the appropriate salary range will be paid to all qualified employees. New employees normally will be hired at the minimum rate. However, at the discretion of the County Administrator, and within current budget restraints, appointment rates above the minimum may be paid a highly qualified new employee based on the employee's prior experience and proficiency in the same or related capacity.

In cases where the qualifications of a newly hired or newly promoted employee are less than those usually required in the assigned position, the employee may be paid below the minimum of the applicable ranges while the employee acquires the necessary minimum qualifications for the position. This training period will normally be limited to one year, after which the employee will be paid at or above the minimum of the range, if retained in the position. The training period may be extended at the discretion of the County Administrator.

If an employee is paid over the maximum at the time the range for the classification is established, the salary will not be reduced. Rather, the employee will ordinarily be considered ineligible for an increase in pay until an adjustment in the salary structure or a promotion to a higher grade brings the rate within the established range for the position.

The mid-point in the pay range for each position establishes the rate that a fully qualified employee is ordinarily able to achieve. A fully qualified employee is one who demonstrates sustained performance that "meets requirements" of the

position, as well as all County criteria. Pay levels above the mid-point are intended for those employees who demonstrate sustained performance that exceeds the “meets requirements” level.

Those Constitutional Officers that adopted the Pulaski County Compensation Plan do not receive increases by the Compensation Board with the exception of any additional compensation to Sheriff's Deputies. The Compensation Plan for County funded positions will be at the discretion of the Sheriff and the County Administrator. The Compensation Board may occasionally provide bonuses to Constitutional Officer employee's that is reimbursable to the County. Comp Funded positions shall also be eligible for these bonuses.

The following positions are exempted from Pulaski County's Personnel Management System and does not set classifications or pay scales for these positions within the compensation plan:

- a. All elected officials
- b. Members of boards and commissions
- c. Volunteer personnel and personnel appointed to serve without pay
- d. Consultants and counsel rendering professional services
- e. Positions involving seasonal or temporary employment
- f. Selected employees of the School System and Constitutional Officers and their employees as may be determined by a legitimate appointing authority and approved by the Board of Supervisors
- g. Student interns and work-study employees
- h. Such other positions as may be designed by the Board of Supervisors

## **W. Position Information/Changes in Status**

### Position Classification System

To assure an equitable treatment of employees, all positions in the County are covered by the Position Classification Plan, including job titles and a position description setting forth the qualifications for the work and the duties and responsibilities. Classification regulations are developed and adopted to provide for the recruitment and development of the best available employee for each position within each classification at all times. The regulations provide for establishing orderly procedures for administering the Plan in such a way as to insure:

That employment within each classification shall be made attractive as a career,

That all appointments and promotions to positions in a classification shall be made on the basis of merit and fitness, which insofar as practicable, shall be determined by means of performance-related, fair and competitive standards,

That the Plan will conform with the principle of equal pay for equal work under like working conditions, and

That each employee shall be encouraged to render his or her best service at all times.

The Position Classification Plan is an inventory of positions and not of employees. A position is one cell in the organizational structure, and positions remain while the personnel filling positions may change. Each individual position is assigned to a class. The Position Classification Plan consists of classes of positions and their descriptions, including the following items: (1) General Definition and Conditions of Work; (2) Essential Functions; (3) Typical Tasks; (4) Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities; (5) Education and Experience; (6) Special Requirements and Other Facts.

### Anniversary Date

The anniversary date shall be the calendar date the employee was initially employed, promoted, transferred, or had his/her position reallocated. An employee's anniversary date shall be changed only upon the direction of the County Administrator or at the written request of the department head and approved by the County Administrator. Anniversary date is not affected

by an administrative decrease or demotion. Eligibility for merit increases is not affected by anniversary date. The anniversary date for a reinstated employee will remain unchanged, except when a reinstated employee had missed one full pay period or more from his/her position prior to reinstatement. In which case the anniversary date will be amended to reflect the days missed to the nearest full pay period.

We want employees to have the opportunity for promotion to positions of more responsibility and higher pay within the County. A promotion may be based on such factors as quality and quantity of work, prior job performance, experience, educational background, attendance record, safety record, and the ability to work well with others. We reserve the right to look outside the organization if we feel that an employee with the best qualifications cannot be found within the organization. Employees that are advanced within the County are subject to the County's introductory period policy.

When an employee is promoted to a higher pay range, the salary shall be increased to the minimum for that class or to an appropriate step in the new range, which will provide at least a 5% increase. The effective date of all promotions will be the first day of the promotion.

#### Demotion

If the demotion is initiated by the supervisor or department head, it may result in the demoted employee's salary remaining the same or going down to, but not below, the minimum of the new pay grade. If the employee initiates the demotion, if approved, it may result in the employee's salary to be no greater than the maximum of the new pay grade, nor greater than the present pay.

#### Transfer

In the mutual interest of the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors and the Pulaski County Public Service Authority, the need and desires for employees to develop and further their careers for both personal and professional reasons is both acknowledged and encouraged. Therefore, it is the desire of both entities that employees may make a seamless transition as to not negatively affect the organization or the well-being of the transferring employee.

Employees transitioning into new positions shall:

Retain any vacation, sick or comp time balance. The balances will be transferred to the new entity. The entity from which the employee is leaving will be responsible for payment of all accrued leave balances (up to allowed maximum) to the receiving entity at the time the transfer takes place. Under normal circumstances, when an employee exceeds the maximum number of vacation time allowed at the time the transfer occurs, it will be the responsibility of the employee and supervisor to utilize such leave prior to the transfer to reduce the burden on the new department. Leave may be paid out to the employee by the original department if the time cannot be reduced or short staffing is an issue.

The employee will retain credit for their years of service in regards to leave tables, service awards and the Virginia Retirement System.

#### Reduction of Workforce

In the event that a reduction in the County's workforce becomes necessary, employees over and above the number determined by the County as needed to perform the available work will be terminated. In determining those employees to be retained, consideration may be given to the quality of each employee's past performance, the need for the position held by the employee, and with all other factors being equal, length of service of each employee. The determination of whether a reduction in force may be carried out, as well as which employees may be included in any such reduction, rests in the sole discretion of the County Administrator.

If feasible, but not as a vested right, employees subject to termination may be given a notice prior to the anticipated termination.

#### Separation from Employment

An employee may be separated from employment voluntarily or involuntarily by voluntary resignation, discharge/termination, layoff, or retirement.

Employees desiring to terminate their employment relationship with the County are urged to provide their Supervisors with advance written notice of at least two weeks. Proper notice generally allows The07-0 County sufficient time to make arrangements for replacements and to calculate monies to which you may be entitled and to include such monies in your final paycheck. Employees who comply with this policy, whose documented performance is above-average, and who are on good terms with the County, may receive pay for all accrued and unused vacation and paid time off paid at the employees' regular rates of pay. Further, should circumstances warrant, employees who comply with this policy and whose documented performance is above average may also be eligible for reemployment for a period of up to six months from the last date of employment, with benefits tied to seniority reinstated in full. Employees who do not provide a two-week notice may lose up to one week of vacation leave payout upon separation.

#### Exit Interview

Exit interviews with Supervisors, department heads or Human Resources may be scheduled for outgoing employees. The purposes of these interviews will be to ensure that all necessary forms are completed, to collect all The07-0 County property that may be in the employee's possession, to discuss employee benefits, and to provide employees with an opportunity to discuss their job-related experiences and effectiveness of the County's personnel policies and practices.

#### Rehires

The County reserves the right to determine who is rehired. Employees that have retired and wish to apply for positions within the County must have a bonafide break in service of more than 30 days, may not be re-hired into the same position and may work no more than 80% of a full-time employee or no more than 32 hours per week. Employees who are rehired will not be eligible to reinstate leave time or other benefits associated with previous employment at the level they were earning when they resigned employment. Rehired employees will go through the same introductory period as a new hire. All leave time and benefits will be determined by the number of hours that the employee works per week.

### **X. Lay-Off**

The County Administrator or the Board of Supervisors shall have the authority to lay off any employee(s) because of elimination of the position, lack of funds, lack of work or when there has been an insufficient appropriation to meet salary requirements necessary to maintain existing personnel by any department. The County Administrator shall give written notice to any employee being separated at least two weeks prior to the effective date contained in the notice. Whenever it becomes necessary to reduce the number of employee(s) in a given job classification and notice of such lay off is given to the affected employee(s) for any of the reasons enumerated herein, this notice shall be final and not subject to appeal.

Employees who are laid off will be entitled to receive payment for their recorded, accrued time, the same way as if they had resigned in good standing.

### **Y. Personal Appearance/Clothing (Updated 07-22-2024)**

We believe that a professional image enhances our work product and makes us more competitive in the marketplace. In part, we convey that image through the appearance of our employees. Neatness, attention to personal hygiene and professionalism in dress, orderliness in the care of County equipment and vehicles, interest in the work assigned, and a courteous cooperative attitude toward clients are recognized and appreciated business assets. The County will not discriminate against employees based on their hair texture or type, nor will it discriminate against employees who style their hair in protective styles, such as braids, locks, and twists. Occasional changes in work settings will also change the appropriate dress for that setting. For example: representing the County at a public meeting will require a more formal

business appearance while an appropriate dress for assisting with an eviction, moving files or clean-up day, may be jeans and a County T-shirt.

Some Fridays are designated as “casual” days, and employees are permitted to dress in a relaxed manner appropriate to their position. Employees’ dress is to remain consistent with the standards listed below, with the exception of tennis shoes and denim. On “business casual” days only, employees will be allowed to wear tennis shoes and denim to work. Such items must be neat, clean, and in good condition.

Maintenance employees, Sheriff’s deputies and firefighter personnel who are provided uniforms will be required to wear them appropriately and will be exempt from Friday Business Casual Day. Maintenance employees who wear uniforms will have a separate policy concerning dress.

Listed below is a general overview of acceptable casual business-wear as well as a listing of some of the more common items that are not appropriate for the office. Obviously, neither group is intended to be all-inclusive. Rather, these items should help set the general parameters for proper casual business-wear and allow you to make intelligent judgments about items that are not specifically addressed.

Examples of acceptable casual business-wear include:

- \* jeans
- \* casual shirts and blouses
- \* golf shirts
- \* T-shirts
- \* sweatshirts

Examples of inappropriate clothing items that should not be worn on casual days include:

- \* jeans that are excessively worn or faded
- \* sweatpants
- \* warm-up or jogging suits and pants
- \* shorts
- \* spandex or other form fitting pants
- \* miniskirts
- \* spaghetti-strap dresses
- \* T-shirts or sweatshirts with offensive messages or images
- \* tank tops
- \* halter tops
- \* visible undergarments
- \* items containing political or offensive logo’s

For some, traditional business attire may simply remain a more favored option on casual days. The choice will be yours. We hope and fully expect that casual days will help make our workplace more enjoyable and productive.

Due to the nature of our business serving clients, we expect our employees to appear as County representatives. Safety, comfort, and appearance should all be considered. Please speak with Human Resources if you have any questions or concerns and would like to discuss a religious exception to the County personal appearance policies. The County fully intends that the enforcement of this policy shall not conflict with the County's obligations under federal EEO laws and standards. If Human Resources finds that your personal appearance is inappropriate, you will be asked to leave work and return properly dressed and groomed. If you are asked to leave, you will not be paid for the time you are away from work. Those who violate this policy may be disciplined, up to and including termination.

Public Safety, Sheriff's Department and safety sensitive positions requiring ANSI clothing are exempted from this policy.

## **Z. Uniform and Clothing Allowance**

This section excludes classifications within the Sheriff's Department whose uniforms are governed by Sheriff's Office General Order #22. The County/PSA rental contract shall be managed by Pulaski County. Department heads and supervisors will work with Human Resources to develop an Approved Rental Listing for classifications within their department or agency. This listing shall consist of uniforms provided through the rental contract. Each employee classification receiving uniforms through the rental contract shall have a requisition form specific to their department or agency. All items through this contract may be taxable unless otherwise specified (see definitions above).

Employees are required to return their uniforms and other related items that are County/PSA property to their supervisor upon termination, retirement or transfer to a position not requiring the uniform. Failure to comply with this policy may result in reduced wages or pay to compensate for the cost of the uniform.

Uniforms issued pursuant to this policy from the rental contract shall adhere to these steps:

- Each employee shall complete the applicable uniform requisition form for their uniform classification. The requisition must be signed and dated and the employee must be measured and sized for the uniform prior to purchase.
- The requisition form will be submitted to the vendor for order.
- Supervisors must approve all size changes or returns. Uniforms must be tagged appropriately by the Garage Office Manager for return or alternation.
- Invoices shall include the name of the employee and must be submitted to the accounts payable department for processing.

### Departments

Employees of the departments listed below shall be issued safety shoes and bogg boots, not to exceed a total cost of \$260, at the time of hire and annually thereafter in July. The Garage Administrative Assistant shall be responsible for the issuance of all safety shoes and bogg boots and will work with employees of these departments to place orders with the current uniform vendor. These shoes/boots are not taxable.

Building Official	Building Inspector
County Engineer	Construction Contract Managers
PSA Water/Wastewater Employees	Water Treatment Plant Employees
Zoning Director	GIS Coordinator
PSA Construction Inspector	PSA Director
Building Maintenance Employees	Community Development Office Administrator
Grounds Maintenance Employees	
Garage Mechanics	
PSA Refuse Sanitation Workers and Drivers	
PSA Drop Sites Attendants	
Environmental Services Employees	

- a. Public Works - Refers to the standard clothing required as a condition of employment for employees of the following departments or positions:

<u>Departments</u>	<u>Positions</u>
Building Maintenance	Technicians
Grounds Maintenance	Maintenance

PSA Water/Wastewater  
Water Treatment Plant  
Garage  
PSA Refuse  
PSA Drop Sites

Crew Leader  
Supervisor  
Sanitation Worker  
Sanitation Driver  
Attendants  
Mechanic  
Building Official  
Building Inspector  
County Engineer  
Construction Contract Manager  
Zoning Director  
GIS Coordinator  
PSA Construction Inspector

Employees of the departments or positions listed above are REQUIRED to wear some form of ANSI certified clothing when performing functions of the job that are safety sensitive such as roadside work or work on a construction site. Acceptable safety or ANSI wear includes vests, reflective pants, shirts, jackets, etc. Shorts for the above positions are not allowed.

Public Works uniforms shall include the division name and be the same or general style and color within each department. Only ANSI (safety) wear is non-taxable, all other uniforms are considered taxable (refer to the definitions above).

All Employees of the departments (not positions) listed above shall obtain the following uniforms from the approved rental contract:

- 22 shirts (11 short/11 long, may be determined by the employee)
- 11 pants
- 2 lightweight jackets
- 2 insulated jackets
- 2 lightweight coveralls
- 2 insulated coveralls

- b. Environmental Services - Refers to the standard clothing that is optional for employees of the division classified as Environmental Services. Uniforms for this department are taxable.

Environmental Service uniforms shall include the division name and be the same or general style and color. These uniforms are considered taxable (refer to the definitions above).

Employees of this department shall obtain the following uniforms from the approved rental contract:

- 22 shirts (11 short/11 long may be determined by the employee)
- 11 pants
- 11 smocks
- 1 lightweight jacket
- 1 heavyweight jacket

- c. Public Safety - Refers to the standard clothing required as a condition of employment for sworn officers of the Sheriff's Office, Animal Control Officers and Public Safety Department employees. Class A uniforms of the Sheriff's Department are not taxable. Polo shirts that contain the Sheriff's logo and BDU (Cargo) pants are not

taxable to the Sheriff's Deputies or Public Safety employees so long as the uniform is not worn while the employee is off duty.

- Sheriff's Department - Uniforms for deputies of the Sheriff's Department are governed by General Order #22, Equipment and Uniforms and are not taxable.
- Animal Control - Uniforms for Animal Control positions will be handled and governed through the Sheriff's Department. These uniforms are not taxable.
- Public Safety - Employees of this department are entitled to polo shirts, t-shirts, BDU (cargo) pants and other related items deemed suitable and required by the Public Safety Director. These items shall not be deemed taxable while worn on duty and should not be worn while off duty. Employees of this department must also utilize ANSI (safety) wear as required.
- E-911 Telecommunications Center - Employees of this department are entitled to polo shirts, t-shirts, BDU (cargo) pants and other related items deemed suitable or required by the E-911 Director. These items shall not be deemed taxable while worn on duty and should not be worn while off duty.
- Sheriff's Department Investigators - The following is a listing of clothing approved for purchases directly by the employee up to but not exceeding \$600 annually (fiscal year July 1 - June 30) by the Investigations Department of the Sheriff's Office ONLY and is deemed as a reimbursable expense. Employees must submit receipts to be reimbursed through the payroll department. Items in this listing are taxable (refer to the definitions above).

- Suits (to include sports jackets and dress pants)
- Dress shirts
- Ties
- Khaki Pants
- Dress Shoes
- Dress Socks
- Dresses, skirts or blouses
- T-shirts
- Polo Shirts

- d. Parks & Recreation - Refers to the shirts and t-shirts provided to Parks & Rec employees including positions in maintenance classifications) required for games, events, programs and County/school activities, necessary to identify the department staff members working these functions and/or performing maintenance services. These employees will also include day camp workers and life guards at Randolph Park. Uniforms for this department are taxable (refer to the definitions above).
- e. Emergency Management Coordinator Clothing - An employee in this classification may purchase clothing for the purpose of identification as a County employee on the job as emergency personnel at incident scenes up to \$300 annually (fiscal year July 1 - June 30). Deputy Coordinators may purchase clothing for the same up to \$150 annually. Employees must submit receipts to be reimbursed. Clothing that is adaptable to street wear is subject to taxes. ANSI or safety wear is not taxable.
- f. Other Departmental Clothing - Employees of other departments not identified above whose staff members choose to purchase t-shirts, jackets, etc. with the County name, and/or logo, may purchase these items upon approval by



their supervisor or department head using their own personal funds. County nor PSA funds may be used for these purchases.

- g. Unauthorized Purchases - All purchases must comply with the procedures outlined in this policy. County or PSA funds may not be used to purchase or rent clothing or uniforms not included in this policy. County and PSA credit cards may not be used for purchases unless an exception is granted by the County Administrator. Any unauthorized purchases shall be immediately reimbursed by the employee to the County or PSA and the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **AA. Solicitation and/or Distribution**

To avoid disruption of business operations or disturbance of employees, visitors, and others, the County has implemented a Solicitation Policy. For purposes of this Solicitation Policy, "solicitation" includes selling items or services, requesting contributions, and soliciting or seeking to obtain membership in or support for any organization. Solicitation performed through verbal, written, or electronic means is covered by the Solicitation Policy.

Employees are prohibited from soliciting other employees during their assigned working time. For this purpose, working time means time during which either the soliciting employees or the employees who are the object of the solicitation are expected to be actively engaged with assigned work. Employees may conduct solicitations during their lunch period, coffee breaks, or other authorized nonworking time, so long as they do so when the other employees are also on nonworking time. The County expects employees to respect the desires of co-workers who do not wish to receive handouts or speak with coworkers who solicit their support for causes, products, interests, or organizations

To avoid inappropriate litter, clutter, and safety risks, employees may not distribute literature or other nonwork related items in working areas at any time. Working areas do not include break/rest areas, lunchrooms, or parking lots. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit employee rights under the National Labor Relations Act.

#### **BB. Media Contacts**

All media inquiries, requests for statements or interviews, and other media contacts must be referred to the County Administrator. Employees should not submit letters to the editor, op-eds, or articles for publication that refer to the County's business, respond to media inquiries, or speak to the media on the County's behalf, without prior authorization by the County Administrator.

#### **CC. Music**

The County discourages employees from listening to music during working hours as it can be distracting and interfere with the work of others interfacing with the public; however, the County also recognizes the need to enjoy one's time at work. Office personnel may listen to music at a reasonable noise level or with headphones and ear buds so long as it does not affect member relations, impact work performance, or interfere with the work of others.

#### **DD. Telephone Policy and Employee Cell Phones**

Communicating to clients or the public via phone is a common in this line of business. Thus, all employees must be courteous on the phone and maintain good service and public relations. Employees should answer the phone promptly, identify your position and your name, transfer calls tactfully, check back with the caller to see if their request was properly resolved, and give accurate information but maintain confidentiality. All workplace policies in this Handbook apply to conversations on the telephone, email, or any other electronic communication.

Employees are asked to make any personal calls on non-work time when possible and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the County's policy. Flexibility will be provided in circumstances demanding immediate attention and/or emergency situations.

### **EE. Horseplay and Fighting**

Although we want our employees to enjoy their jobs and have fun working together, we cannot allow employees to engage in horseplay or to play practical jokes or pranks on each other. At best, these actions disrupt the workplace and dampen the morale of some; at worst, they lead to complaints of discrimination, harassment, or assault.

Employees are prohibited from engaging in horseplay, which is fun that has gotten loud and boisterous, and out of control. Horseplay disrupts the work environment and can get out of hand, leading to fighting, hurt feelings, safety hazards, or worse.

Verbal assaults or physical fighting among employees is absolutely prohibited and may be cause for immediate termination. Employees shall not engage in, provoke, or encourage a fight.

Those who violate this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination.

### **FF. Workplace Bullying (Updated 12/18/2023)**

The County will not in any instance tolerate bullying behavior. Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. Bullying is defined as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical, gesture, cyber, exclusion or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment. All employees must treat each other and the County's clients, vendors, etc. with dignity and respect. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination. This policy is not intended to interfere with employees' NLRA rights.

### **GG. Gossip and Rumors (Updated 12/18/2023)**

We expect our employees to treat everyone they meet through their jobs with courtesy and respect. Gossip and rumors in the workplace destroy morale and relationships, and it impede the effective and efficient operation of our business. Gossip and rumors can drain, distract and downshift employee job satisfaction. In order to create a more professional workplace, we the undersigned are making a commitment to change our atmosphere to be gossip and rumor-free.

Employees are not to speak about another person that is an employee or a member when that person is not present unless it is to compliment that employee or with regard to a business matter. Employees are encouraged to not participate in any conversation when an employee or member mentions a person that is not present and is speaking about that person in a negative light. Employees are not to respond to negative or derogatory emails, texts, or chats about other employees or clients. If employees become aware of another employee doing something unethical or in violation of County policy, employees are to use the proper reporting channels to report this information so that corrective action can be taken.

Employees who violate this policy will face disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This policy is not intended to interfere with employees' NLRA rights.

Further, the County will also not tolerate threatening, abusive, or vulgar language from employees while they are at work or attending County-related business or social functions. Using profane language is discouraged and strictly prohibited in the vicinity of clients or potential clients and may be cause for immediate termination.

### **HH. Insubordination (Updated 12/18/2023)**

The County operates on a system of mutual respect between department heads/supervisors and employees. department heads/supervisors must treat employees with dignity and understanding, and employees must show due regard for authority.

Insubordination occurs when employees unreasonably refuse to follow, intentionally disobey or ignore the instructions of supervisors or department heads.

Insubordinate employees will face discipline, up to and including termination. This policy applies to all employees equally, regardless of job titles. This policy is not intended to interfere with employees' NLRA rights.

## II. County Property

The County has invested a great deal of money in the property and equipment that you use to perform your job. County property includes, for example, The07-0 County's real property (office buildings) and personal property (office equipment, etc.), leased or owned by the County. Abuse, misuse, or avoidable wear and tear of County property harms The07-0 County's bottom line and success as a County. County property should be treated with respect. The following are examples of prohibited actions with regard to County personal and real property:

- Deliberate damage to, or destruction of, or removal or theft of the property of the County, of another employee or of a member.
- Intentional waste of material or abuse of County equipment.
- Negligent use of County property.
- Creating unsanitary or unhealthy conditions, or other violations of health rules or health or sanitary standards
- Using County property for personal use or any other unauthorized uses.
- Unauthorized entry into or on County buildings or work areas.
- Tampering with County property to change its aesthetics, use, or safety without authorization from supervisors or department heads.

Those who violate this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination.

**Returning County Property:** When your employment with The07-0 County ends, we expect you to return The07-0 County property—and to return it clean and in good repair. This includes this Employee Handbook, all manuals and guides, documents, phones, computers, equipment, keys, and electronics. **THESE ITEMS ARE COUNTY PROPERTY AND MUST BE RETURNED.** Employees may be required to reimburse The07-0 County for lost, stolen, or damaged equipment that are the result of negligence or willful misconduct by the employee. Reimbursement should be paid based on the replacement cost of the item.

The County reserves the right to take any lawful action to recover or protect its property.

**Workplace Inspections:** To promote safety and security, all The07-0 County property provided and available to employees are subject to search, without prior notice or consent, when business conditions necessitate. Consequently, there should be **no expectation of privacy** in such County property, and as such, please do not put anything in these areas which are personal to you and which you would not want the County to see upon inspection.

Workplace monitoring may be conducted by The07-0 County to ensure quality control, employee safety, security, and member satisfaction. This includes monitoring of phones and computers.

Where there is reasonable cause to believe that there is a violation of policy, including, but not limited to, theft, weapons, and drugs or alcohol, The07-0 County may ask your consent to search personal property such as pocketbooks, briefcases, vehicles, etc. While you have the right to refuse consent, such a refusal may be, as circumstances warrant and consistent with the law, viewed as a violation of policy.

## JJ. Cell Phone Usage

Pulaski County provides cellular telephones to some employees as a business tool. Distribution of cell phones shall be determined by the department head. They are provided to assist employees in communicating with employees, their clients, associates, and others with whom they may conduct business. Cell phone invoices may be regularly monitored.

Employees have the option of selecting to utilize the phone for strictly business use or business/personal use for a fee as follows:

#### Billing Options

Option One - No non-emergency personal use of the County issued cell phone. Emergencies are defined as any life-threatening situation such as reporting an accident, calling for help, etc. Coordination of personal schedules or other communications would not be included in this definition. There shall be no cost to the employee associated with this option.

Option Two - Employee would be allowed to utilize the phone for personal use in exchange for sharing the cost of the bill in the amount of \$25 monthly as a payroll deduction.

This policy shall only apply to cell phone service in which the County has financial responsibility but would not include agencies purchasing cell phones through the County.

Employees have the option of paying the difference to upgrade to a newer model. If employees take this option, the phone becomes the property of the employee upon separation of employment.

#### Use While Driving a County Vehicle

Employees may have access to a cell phone while in their cars and should remember that their primary responsibility is driving safely and obeying the rules of the road. The following guidelines have been established to minimize risks while driving a County vehicle:

1. If Bluetooth capabilities are not available, employees are prohibited from using cell phones to conduct business while driving and should safely pull off the road and come to a complete stop before dialing or talking on the phone.
2. If the employee is unable to pull off the road, the conversation should be limited to no more than two minutes in order to obtain the general message from the caller.

As a representative of Pulaski County, cell phone users are reminded that the regular business etiquette employed when speaking from office phones or in meetings applies to conversations conducted over a cell phone.

#### Limited Use of Personal Cell Phones by Employees

Employees not issued County cell phones should refrain from using personal cell phones during business hours; however, occasional use may be tolerated. If the use becomes excessive, employees will be asked to limit phone usage. If the employee is deemed to be using their cell phone excessively after being counseled, progressive disciplinary action may be warranted.

#### Maintenance

Cell phones are owned by the County of Pulaski. If the cell phone is damaged, lost or broken due to personal negligence, the employee will be responsible for the replacement cost of the phone. Any damaged or lost cell phones must be reported to the Information Technology Director immediately.

#### Return of Cell Phones

Cell phones should be returned to the IT Department immediately upon termination or resignation of employment if not purchased by the employee. Employees must provide the screen lock password and no formatting should be done.

#### Porting Numbers

Upon separation of service, employees may request to port their number and must work with IT for authorization and transfer. However, this option may not be guaranteed.

Use of public property is governed by Virginia Code Section 15.2-1512.2 and states that telephones, computers, related devices, and peripheral equipment that are the property of the locality shall not interfere with the employee's productivity or work performance or political activities. Political activities is defined in Code Section 15.2-1512.2 as the purpose of promoting a political issue, for influencing the outcome of an election for local or state office or influencing the outcome of a referendum. Pulaski County may not limit employees from participating in political activities while these employees are off duty, out of uniform and not on County property. Please see the code section for additional information.

### **KK. Money Matters, Fraud, and Embezzlement**

The County considers any form of fraud or dishonesty on the part of its employees/volunteers as totally unacceptable conduct. Claims of fraudulent or dishonest behavior will be investigated. Any money collected for services must be kept safe and in accordance with all state and federal laws. Failure to timely handle County money may constitute embezzlement or theft. It is never appropriate to solicit money or other tangible benefits ("gifts") from anyone we do business with, including our clients. Theft of any kind, including stealing from client accounts is strictly prohibited. A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination

The County reserves the right to take any lawful action, including filing criminal charges, against an employee who embezzles or attempts to defraud clients or the County.

### **LL. Member Relations and Visitors**

The County realizes it is good business to acquaint the public with our services and function in the business world. Courteous and intelligent treatment of clients and the general public by all of our employees with whom they may come in contact helps to make and retain a good public image and to secure future business. All employees should greet and introduce themselves to clients and members of the public while at the workplace.

Visitors not on County-related business are not allowed into working areas of the County at any time. A visitor is anyone not currently employed by the County but does not include employees' family members and friends so long as they are not a distraction to employees. Employees are not permitted to "babysit" their children or children of others during working hours.

### **MM. Vehicle Use Policy (Updated 07-22-2024)**

Vehicles owned by the County shall be used only on County business. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Please notify the supervisor if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. The supervisor can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment or vehicles used on the job.

#### IN COUNTY VEHICLE USE POLICY:

Employees assigned vehicles for travel to and from work, or employees in route in a County vehicle on County business, may divert for personal needs of short duration (for example fifteen minutes or less for shifts less than 12 hours in duration, shifts longer than 12 hours in duration are allowed longer stops). Such employees may also drive County vehicles for lunch or other meals during working hours. Travel for meals should not be outside the immediate area where work is performed. If in the Town of Pulaski, meals should be partaken in the greater Pulaski area. If in Fairlawn, meals should be taken in the greater Fairlawn area. Public Safety Department employees must remain available for emergency calls during meal times and personal stops.

#### Driver Safety and Evaluation Policy:

##### Driver Eligibility Guidelines:

The following guidelines shall be considered minimum for all drivers of County owned vehicles:

- Where possible, a driver of a commercial vehicle should be at least 21 years of age, and have at least one year of previous experience operating the type of vehicle used by the County. Where exception to this exists, documentation on reasons why, and what program elements exist to control exposures presented by younger or inexperienced drivers shall be required. A driver-training program where the inexperienced driver rides with and is trained by a driver trainer for a period of 1 week would be an example of a control program.
- The driver should have a valid license, appropriate for the type of vehicle to be operated, as well as cargo, and that license should not have been suspended or revoked during the previous three years. Individual exception may require additional documentation on the nature of the suspension.
- The driver must have a signed driver alert form on file with Human Resources prior to driving a County owned vehicle and will be monitored through the DMV Driver Alert program.

##### Reviewing Violations:

In reviewing driver history on the Motor Vehicle Record, the following may be utilized and drivers with the following convictions may be deemed unsuitable for operating a County vehicle.

##### Conviction for the following Class A serious motor vehicle violations:

1. Driving while intoxicated
2. Driving under the influence of drugs
3. Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle (gross negligence)
4. Operating during a period of suspension or revocation
5. Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony
6. Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle
7. Operating a motor vehicle without the owners authority
8. Permitting an unlicensed person to drive
9. Reckless driving
10. Hit and run driving

More than three convictions for motor vehicle moving violations during the previous 36 months. Violations may have occurred in either a commercial or private vehicle. Reviewing number and seriousness of violations is much preferred to using the VA DMV point system.

1. Involvement in two or more avoidable (at fault) accidents during the previous 36 months.

2. Any combination of three incidents, (other than those listed in 2 above) accidents/violations within the previous 36 months.

#### In-Service Drivers:

During the annual review of driving record, the same criteria should be applied to in-service drivers.

Drivers who exceed this criteria should receive some type of training and/or disciplinary action (i.e. car use privileges removed, probation, etc.). Drivers allowed to continue using County vehicles should be counseled on County concerns, what action must be taken by the driver/County to correct the identified problem and a commitment to meet the driver eligibility guidelines within a one-year period. This documentation should be agreed to and signed by the driver. This action should be documented in the employee's file.

Violations of this policy will be addressed as disciplinary issues in accordance with the Pulaski County Personnel Policies.

#### Division of Motor Vehicles Record Check:

During employment with the County of Pulaski, events may occur that require an employee or volunteer to use a County vehicle. This policy is to clarify that driving record reviews will be conducted during the hiring process and randomly throughout employment. This measure allows the County to be as safe as possible by allowing qualified individuals to operate County vehicles and preventing non-qualified individuals from endangering others safety.

#### County Vehicles:

1. County Vehicles may be used in the following situations:
  - a. Required job use as an employee or volunteer.
  - b. Business events such as banquets or business trips outside of the County of Pulaski.
  - c. Errands for the county where the employee may not want to put mileage on his/her own personal vehicle.

With every situation listed above county vehicles will be checked in and checked out through the County Administrator's office. This does not apply to required job use.

#### Usage:

Individuals will not be allowed to operate county vehicles if the following conditions are found when applying for employment with the County of Pulaski, the Pulaski County Public Service Authority or upon random records checks:

- Any applicant or employee found to have any six point violations on his/her record within the last 10 years
- Any applicant or employee with a suspended or revoked license, until the license is reinstated
- Any applicant or employee with a conviction of a driving related crime (i.e. voluntary manslaughter)
- Any applicant or employee with a violation that stays on the driving record for the life of the individual
- Any employee that refuses a driving record verification

#### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse Regulations for Commercial Driver's (CDL):

Beginning January 6, 2020, employers or their designated consortium/third-party administrator, will be required to conduct queries to check if current and prospective employees are prohibited from performing safety-sensitive functions, such as operating commercial motor vehicles, due to an unresolved drug and alcohol program violation. Employers are also required to request information from the employee's previous FMCSA-regulated employer under 391.23(e). Once three

years of violation data is stored in the Clearinghouse, employers are no longer required to request this information from a former employer.

#### Limited Query

Pulaski County must conduct an annual query by performing a limited query on all CDL drivers and may also conduct periodic checks. A limited consent form must be completed by the employee in order to perform the check. If the driver does not consent, the query cannot be conducted and the driver will be removed from all safety-sensitive functions. If no records are found during the query, no action is needed.

#### Full Query

Should records be found in the Clearinghouse for a limited queried driver, a full query is required. A full query must be conducted for violation and/or return-to-duty details to be released. If a query is not conducted with 24 hours, the driver will be removed from all safety-sensitive functions including the operation of a CMV. Employees are **STRONGLY** encouraged to pre-register on the Clearinghouse web site so that the query may be conducted immediately if required.

A full query must also be conducted on all new hires. If the employee refuses, the employer is notified of the refused consent, a query cannot be conducted and the driver will be removed from all safety-sensitive functions. If the consent is provided, the query will be conducted and a full violation and/or return to duty will be released if any. If the driver has a violation and no negative return to duty test result, the driver will be removed from the safety-sensitive function. If a driver has no violations or a violation and a negative return to duty result, no action is required.

The Clearinghouse will contain information on all CDL driver drug and alcohol program violations that include:

- Report for duty/remain on duty for safety-sensitive function with alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater or while using any drug specified in the regulations (Part 40), other than those prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner
- Alcohol use while performing or within four hours of performing a safety-sensitive function
- Alcohol use within eight hours of an accident or until a post-accident test, whichever occurs first
- Test positive for use of specified drugs
- Refusing to submit to a required drug or alcohol test.

When applying for a position with the County that requires the individual to obtain a commercial driver's license, the following must not be on the driving record of the individual:

- Any violation that stays forever on the applicants driving record
- Any six point violations within the past 10 years

All information found from review of the driving record will remain confidential to the public and will only be seen by the appropriate authorities including Human Resources and the County's insurance carrier.

When a third party (i.e. insurance carrier) receives a copy of the employee's or applicant's driving record based on review for employment or random record review, the applicant or employee will receive a copy as well. Notice Given for Records Supplied Virginia Code 46.2-212.

#### VEHICLE MAINTENANCE:

Although cars and other County vehicles will be thoroughly inspected by the County garage before any use, the driver of the vehicle at that time will be required to make sure:

- The vehicle's registration is up to date;



- The tags, such as town and County stickers, of the vehicle are current and visible;
- The vehicle is operating properly;
- Tires are inflated and tread is visible;
- No unusual sounds are coming from the car;
- The brakes are safe, and work properly;
- Alarms, if equipped, work properly;
- Head lights, and interior lights work properly;
- The oil is at a proper level;
- Gas is full; and
- The vehicle is clean on the interior and exterior;

If the employee must put gas or oil into the vehicle prior to being able to get to the garage, the employee will be reimbursed for the cost of the materials.

If any of the listed problems are discovered on a County vehicle, the employee is required to report these problems immediately to the nearest supervisor or Garage facility.

#### TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS:

In the event that a citation to appear in court is given for a traffic violation, while an employee is operating a County vehicle, the employee shall report the violation to the department manager or the immediate supervisor. A copy of the citation will be made and kept on file in the administration building.

- Immediately reporting a violation may prevent the employee from further discipline with the County.
- Not reporting a cited violation may result in the County assuming what may have happened during the incident and may result in revocation of the employee's privilege of operating a County vehicle in the future or the employee's employment with the County may be terminated.
- The employee is also required to report traffic violations that occur outside of the workplace to his/her supervisor. Citations given for traffic violations outside the workplace will not be kept on file by the County.
- Any accident while operating a County owned vehicle or equipment requires that the employee undergo a post-accident drug screen whether at fault or not at fault.

#### Division of Motor Vehicles Record Check Dictionary:

Six Point Violation- please refer to DMV pamphlet on Moving Violations and Point Assessments.

Vehicle accident legal defense policy

It is the policy of Pulaski County that traffic charges arising from operation by County officials or County employees operation of a motor vehicle in the line of duty shall be defended on behalf of the official or employee by the County Attorney or through his office, unless such defense is objected to by the County's insurance carrier.

Civil suits, or the threats thereof, shall be defended as directed by the County's insurance carrier.

Any claim arising from the use of a County vehicle shall be referred immediately to the County's insurance carrier.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY DRIVER SELECTION

See Class A violations listed above. An individual who has a Class A violation within the past three (3) years normally receives a license suspension from the Department of Motor Vehicles that issued the license. In addition, VFIS guidelines call for suspension of driving privileges for anyone convicted of a Class A violation for a period of eighteen (18) months. Additionally, any of these individuals would also be required to attend an approved driver-improvement program, or equivalent training, and be re-qualified to operate emergency vehicles.

#### **Class B Violations**

All moving violations not listed as Type A violations. (Exceeding the posted speed limit is a Type B violation).

Any individual who has a combination of two (2) class B moving violation convictions and/or chargeable accidents in a three (3) year period will be issued a warning letter by Human Resources.

Any individual who has a combination of three (3) moving violation convictions and/or chargeable accidents in a three (3) year period will be issued a suspension of driving department vehicles for a period of ninety days (90) by Human Resources. Any individual who has more than three (3) moving violation convictions or three (3) chargeable accidents or any combination of more than three (3) of the formerly stated violations in a three (3) year period will be issued a suspension of driving department vehicles for a period of one (1) year. In addition, the same individual would be required to complete an approved driver improvement program and be re-qualified to operate emergency vehicles.

#### **NN. Use of Phone and Mail Systems**

Personal use of the telephone for long-distance and toll calls is not permitted. Employees should practice discretion when making local personal calls and may be required to reimburse Pulaski County for any charges resulting from their personal use of the telephone.

The use of Pulaski County-paid postage for personal correspondence is not permitted.

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use the approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller, and hang up only after the caller has done so.

Employees are discouraged in using personal cell phones while on the job; however, Pulaski County realizes at times personal calls must be made. Employees are asked to limit all personal phone calls and text messages during business hours. Employees found to be abusing this policy will have all rights revoked and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Use of public property is governed by Virginia Code Section 15.2-1512.2 and states that telephones, computers and related devices and peripheral equipment that are the property of the locality shall not interfere with the employee's productivity or work performance or political activities. Political activities is defined in Code Section 15.2-1512.2 as the purpose of promoting a political issue, for influencing the outcome of an election for local or state office or influencing the outcome of a referendum. Pulaski County may not limit employees from participating in political activities while these employees are off duty, out of uniform and not on County property. Please see the code section for additional information.

#### **OO. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy (Added 12/18/2023)**

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are transforming the way we work; however, AI tools also presents new challenges in terms of information, security and data protection, especially when it involves the sharing of potentially sensitive company and customer information.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all employees use AI tools in a secure, responsible and confidential manner. The following policy outlines the requirements that employees must follow when using AI tools, including the evaluation of security risks and protection of confidential data.

Employees are expected to adhere to the following security best practices when using AI tools.

- a. **Evaluation of AI Tools** – Employees must evaluate the security of any AI tool before using it. This includes reviewing the security features, terms of service, and privacy policy. Employees must also check the reputation of the tool developer and any third-party services used by the tool. The County’s IT Department can provide assistance in the evaluation of AI tools.
- b. **Protection of Confidential Data** – Employees must not upload or share any data that is confidential, proprietary or protected by regulation without prior approval from the department head. This includes data related to customers, employees or partners.
- c. **Access Control** – Employees must not give access to AI tools outside of the company without prior approval from the appropriate department head and subsequent processes as required to meet security compliance requirements. This includes sharing login credentials or other sensitive information with third parties.
- d. **Use of Reputable AI tools** – Employees should use only reputable AI tools and be cautious when using tools developed by individuals or companies without established reputations. Any AI tool used by employees must meet our security and data protection standards.
- e. **Compliance with Security Policies** – Employees must apply the same security best practices we use for all company and customer data. This includes using strong passwords, keeping software up to date and following our data retention and disposal policies.
- f. **Data Privacy** – Employees must exercise discretion when sharing information publicly. As a first step, employees must ask themselves the question, “Would I be comfortable sharing this information outside of the company? Would we be okay with this information being leaked publicly? Before uploading or sharing any data into AI tools. Second would be to follow item “b” above.

## REVIEW AND REVISION

This policy will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure that it remains current and effective.

## CONCLUSION

Our organization is committed to ensuring that the use of AI tools is safe and secure for all employees and customers, as well as the organization itself. WE believe that by following the guidelines outlined in this policy, we can maximize the benefits of AI tools while minimizing the potential risks associated with their use.

### **PP. Credit Card Policy (Updated 12/18/2023, 01/23/2024)**

#### PURPOSE:

To establish procedures under which departments shall control the use of credit cards assigned to and utilized by County of Pulaski employees to purchase goods and services on behalf of the County. These procedures are intended to accomplish the following:

- Ensure the procurement with credit cards is accomplished in accordance with the County’s Purchasing Policy.
- Ensure appropriate internal controls are established within each department so that credit cards are used only for authorized purposes only.

- Ensure the County bears no legal liability from inappropriate use of credit cards.
- Provide a convenient method for low dollar purchases of goods and services.

## 1. SCOPE

These procedures are applicable to those County departments and employees who use credit cards. The decision of when a credit card is issued, to whom and card limitations will be made by the County Administrator upon the recommendation of the employee's Department Head and shall be referred to as the Delegation of Authority.

The employee in employee in which the credit card is issued is the Cardholder.

The Finance Director is a designee of the County Administrator and shall conduct and enforce all Credit Card policies and procedures.

## 2. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. The Credit Card

The credit card will be embossed with the department name to which it was issued. A cardholder may be asked to make a purchase for another department. Enter that Department's account code on the Credit Card Log sheet. An authorized individual from the requesting department must sign off on the transaction charged to their department account code on the Credit Card Log form prior to submission to Accounts Payable Clerk.

### B. Tax Exemption

**THE CARDHOLDER SHALL GIVE THE MERCHANT OUR TAX-EXEMPT NUMBER TO ENSURE THAT THE COUNTY IS NOT TAXED ON TRANSACTIONS THAT ARE EXEMPTED.** The County is tax exempt in most cases. Cardholders should remind merchants of our tax-exempt status when making all purchases. There is a separate card for the PSA & County with the FIN. If you are charged taxes, ask the merchant to correct the transaction before leaving the store. If the merchant needs a tax-exempt status form, the accounts payable department can assist you with the necessary information.

### C. Cardholder Limitations

THE CREDIT CARD IS TO BE USED FOR COUNTY PURCHASES ONLY. Personal purchases are prohibited. Use of credit card for personal purchases may result in termination of employment and may result in prosecution for embezzlement under section 18.2-112 of the Code of Virginia. Initiation of disciplinary action shall be the responsibility of the County Administrator but may be initiated by the Finance Director or the employee's Department Head.

Credit cards are issued by department name. Only those authorized to use County credit cards may do so. Unauthorized use is prohibited.

Credit cards may be used for the payment of travel expenses, such as hotel charges, registrations, and for training and education while conducting County business.

Credit cards may be used for non-overnight business meals, if the employee's card allows such transactions. However, a detailed receipt listing meals and drinks purchased must be attached. The nature of the meeting and the names of those in attendance must be written on the receipt. The purchase of alcoholic beverages is prohibited and may NOT be charged to a County Credit Card.

Credit cards may be used for fueling County vehicles when away from County fueling facilities in the event that a County gas card is not available. Credit cards shall NOT be used for fueling personal vehicles as employees are reimbursed on a per mile rate.

Computer hardware, software, and peripherals shall only be procured by the Information Technology (IT) Department unless prior authorization has been granted by the IT Department.

Credit cards shall be used for current expenditures only. Credit cards may not be used to pay vendors for amounts past due.

The total of a single card purchase cannot exceed the authorized single purchase limit. Payments for purchases are not to be split in order to stay within the single purchase limit.

Telephone and online orders may be placed using the credit card, however proper documentation showing credit card payment must accompany the monthly report.

### 3. DOCUMENTATION

Detailed receipts are required for all purchases. Any time a purchase is made with the credit card, the cardholder is to obtain the customer's copy of the charge slip, cash register tape, paid invoice receipt or packing slip with pricing. This original documentation must be attached to the Monthly Credit Card Log for each cardholder for review by the Department Head and forwarded to the Accounts Payable Department. The customer's copy of the credit card signature form alone is not sufficient.

If for some reason the cardholder does not have documentation of the transaction to send with the statement, he/she must attach a memorandum detailing the description of the item, quantity, unit cost, date of purchase, merchant's name and why there is no supporting documentation. Instances of frequency of lack of documentation as determined by the Finance Director or County Administrator may constitute abuse. Abuse of this provision may result in cancellation of the credit card as well as disciplinary action. In addition, the person utilizing the credit card will be held personally liable for the charges.

If an invoice is not received, contact the vendor and ask them to fax an invoice. If you only received a packing slip with no pricing shown, write the prices on the slip. It is the responsibility of the cardholder to provide his/her Department Head with the receipt(s) for ALL transactions.

### 4. PAYMENT AND INVOICE PROCEDURES

- Do not issue a purchase order for any item purchased on a credit card.
- The bank will mail one (1) copy of the Statement of Account (master statement) to the Finance Department at the end of the billing cycle. This Statement will list all items purchased/processed in the previous 30 days by all cardholders. Individual cardholders will also receive a Statement of Account at the end of the billing cycle.
- The cardholder is required to review the statement and to note any errors. The cardholder attaches to the statement, a Credit Card Log and originals of the documentation received at the time of purchase or the explanation for lack of documentation. The individual whom made the purchase must sign each individual receipt. Each purchase must be coded with the department's general ledger line item on the Credit Card Log. The cardholder approves the Credit Card Log and all original receipts are then forwarded to Accounts Payable in the Finance Department within three business days.
- The Accounts Payable Clerk is responsible for reviewing the statements and receipts from all department heads and resolving any questions. Should the Accounts Payable Clerk not receive all of the statements, it will be his/her responsibility to contact department head to request the statements.

- The department head or County Administrator shall sign a copy of the statement for an absent cardholder and forward with all information to the Accounts Payable Clerk. The cardholder shall sign the original statement upon returning to work.
- A cardholder may be asked to make a purchase for another department. Enter that Department's account code on the Credit Card Log sheet. An authorized individual from the requesting department must sign off on the transaction charged to their department account code on the Credit Card Log form prior to submission to Accounts Payable Clerk.
- All statements should be approved by the cardholder and returned to Accounts Payable even though there may be no purchase activity on his/her credit card for a particular billing cycle.

#### TRANSACTION APPROVAL

Approval of the transactions that cardholders have made using the credit cards will not be totally defined in these procedures. If for any reason Accounts Payable questions a purchase, it is his/her responsibility to resolve the issue with the cardholder. The County Administrator, Finance Director, and the department head will be notified immediately of any questionable purchases.

#### DISPUTES/RETURNED ITEMS

If item(s) purchased with the credit card are found defective, the cardholder has the responsibility to return item(s) to the merchant for replacement or to receive a credit on the purchase. Record the return on the Credit card Log. The vendor will issue a credit to your account for items returned. Documentation of the return (credit receipt) should be issued to the cardholder by the merchant and submitted with the log. CASH REFUNDS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. If the merchant refuses to replace or correct the faulty item, contact the Finance Department immediately.

#### REQUESTS FOR INITIAL, ADDITIONAL OR CHANGES TO CREDIT CARDS

All requests for new cardholders or changes to current cardholders shall be made by submitting a "Request for Credit Card" form. The department head must approve all requests for credit cards. The County Administrator will review and provide final approval for issuance of the card.

After approval of the County Administrator, the cardholder shall receive a copy of the Credit Card Policy. The cardholder shall personally sign the "Credit Card Employee Agreement" in order to receive their credit card.

#### ANNUAL INVENTORY

On an annual basis, the Finance Department will provide a list of credit cards issued to cardholders for each department. Departments shall conduct a physical inventory of credit cards and provide a report to the County Finance Director on the results of the inventory.

#### LOST OR STOLEN CARDS

Should an employee lose or have the credit card stolen, it is the responsibility of the cardholder to immediately notify the bank that issued the credit card, the department head, the County Administrator and the Finance Director of the loss or theft of the card.

#### CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Credit cards that are issued to County employees, as approved by the County Administrator. If an employee leaves employment, his/her card must be surrendered and returned to the Finance Department by the cardholder or his/her Department Head. The Finance Department will notify the bank to cancel the card.

Should the cardholder be transferred within the County, the Finance Director must be notified by the cardholder's Department Head of the transfer. The Finance Director shall verify with the employee's new supervisor of the need for a credit card and make the necessary changes.

In the event the Finance Director, the County Administrator or the Department Head is not able to collect the credit card when the employee leaves employment, the Finance Director shall notify the card issuer immediately to take action to ensure the credit card is canceled to prevent any purchases after the employee separates employment.

#### NON-COMPLIANCE WITH PROCEDURES

Failure of the cardholder to comply with these procedures could result in the revocation of card usage privileges or other disciplinary actions such as termination of employment. In order for a cardholder to regain the privilege to use a Credit card, the employee's department head, the Purchasing Agent and County Administrator must approve.

#### **QQ. Smoking Policy**

Smoking of any kind (e.g. tobacco, e-cigarettes/vaping) is prohibited in the office, in County vehicles, and within 20 feet from entrances and ventilation intakes at all County building locations/job sites. The County does not specifically allow for smoking breaks. Please see your supervisor for guidelines regarding any questions or concerns.

#### **RR. Employment Verification Policy**

Human Resources will respond to all reference check inquiries from other employers. Responses to such inquiries will confirm dates of employment and position(s) held. Individuals or companies requesting this information should be directed to Human Resources. Supervisors should not reply to any reference checks. Human Resources and/or payroll shall also respond to all employment verifications in which we have received a signed release from the employee.

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#### **ELECTRONIC AND INTERNET USE POLICY**

## A. General Use

The use of The07-0 County's automation systems, including computers, fax machines, and all forms of Internet/intranet access, is for County business and for authorized purposes only. Brief and occasional personal use of the electronic mail system or the Internet is acceptable as long as it is not excessive or inappropriate, and does not result in expense or harm to the County or otherwise violate this policy.

Use is defined as "excessive" if it interferes with normal job functions, responsiveness, or the ability to perform daily job activities. Electronic communication should not be used to solicit or sell products or services that are unrelated to the County's business; distract, intimidate, or harass coworkers or third parties; or disrupt the workplace.

Use of County computers, networks, and Internet access is a privilege granted by Pulaski County and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct carried out on such systems. The County has licensed the use of certain commercial software application programs for business purposes. Third parties retain the ownership and distribution rights to such software. No employee may create, use, or distribute copies of such software that are not in compliance with the license agreements for the software.

All information transmitted, composed, sent, or received on the electronic communications systems are and remain the property of the County. They are not the private property of any employee. **Employees have NO expectation of privacy for their use of Internet and/or email or any other form of electronic communication made using County property or systems or done during working hours.** The use of the County's electronic communications system is reserved for the conduct of business at the County. The County's electronic communications system may not be used to solicit or promote commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations or other non-job related ventures. The County's electronic communications systems are not to be used to create any offensive, threatening or disruptive messages. The County reserves and intends to exercise the right to monitor, review, audit, intercept, access, record, and disclose any or all information created, transmitted, received or otherwise communicated via the County's electronic communications systems for any purpose and without prior notice. The contents of electronic communications may be disclosed within the County or otherwise as deemed necessary and/or appropriate by the County, without the consent or knowledge of the employee.

Without express authorization from the County, no employee shall remove any Computer Equipment, Peripherals, or software from the premises of the County.

Upon the termination of employment, an employee shall return to the County all Information Technology Systems in his or her possession and shall discontinue all use of the employee's Login Credentials. Passwords should be a series of characters/numbers. Passwords should be no less than seven characters and no more than 14 characters.

Passwords should not be the names of family members, pets, friends or associates.

Passwords should not be a series of repeating or sequential characters or numbers nor should they be Social Security or telephone numbers.

Passwords shall be changed at specified intervals and may be changed more frequently as needed or required by specific circumstances.

Passwords should not be written or stored in a manner accessible to others.

## B. Social Media Policy



Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon employees' rights under the National Labor Relations Act.

#### *Use of Social Media on Behalf of the County*

1. Creation of Social Media Accounts. No employee shall create an account with any Social Media on behalf of the County without the written authorization of the County Administrator.
2. Use of County Social Media Accounts. Social Media accounts created by or on behalf of the County ("**County Social Media Accounts**") shall be used only by employees authorized by the County Administrator. Employees who use County Social Media Accounts shall:
  - a. comply with any communications guidelines established by the County;
  - b. comply with the terms of use for all County Social Media Accounts established by the Social Media entity (e.g., the Facebook Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, the Twitter Terms of Service, etc.);
  - c. comply with all applicable laws, including copyright, trademark, privacy, financial disclosure, and other laws; and
  - d. submit all proposed Social Media content to the County Administrator, or his designee, for approval prior to posting, uploading, or transmitting the content via the Social Media service.
3. Likewise, no employee shall post, transmit, or upload any content using any Social Media

#### *Personal Use of Social Media*

Employees shall comply with the following guidelines when using personal Social Media accounts:

1. Employees' use of Social Media may not interfere with their work commitments and may not take place during work time.
2. Employees may not post confidential information belonging to the County or contractors, clients, customers, or co-workers on any Social Media.
3. Employees may not disparage, defame, harass, or intimidate County employees using any Social Media.
4. In addition, the following guidelines apply when an employee references the County (including listing the County as an employer) using any Social Media:
  - a. Employees should include disclaimers, in matters of controversy or otherwise, on any Social Media that reference the County, stating that the views expressed by the employee do not represent the views of the County.
  - b. Employees should refrain from using profanity, obscenities, or vulgar language on any social networking website that references the County.

All discussions and materials posted, including pictures, using any Social Media that reference the County should conform to workplace conduct and dress policies.

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## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **A. Safety**

The County is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for its employees. As such, we make every effort to comply with relevant federal and state occupational health and safety laws and to develop the best feasible operations, procedures, technologies, and programs conducive to this environment.

Our policy is aimed at minimizing the exposure of our employees, clients, and visitors to our facilities to health or safety risks. To accomplish this objective, all employees are expected to work diligently to maintain safe and healthful working conditions and to adhere to proper operating practices and procedures designed to prevent injuries and illnesses. The responsibility of all employees includes:

1. Exercising maximum care and good judgment at all times to prevent accidents and injuries;
2. Following the instructions of supervisors and department heads;
3. Reporting to supervisors and seeking first aid for all injuries, regardless of how minor;
4. Reporting unsafe conditions, equipment, or practices to supervisors or department heads;
5. Using safety equipment provided by The07-0 County at all times;
6. Wearing personal protective equipment, such as safety glasses, hearing protection, masks, or gloves, and refraining from wearing dangling jewelry or apparel.
7. Observing conscientiously all safety rules and regulations at all times; and
8. Notifying their supervisor before the beginning of the workday if they are taking any medication that may cause drowsiness or other side effects that could lead to injury to them or their coworkers.

## **Public Service Authority Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements – See Appendix E**

### **B. Confined Space**

#### Scope and Application

This section prescribes the basic mandatory practices and procedures, which Pulaski County Employees will follow for employee entry into and work within confined spaces.

#### Preparation

Entry into a confined space shall not be made unless the Utility Maintenance Supervisor or General Services Director has assured that the following procedures have first been completed:

Confined Space - It is important to understand that to be defined "confined space", an area must fit ALL three of the following descriptions as provided in OSHA 1910.146 (b):

1. It is not intended for continuous employee occupancy;
2. It has a limited means of egress; and
3. It is large enough and so configured that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work.

If the space does not fit all three descriptions above, it is not a confined space and the standard does not apply.

Permit Required Confined Space - The County will consider all confined spaces as permit required confined space as stated in OSHA 1910.146.

#### General Provisions

1. Training - All Pulaski County employees who will be entrants will be trained in the hazards of working in confined spaces and at least one qualified person will be selected and trained. Only a qualified person can evaluate the hazards of each confined space to be entered, specify necessary safety control measures and determine if conditions permit an unattended entry. When appropriate, all employees will be trained and designated as qualified persons and make solo entries.
2. Rescue Team - The Pulaski County Special Operations Team, trained in the use of all equipment they will use in rescue and all members are certified and trained according to current applicable standards. Every year the rescue

team will practice removing a victim through openings similar to those in actual situations. The Emergency Management Coordinator must be notified and confirm that Confined Space Technicians are available to respond in the case of rescue.

3. Permit System - It is the responsibility of each applicable supervisor that the County's entrance permit be completed. The established permit system, which insures that a permit is written for every entry into a confined space is attached. The permit, which may be discarded after the entry, must be completed for each confined space project. The permit will provide the following information.

- a. The minimum environmental conditions acceptable for entry and work in the confined space;
- b. A record of atmospheric test results;
- c. The last calibration date for the oxygen detector and combustible gas indicator used;
- d. The signature of the qualified person responsible for securing the permit and reviewing conditions prior to entry.
- e. A written description of the location and type of work to be completed; and
- f. The time of issue of an expiration (a maximum of 12 hours apart with one 12-hour extension).

### Preparation

All of the steps listed below will be taken as appropriate before each confined space entry including:

1. All pumps and lines conveying hazards must be effectively isolated to prevent air contamination or oxygen deficiency within the space;
2. All fixed mechanical equipment capable of causing injury must be placed at zero mechanical state and electrical equipment other than lighting must be locked out or tagged if locking out is impossible;
3. The confined space must be emptied of all hazardous and flammable substances to the extent feasible;
4. Immediately prior to the entry, the qualified person must assure that the space is tested for oxygen levels, potential flammable hazards and toxic materials; and
5. If the tests show the existence of a hazardous atmosphere, the space must be mechanical ventilated or entrants must wear specific protective equipment.

### Entry Requirements

All confined spaces shall be deemed as Permit Required Confined Space and therefore requires:

- a. A trained attendant without other duties must be stationed immediately outside while employees are in the confined space;
- b. The qualified person must test the atmosphere no less frequently than hourly and record the results on the entry permit;
- c. All entrants must use an OSHA approved full-body harness and retrieval lines, unless the lines could pose a hazard, or wear an approved positive-pressure, self-contained breathing apparatus if there is an IDLH or hazardous atmosphere only. Hoisting devices must be used if the entry is through a top opening;
- d. The retrieval/tag line shall be attached to a mechanical device or fixed point outside the permit space;
- e. If there is an IDLH or hazardous atmosphere, there must be either a positive-pressure, self-contained breathing apparatus or a combination positive-pressure, air-line respirator within an auxiliary self-contained air supply immediately outside the space entrance.
- f. Employees are required to have MSDS sheets on hand for any substance that an entrant may be exposed too.

### Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in these regulations, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Attendant - An individual whom no other duties assigned to remain immediately outside the entrance to the confined space and who may render assistance as needed to employees inside the space.

Blind or Blinding or Blanking - The absolute closure of pipe, line or duct, to prevent passage of any material (e.g. by fastening a solid plate or "cap" across the pipe).

Confined Space - Any space not intended for continuous employee occupancy, having a limited means of egress and which is also subject to either the accumulation of an actual or potentially hazardous atmosphere or a potential for engulfment. Confined spaces generally include, but are not limited to storage tanks, process vessels, bins, boilers, ventilation or exhaust ducts, sewers, manholes, underground utility vaults, acid tanks, digesters, ovens, kilns, pulpers, tunnels and pipelines. Open top spaces more than four (4) feet in depth such as pits, tubs, vaults and vessels may also be considered confined spaces if the above criteria is met.

Engulfment - The surrounds and effective capture of a person by finely divided particles of matter or liquid. There is a potential for engulfment when such particles, matter or liquid exists in a sufficient quantity or at a sufficient pressure to surround a person before normal exit can be effected.

Entrant - Any employee who enters a confined space.

Entry - Any action resulting in any part of the employee's face breaking the plane of any opening of the confined space, and includes any ensuing work activities inside the confined space.

Hazardous Atmosphere - An atmosphere presenting a potential for death, disablement, injury or acute illness from one or more of the following causes:

- a. flammable gas, vapor or mist in excess of 10% of its lower flammable limit (LFL);
- b. an oxygen deficient atmosphere containing less than 19.5% oxygen by volume or an oxygen enriched atmosphere containing more than 23% oxygen by volume;
- c. an atmospheric concentration of any substance listed in Subpart Z of Part 1910 Standards above the listed numerical value of the permissible exposure (PEL); or
- d. a condition immediately dangerous to life or health.

### **C. Reporting Injuries and Accidents/Company Nurse Program**

When any accident, injury, or illness occurs while an employee is at work, it must be reported to your supervisor as soon as possible regardless of the nature or severity. "Near misses" should also be reported promptly.

The following is a checklist for employees and supervisors to refer to should a workplace injury occur.

#### **STEP 1:**

For life or limb threatening injury only, call 911 then report the accident/injury after the employee has been stabilized.

1. Advise the supervisor of ANY accident/injury immediately.
2. In a quiet location, the employee and/or supervisor will contact Company Nurse at 888-770-0925.
3. You will be asked to provide the following information when you call:
  - Search Code
  - Employer name and/or worksite
  - Employee personal information
  - Injury details: Who? What? When? Where?
4. Possible outcomes as a result of the call:

- Self-care or basic first aid; or
  - Referral to a medical facility by a nurse, occupational health, urgent care or ER
5. After examination by a doctor all forms are to be submitted to HR.

#### STEP 2:

The nurse line will conduct the following:

- Report the injury as emailed or faxed to the employer.
- If the injured employee is referred for medical treatment, an alert will be sent immediately to the medical provider to expect the employee at their facility.

#### STEP 3:

The nurse line will conduct the following:

- Additional nurse advice: Employees who are triaged by a nurse but not initially referred are encouraged to contact the nurse line again if injuries become worse or new symptoms develop for which they require additional nurse advice or injury triage services and a possible referral for medical treatment.

The Company Nurse will handle all initial reporting of the workplace injuries and is available 24 hours per day/7 days per week. The Company Nurse will complete the first report of injury form and fax it to the claims processing administrator with VACORP.

Prescription drugs for work related injuries may be requested via participating pharmacies through the Express Scripts program of VACORP. The employee must have Human Resources complete the information requested and present their ID card to receive up to 14 days of the prescription to the employee. If the employee chooses not to use this option, the employee must then pay for the prescription and request reimbursement through VACORP.

### **D. Pandemic & Influenza Policy**

#### PURPOSE

The County is committed to the health and safety of its employees, contractors and workplace visitors and is committed to minimizing the risk of exposure and transmission of pandemic influenza virus through the workplace. The County will make all reasonable efforts to provide essential services to residents on an uninterrupted basis during a pandemic influenza outbreak. During a pandemic outbreak, employees will be expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work and perform essential duties. This policy will help prepare the County to properly handle infection control, to establish communication strategies and to provide needed support services to employees during a pandemic outbreak.

#### PRINCIPLES

- All employees are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves by: preparing their own pre-plans, understanding their own levels of responsibility and fulfilling their work obligations.
- Internal communication methods need to be established in advance in order to provide accurate, timely and consistent information to all employees affected by an outbreak. A failure to present information to employees in a planned and comprehensive fashion can lead to lost confidence and may result in employees' failure to comply with their individual work responsibilities.
- Coordination with the Pulaski County Health Department is required in order to provide information, education and services to employees regarding prevention precautions, infection control, quarantine/isolation guidelines and safe work practices.
- Sufficient income continuance will encourage employees' cooperation with safe work practices (i.e. self-reporting,

self-quarantine and self-isolation) so they can fulfill their work obligations when fit to do so without putting themselves, their co-workers or the public at risk. An extension of some benefits beyond what is currently provided (such as administrative leave) may be available to qualifying employees.

- It is prudent to pre-plan for a pandemic; however, it is impossible to anticipate every issue that may arise during a public health emergency. This procedure should be used as pre-planning guidelines.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Influenza** is commonly known as "the flu" and is a highly contagious and common respiratory illness (an infection of the lungs and airways) caused by a virus. It is transmitted from person to person in one of two ways: (a) from droplets that enter your body through the eyes, nose or mouth when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks, or (b) from indirect contact when a person's hands become contaminated with the virus by touching contaminated objects and the person subsequently touches his eyes, nose or mouth or eats food without washing their hands first.
- **Pandemic Influenza** occurs when there is an abrupt and major change in the structure of the influenza and infection reaches global proportions. Since people have no immunity to the completely new strain, the virus can spread very quickly and outbreaks can occur in many countries.
- **Public Health Emergency** occurs when there is a pandemic influenza that is spreading very quickly and creating simultaneous outbreaks in many communities. The Governor or the State Health Commissioner may declare a public health emergency in coordination with federal health agencies.
- **Quarantine** occurs when a person has been in close contact with someone else who is contagious with the pandemic influenza virus or when a person has been in a high-risk contaminated area. Quarantine can be imposed by an order from the State Health Commissioner or by self-quarantine when that person realizes that they have had close contact that may make them contagious. Self-quarantine should occur for a three to five day period following exposure or as recommended by the State Health Department.
- **Isolation** should occur when a person starts to exhibit the actual signs and symptoms of pandemic influenza and will, therefore, be capable of spreading the virus to others with whom they may have had contact. Self-isolation should occur for a three to five days from the onset of symptoms or as recommended by the Health Department to prevent further spreading pandemic influenza.
- **Supervisor** means the supervisor or work group leader who is accountable for a particular facility, department or area of the County and generally includes managers and others in supervisory positions directly responsible for the performance of employees.
- **Employees** includes all full-time, part-time, temporary and seasonal employees on the County payroll.
- **County Work Sites** include any work site to which employees have been assigned for the purpose of conducting county business and includes all land, buildings, facilities, mobile equipment and vehicles either owned, leased or otherwise controlled by the County.
- **Essential Services** are those County services critical to the protection of life and property. The loss of any of these essential services would be intolerable in that they could affect the basics of life or safety and the community could not function without such services. Essential services shall be identified in each department and shall be distinguished from services that are determined to be merely desirable or valued services.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

### Department Directors/Office Administrators

- Have the ultimate responsibility to provide the essential services within their departments to the best of their ability.

- Require that all supervisors and employees in the departments/sections under their control adhere to the responsibilities and procedures as identified in this policy.
- Assume the supervisor's responsibilities and accountabilities in regard to all employees that are directly reporting to them.

#### Supervisors

- Have responsibility to provide the essential services within their sections to the best of their ability.
- Consult with the appropriate sections of the Human Resource Department to provide consistent application of this policy and procedures.
- Require all employees in their departments/sections to adhere to the responsibilities and procedures as identified in this policy.
- Require departmental timekeepers (or backup timekeepers) to continue to enter time sheet details for employees to ensure that employees can continue to receive paychecks during any pandemic influenza emergency.

#### Employees

- Develop personal plans so they can manage their responsibilities at home, plan on how to care for their families and be able to come to work.
- Follow infection prevention and transmission control guidelines as applicable to their work situation (appendices 1 and 2).
- Properly use personal protective equipment and respiratory protection equipment that may be made available to them.
- Identify to their supervisor immediately any potential risks to infection transmission and assist in corrective actions to minimize these risks.
- Identify to their supervisor immediately if an employee is exposed to others with pandemic influenza or if they become symptomatic themselves. Employees with pandemic influenza-like symptoms should not be at the work site.
- Assist in cleaning of workstations and/or shared work areas if requested.
- Not report to work with pandemic influenza-like symptoms. Sick leave call-in procedures must be followed. Employees who develop pandemic influenza-like symptoms while at work should leave the work site after notifying their supervisor.
- Return to work only when safe to do so. The Health Department will provide return-to-work guidance based on the particular pandemic influenza virus.

#### Department of Environmental Services

- Ensure that there are sufficient amounts of appropriate cleaning supplies.
- Ensure Environmental Services employees are wearing the proper personal protective clothing (i.e. disposable gloves, masks, etc.) when cleaning.
- Ensure their employees are knowledgeable and require them to follow appropriate infection control procedures while performing their job duties.

#### Administration

- Develop strategies for effective methods of establishing communication with appropriate groups in order to ensure accurate and timely information as disseminated.
- Collaborate with the Health Department to develop informational materials for distribution to employees,



supervisors and County residents.

#### Human Resources

- Recommend amendments and updates to this policy and procedures as may be required on a periodic basis to respond to current circumstances and evolving needs.
- Provide information about this policy to supervisors and employees so that they are aware of their responsibilities and the procedures as identified in this policy. Attend departmental staff meetings and distribute information to staff as required.
- Provide advice and interpretation of this policy to department heads and supervisors.
- Consult with supervisors to ensure consistent application to this policy.

#### Pulaski County Health Department

- Provide information to departments, prior to and during a pandemic influenza outbreak regarding:
  - Pandemic influenza and infection prevention and control strategies
  - Modes of transmission on pandemic influenza
  - Signs and symptoms of pandemic influenza
  - Personal protection methods
  - Social distancing guidelines
- Monitor both seasonal and pandemic influenza situations.
- Provide advice to departments on quarantine and isolation situations.

#### Emergency Management

- Activate the Emergency Operations Center as needed.
- Activate the County's Continuity of Operations Plan (OOP) as needed.

#### Information Technology

- Be prepared to execute appropriate emergency plans and actions; implement expanded Internet capabilities with key suppliers, business partners and customers that may be unwilling or unable to provide services in person during a pandemic event.
- Determine and communicate the preferred IT enabled secure telecommuting and Remote Access Infrastructure.
- Provide technical support that enables crisis communications as necessary. This may be via the Internet, Intranet and/or voice services.
- Provide guidance on preferred methods of obtaining and securing alternative communication technologies if primary lines of communication are disrupted.
- Provide specialized teleconferencing and/or video link technologies as required to support disparate, remote operations.
- Provide preferred method for secure access to County information resources.
- Provide infrastructure support for preferred resources or tools to support a centralized or decentralized crisis management.

#### PROCEDURES

- **Infection Control** - The most common route of pandemic influenza is droplet transmission and indirect contact

from person-to-person. Scrupulous attention to hand hygiene and containment of respiratory secretions produced by coughing and sneezing will be essential in reducing the transmission of pandemic influenza. Key actions in a pandemic situation include:

- **Health and Safety** - The requirements for personal protective equipment will be based on Health Department assessments. Appropriate masks to prevent the transmission of droplet contact shall be provided as required. As practical, barriers or other personal distancing measures will be taken to reduce close physical contact between employees and the public.
- **Alcohol Dispensers and Hand Sanitizers** - Hand washing is the most effective method to control the spread of pandemic influenza. When necessary hand sanitizer should be made available in employee work areas as well as in areas that the public or customers utilize. People will be encouraged to use these pump foam dispensers whenever they are entering any public or shared workspace in order to control the transmission of the virus.
- **Vaccinations** - It is anticipated that a vaccine may not be readily available in the early stages of a pandemic; and when it does become available, it may initially be in a very limited supply. Therefore, pandemic influenza vaccine will need to be administered on a restricted and pre-established priority basis. The priority will initially be to those employees who are directly involved in the delivery of essential services that request the vaccine. After these employees have been immunized, and when additional vaccines become available, then other employees will receive vaccine based upon a pre-established priority setting process by those that request the vaccine.
- **Communications and Education of Employees** - Infection control measures need to be implemented long before the population is at risk and then need to be reinforced as the situation manifests itself. Administration, in consultation with the Health Department, will coordinate and distribute pandemic-related information in order to provide consistent and timely messages to employees. Information will be distributed through such means as pamphlets and posters in strategic locations, intranet, Internet, emails and other means. External strategies and networks shall be required between Human Resources, Administration and the Health Department to ensure that information and advice that is provided to County employees is consistent with information being provided to the general public. Communication strategies and networks with other external groups (such as the public, customers, suppliers, media, local employers and other municipalities) shall be the responsibility of Administration.
- **County Departments/Human Resource Management Priorities** - County departments are responsible for ensuring that they have the optimum number of personnel available and trained to perform essential services. To do so, they will employ the following strategies in order of priority:
  - Suspend normal employee training programs.
  - Suspend vacations, leaves and any other planned absences of employees involved in essential services.
  - Re-deploy employees from desirable and valued function to essential and necessary valued functions.
  - Authorize overtime for employees in situations where re-deployment of other skilled employees is not an option due to the complexity of the essential task.
  - Use surplus employees from their County departments.
  - Rehire recently retired employees.
  - Where possible, utilize volunteers.
  - Recruit new employees.

The Human Resources Department will coordinate the application of the last four items above.

- **Payroll and Benefits Services** - It is recognized that the accurate and timely provision of employees' paychecks and the continuance of their health insurance coverage is an essential service that must continue during a pandemic influenza emergency. Health care, dental and life insurance claims will continue to be submitted as they are normally. The most significant issue will be the need for accurate record keeping and timesheet entry. This will require departments to maintain a qualified timekeeper and backup timekeepers to continue to enter the pay details for employees on a weekly basis.

- **Recruitment Processes** - The normal process of hiring new employees may be put on hold unless there is a critical need to immediately fill the position. However, during a public health emergency, it may be necessary to recruit additional employees to perform some essential services, if the required staffing cannot be provided with existing employees. Human Resources shall work directly with departments in order to determine priorities based upon their essential needs. It may be necessary (during a public health emergency only) to modify some recruitment procedures, to delay some pre-employment requirements, to hire some employees without all the necessary qualifications or to recruit from alternate sources or retired County employees.
- **Employees' Refusal to Work** - In accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, Section 35: A worker shall not carry out any work if, on reasonable and probable grounds, the worker believes that there exists an imminent danger to the health or safety of that worker or another worker present at the work site. If a worker refuses to carry out any work, he shall, as soon as practical, notify the supervisor of the reasons. Upon investigation, the supervisor shall take any actions to eliminate the imminent danger. The worker may be assigned to other work which they are reasonably capable of performing until the investigation is completed. Examples of the County controlling or eliminating dangers include providing protective equipment, protective clothing, distancing measures and/or associated training (as long as it is reasonably practical for the County to do so). If a worker continues to refuse the work after the County concludes that imminent danger does not exist, the supervisor should then consult with department heads or Human Resources, and appropriate disciplinary actions may be applied on a case-by-case basis in accordance with County policy.
- **Worker's Compensation Benefits** - If an employee believes that he has contracted an infectious disease while performing duties on County business during a public health emergency, the employee may follow the normal procedures to complete a Worker's Compensation claim form. If their claim is approved, they shall be paid in the same manner as others who are off on approved claims.
- **Reporting Sick Leave Absences** - Employees shall contact their supervisor in accordance with current notification procedures when they are unable to report to work due to quarantine, isolation or sick leave situations. It will be necessary for employees to report their absences, the reason for the absence and anticipated return to work date to their supervisor who will be responsible for ensuring that attendance records and timesheets are completed and entered properly.
- **Absence Verification** - The criteria for verification of sick leave or FMLA leave may need to be relaxed during the actual public health emergency period. Undoubtedly, the level of adjudication for claims will be different because of the significant increase in absences, the difficulty for the employees to gain access to medical staff and the difficulty in acquiring medical certifications for absences. If the supervisor has a reason to question the absence or the length of such absence of any employee, they shall consult with the department heads or Human Resources to determine if further information or action is required.
- **Employees with Symptoms Excluded from the Workplace** Employees should not report to work with pandemic symptoms nor if they have been quarantined. Some employees will develop symptoms of pandemic influenza while at work. These individuals must notify their supervisor and immediately leave the workplace and should not return to work until five days after the onset of symptoms or as recommended by the Health Department. If the employee is too ill to drive themselves home, the supervisor shall arrange for alternate transportation to their home or to medical services, if required. Members of the public or customers should be discouraged from entering the workplace if they are pandemic influenza symptomatic.
- **Taking Temperatures** the ADA strictly limits an employer from taking temperatures; however, the EEOC allows such measures during a pandemic. The following measures must be taken:
  - Only a department head or supervisor who has been trained and the training has been documented may take an employee's temperature
  - A temperature gauge that requires no physical contact with the employee must be used

- A reading over 100.4 degrees is considered a temperature
- A positive reading means you discreetly notify the employee and they will not be allowed to enter the workplace. The employee should begin quarantine procedures and not return to work for fourteen (14) days, and only if, by that point, the employee is fever and symptom free for three (3) days.
- If the employee is entering the work site when the temperature check is being performed, that time is deemed compensable work time.
- **Disinfecting Shared Work Areas** - If an employee has been identified as having been sick at work with pandemic influenza-like symptoms, the workstation, work vehicle and any shared work areas will require cleaning. The supervisor is responsible for:
  - Having cleaning supplies and appropriate protection available for employees to clean the area safely and without the risk of becoming infected themselves
  - Assigning staff, using the proper protective equipment and procedures, to be responsible for disinfecting shared work areas
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Counseling Services** - Eligible employees who might need counseling services for any reason should access the County's EAP. In the event of critical illnesses or deaths of fellow employees or family members, the County shall endeavor to arrange for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing conducted by a qualified provider for any affected County employee. Post-Traumatic-Stress Debriefing may also be necessary as the pandemic develops.
- **Enhanced Benefit Areas** - During a public health emergency, the following benefits shall be enhanced in order to better support employees:
  - **Administrative Leave Pay** - The County Administrator or designee may approve administrative leave with pay as necessary.
- **Alternative Work Schedule** - Departments shall review their normal business hours and work schedules to determine if they can be modified in a manner that best promotes social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals during an emergency. If feasible, supervisors should first ask for employees to volunteer to work hours other than their usual schedule. Regular work schedules may be changed by a supervisor subject to a 24-hour cancellation notice, when possible, upon the proclamation of a pandemic influenza emergency. If less than a 24-hour notice is necessary, department heads may make such changes. Departments are encouraged to work with staff to minimize the impacts of decisions affecting schedule changes. Approved schedules shall also be formally documented. Review personnel policy guidelines on alternative work schedules for more details.
- **Telework** - Telework means that an employee is working one or more days each workweek from home instead of commuting to his or her centrally located worksite. Telework is not appropriate for all employees and no employee is entitled or guaranteed the opportunity to telework. The purpose of this policy is to provide support for social distancing or other pandemic response goals as necessary to respond to a pandemic influenza emergency. Departments should identify possible teleworkers as soon as possible and make the necessary technical arrangements with IT in accordance with the County telework guidelines. Departments shall consider a broader use of telework than they would for normal operations or other types of emergencies to accomplish social distancing for a pandemic influenza emergency. Departments shall identify essential functions that may be accomplished remotely and whether the person performing the function needs access to all systems and applications or only e-mail and/or voice communications.

### **Hand Hygiene Guidelines**

Pandemic influenza is an infection of the lungs and airways caused by a virus. The virus passes from person to person by droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks and can be further spread by touching infected surfaces and then touching your eyes, nose, mouth or food before washing your hands. Viruses generally live on hard surfaces for 1 to 2 days, on

cloth/tissue/paper for 8-12 hours and on hands for 5 minutes.

Next to immunization, the single most effective method of preventing pandemic influenza is frequent and proper hand washing.

### **Wash your hands:**

Before:

- Touching your mouth, nose or eyes
- Handling or eating foods or serving others
- Brushing or flossing your teeth
- Inserting or removing contact lenses

After:

- Touching objects in a shared workplace or public area
- Treating wounds or cuts
- Having contact with a person with influenza or their immediate environment
- Going to the bathroom or changing a diaper
- Blowing your nose or wiping a child's nose
- Coughing or sneezing
- Handling garbage
- Children - after playing with items shared by other children

### **How to Wash your hands:**

- Use regular soap and water. Antibacterial soap is not necessary.
- Rub hands vigorously covering all surfaces for 20 seconds
- Rinse under hot running water
- Dry with clean or disposable towel
- Use a disposable towel to turn off the faucet and open the door
- Alcohol rubs are effective. Rub hands vigorously for 20 seconds.

### **Respiratory Protection Guidelines**

Pandemic influenza is an infection of the lungs and airways caused by a virus. Droplets pass the pandemic influenza virus from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. Covering your mouth and nose when you cough is very important.

Airborne droplets can enter the body through the eyes, nose or mouth. The virus contained in droplets can travel up to 2 meters (6 feet) in the air and can live on hard surfaces for 1 to 2 days, on cloth/tissue/paper for 8 to 12 hours and on hands for five minutes.

People generally develop symptoms of influenza 1 to 2 days after becoming infected. They are contagious from the day before they have the first symptom until normally 5 days after the symptoms start.

### **Respiratory Protection Procedures:**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve with sneezing/coughing
- Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing or using tissues
- Throw away tissues after wiping your nose or coughing/sneezing
- Keep hands away from eyes, nose, mouth, until you have washed them
- Maintain personal distance from the next person of at least six feet

## **E. Violence Prevention**

The County does not tolerate employee violence or threats of violence on County property or on County time. The County strives to provide each employee with a safe working environment and to provide our clients with a comfortable business climate. Employees who jeopardize this safe atmosphere by engaging in violent behavior will be disciplined, up to and including termination for a first offense. Violent behavior includes fighting, threats, harassment, verbal assault, and other aggressive or intimidating behavior that places another individual in discomfort or fear for his or her well-being.

**Reporting:** All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Employees should not place themselves in peril. If employees see or hear a commotion or disturbance near their workstation, they should not try to see what is happening. The County will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the County may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

If employees are subjected to violent behavior, inform your supervisor or Human Resources instead of responding with violence. Do not escalate a potentially hostile situation. Threats of (or actual) violence to employees outside of work or during non-working hours can later impact employees at work or result in later acts of violence to employees at the workplace. The County encourages employees to report threats of (or actual) violence made to employees outside of work and working hours, and especially in cases of domestic violence or child abuse.

**Victims of Violence:** The County supports victims of workplace violence by offering an Employee Assistance Program to victims and their families. The County may mandate that an employee who is the victim of violence attend an EAP program before returning to work. Any employee with knowledge of any violation of this policy should report to his or her supervisor immediately.

## **F. Weapon-Free Workplace**

Weapon refers to any object or substance designed to (or which could reasonably expect to) inflict a wound, cause injury, incapacitate, or cause death, including, without limitation, all firearms (loaded and unloaded, simulated or real), devices designed to expel a projectile (such as bb guns, air guns, pellet guns, and potato guns), swords, knives with blades of 5 inches or longer, martial arts weapons, bows and arrows, and chemicals such as tear gas.

The County maintains a work environment that is safe for all persons, including the community, and conducive to attaining high work standards. To achieve these objectives, the County has a strong stand against firearms and weapons in the work environment regardless of any personal permit that an individual may have that would otherwise authorize the individual to carry firearms or weapons. Employees with questions about what constitutes a weapon should talk with Human Resources.

The County will strictly enforce this policy. Employees who violate this policy will be terminated.

**A. Disciplinary Action**

1. The County shall support the practice whereby all employees shall be disciplined by the same process. To the extent deemed appropriate by the County, the discipline of an employee shall be a progressive process. In determining appropriate discipline, both the severity of the unsatisfactory job performance or misconduct and the prior discipline record of the employee shall be considered. The goal of disciplinary action is for the employee to perform and behave acceptably and to be retained, when reasonable.
2. Disciplinary actions may take any of the following forms but are not necessarily restricted to the order set forth herein and are not intended to be all-inclusive:
  - a. Verbal reprimand
  - b. Written reprimand
  - c. Suspension
  - d. Withholding pay increases
  - e. Administrative decrease
  - f. Evaluation status
  - g. Demotion
  - h. Termination
3. Reprimands
  - a. A reprimand may be either verbal or written.
  - b. All reprimands must be documented.
  - c. Reprimands are designed to put the employee on notice that certain behavior is unacceptable. Reprimands become a part of the employee's personnel file.
  - d. The supervisor is encouraged to calmly, quietly and amicably encourage positive behavior and make suggestions for improvement. If the situation does not improve within a reasonable time (not longer than three months) another reprimand may be issued.
  - e. A written reprimand may be issued for repeated minor infractions, or one or more substantial infractions. The supervisor should discuss the written reprimand with the employee and give the employee an opportunity to comment on the issue orally or in writing. The employee should be asked to sign the written reprimand form, acknowledging receipt, or a copy mailed to the employee certified mail. The supervisor shall retain a copy of the form, give a copy to the employee and forward the original to Human Resources for the employee's personnel file.

- g. The written reprimand shall advise an employee of his or her right to file a grievance through the Grievance Procedure Policy and the applicable time limits. This shall apply only to employees who are covered by the Grievance Procedure Policy.

#### 4. Suspensions

- a. The County Administrator shall have the authority to suspend an employee for a length of time, as he may deem prudent. Suspension with or without pay will be determined at a later date by the County Administrator. The department head should immediately notify the County Administrator when suspending an employee.
- b. A written notice of suspension will include:
  - i A statement of the reason(s) for suspension
  - ii A statement of the period of suspension
  - iii A warning of what further disciplinary action could result if the situation is not corrected
  - iv A statement of the employee's right to appeal (if any) in accordance with the County's Grievance Procedure Policy
- c. The completed suspension form shall be hand-delivered as soon as possible to the employee, if the employee is available. Where the employee is not available, the completed suspension form or written notice shall be sent by certified mail to the last known address of the employee.
- d. A copy of the suspension notice shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

#### 6. Administrative Decrease

- a. An employee's pay range may be reduced as a disciplinary action resulting from unsatisfactory work or misconduct as authorized by the County Administrator.
- b. An administrative decrease of pay requires a letter of justification submitted by the respective department head to the County Administrator.
- c. A written notice of an administrative decrease of pay shall include:
  - i A statement of the reason(s) for the decrease
  - ii The length of time during which the decrease will be effective
  - iii A statement of employee's right to appeal (if any) in accordance with the Grievance Procedure Policy
- d. A copy of the notice shall be hand delivered and signed received or mailed by certified mail to the employee. A copy of the notice shall be included in the employee's personnel file.

#### 7. Evaluation Status

- a. The County Administrator shall have the authority to change the status of a regular employee to evaluation status as a means of discipline.
- b. Evaluation employees do not have access to the Grievance Procedure Policy.
- c. A written notice of evaluation status shall include:
  - i A statement of the reason for probationary status
  - ii An approximate time period for probationary status
  - iii A warning of what further disciplinary action could result if the situation is not corrected
  - iv A statement that the employee does not have the right of access to the County's Grievance Procedure Policy for further disciplinary action during probationary status
- d. A copy of the probationary status notice shall be hand delivered and signed received or mailed by certified mail to the employee. A copy of the notice shall be included in the employee's personnel file.



## 8. Demotion

- a. A demotion shall be authorized by the County Administrator.
- b. A demotion shall not be used as a disciplinary action in lieu of termination if the employee involved cannot qualify for the lower-ranked position or if the demotion would require the displacement of another employee.
- c. A written notice of demotion shall include:
  - i A statement of the reason(s) for the demotion
  - ii A warning of what further disciplinary action could result if the situation is not corrected
  - iii A statement of the effective date of demotion and information pertaining to the employee's new pay grade and salary
  - iv A statement of the employee's right (if any) to appeal in accordance with the County's Grievance Procedure Policy
- d. A written notice of demotion shall be hand-delivered before or at the time of demotion if the employee is available. If not available, notice is to be sent by certified mail to the last known address of the employee. A copy of the demotion notice shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

## 9. Termination

- a. Termination is the most serious form of discipline. Responsibility for termination or discharge of all employees is vested with the County Administrator.
- b. Temporary, part-time, probationary period, or probationary status employees shall have no access to the pre-disciplinary procedures described above or to the post-disciplinary process provided by the Grievance Procedure.
- c. A written notice of termination shall include:
  - i A statement of the reason(s) for termination
  - ii A statement of effective date of termination
  - iii A statement of the employee's right (if any) to grieve this action through the County's Grievance Procedure Policy
- d. A completed termination notice will be hand-delivered to the employee if the employee is available. If not available, the completed termination form will be sent by certified mail to the last known address of the employee. A copy of the termination form will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

## VI. REASON FOR DISCIPLINE

Employment with the County is based on mutual consent. Members of County supervisory staff have the responsibility of determining when disciplinary counseling is warranted and when to take appropriate action. Certain conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. No discipline shall be imposed except for cause. Examples of violations, which may constitute cause for corrective action, are listed below. These examples do not constitute an exclusive list and corrective action may be based upon other behavior that is of a similarly serious nature:

1. Re-occurring tardiness without reasonable explanation
2. Absence from work without notification or approval
3. Refusal to accept or follow orders or directions from properly authorized persons or any other form of insubordination
4. Inefficiency or lack of effort on the job; failure to perform assigned job satisfactorily
5. Sleeping on the job
6. Use of offensive, abusive, threatening, coercive, indecent or discourteous language toward supervisors, other employees, or members of the public
7. Bringing in, possession, or unauthorized use of weapons of any kind on County property

8. Leaving your job or regular work place during working hours without authorization, except for lunch and approved break periods
9. Interfering with, obstructing or otherwise hindering the production or work performance of another employee
10. Provoking, instigating or participating in a fight while on duty or on County property, engaging in other acts of a violent nature, or assault or battery of any kind
11. Failure to adhere to any of the County's Policies
12. Dishonesty; removal of County property, or the removal of the property of other persons without permission
13. Misrepresentation of facts in seeking employment
14. Unauthorized altering of a time sheet, or otherwise falsifying time or attendance records; making or permitting a false or untrue statement in connection with work; originating or spreading false statements concerning employees or the County
15. Unauthorized use of computers, software or data; unauthorized disclosure of access methods or passwords; leaving computers unattended in any status other than the logon screen on the main computer system
16. Negligent use or willful destruction of equipment or property belonging to the County, other employees, residents or visitors; unauthorized use of equipment or property
17. Careless or negligent actions affecting the safety or equipment and property of the County or others, and/or jeopardizing the safety of employees, residents and visitors; violating safety rules and practices
18. Assisting any person to gain unauthorized entrance or exit from any portion of the County's premises
19. Use of County facilities, equipment or vehicles during or after normal working hours without authorization; the County will not be responsible for any accidents or injury that occur on County property when the property and persons are not involved in County business
20. Disorderly, improper, and/or indecent conduct on County property
21. Contributing to untidy or unsanitary conditions
22. Any other act, which, in the judgment of the County Administrator, is harmful or detrimental in any way to the morale, safety, health and/or work environment of any employee, resident or visitor

## **B. Grievance Procedure**

The County recognizes that there are times when the need arises for employees to express concerns or complaints in a formal manner. When this need arises, eligible employees should follow the following guidelines for the grievance procedure.

### **Employees Included:**

All Regular Full-Time and Regular Part-Time employees of the County and the Public Service Authority that are not under an orientation period.

### **Not Included:**

- a. Employees of the County or Public Service Authority under an orientation period.
- b. Employees of Constitutional Officers
- c. Temporary or seasonal employees of the County or Public Service Authority
- d. Any employee who has voluntarily resigned may not have access to the

Grievance procedure after the effective date of resignation

### **Definition of Grievance**

As defined in Section 15.1-7.2A of the Virginia State Code, a grievance shall be defined as "...a complaint or dispute by an employee relating to his or her employment including but not necessarily limited to (I) disciplinary actions, including dismissals (where resulting from formal discipline or unsatisfactory job performance), demotions and suspensions, (II) the

application of personnel policies, procedures, ordinances, statutes, rules and regulations (III) acts of retaliation as a result of utilization of the grievance procedure or of participation in the grievance of another County employee, and (IV) complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, political affiliation, age, disability, national origin or sex, and acts of retaliation because the employee has complied with any law of the United States or the Commonwealth, has reported any violation of such law to a governmental authority or has sought any change in law before the Congress of the United States or the General Assembly.

#### Matters Deemed Not Grievable

Employees are advised that conditions of employment and the content of laws, ordinances and policies established by the Board of Supervisors are not grievable. By State Law, wages, salaries and fringe benefits are likewise not grievable. In addition, it is to be understood that the establishment of the procedure shall in no way remove the right of the County to do the following, provided however, that none of these rights may be exercised in an arbitrary or capricious manner:

1. Direct the work of its employees
2. Hire, promote, transfer and assign employees, except where the employee can show established promotional policies or procedures were not followed or applied fairly
3. Maintain the efficiency of governmental operations
4. Reduce the work force or abolish jobs
5. Take actions necessary to carry out duties of an agency in emergencies
6. Determine the methods, means and personnel necessary to carry out operations except where such action affects an employee who has been reinstated within the previous six months as the result of the final determination of a grievance. In any grievance brought under this exception, the action shall be upheld upon showing by the County that: (I) there was a valid business reason for the action, and (II) the employee was notified of such reason in writing prior to the effective date of the action.
7. Control and manage the County's property and maintain the county's function and operations.

#### Determination of Grievability

If the question should arise regarding the grievability of a specific problem and the question cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both the employee and their supervisor at the departmental level, the employee may make a request for a ruling of grievability from the County Administrator, who shall respond within five (5) days. In any case, no complaint may be addressed beyond the top management level before grievability has been determined. Only after grievability has been determined shall a grievance be processed through the grievance panel stage. The decision of the County Administrator may be appealed by the grievant to the Circuit Court for a hearing de novo on the issue of grievability, as provided for in Virginia Code Section 15.1-7.2. Proceedings for review of the decision of the County Administrator shall be instituted by filing a notice of appeal with the County Administrator within ten (10) working days after the date of the decision and giving a copy thereof to all other parties. Within ten (10) days thereafter, the County Administrator shall transmit to the Clerk of

the Circuit Court a copy of the decision of the County Administrator, a copy of the notice of the appeal and the exhibits. The decision of the court is final and is not appealable.

### Grievance Procedure

An employee wishing to file a grievance shall have the right to follow all the steps of this procedure as listed below with complete freedom of reprisal. This does not, however, confer the right upon anyone to make slanderous or libelous statements. After the initial filing of a written grievance, failure of either party to comply with all substantial procedural requirements of the grievance procedure without just cause in a decision in favor of the other party on any grievable issue, provided the party non in compliance fails to correct the non-compliance within five (5) work days of receipt of written notification by the other party of the compliance violation. Such written notification by the grievant shall be made to the County Administrator.

The County Administrator shall make all determinations on compliance issues. Compliance determination made by the County Administrator shall be subject to judicial review by filing a petition with the Circuit Court within thirty (30) days of the compliance determination. Failure of either party without just cause to comply with all substantial procedural requirements at the panel hearing shall result in a decision in favor of the other party.

#### STEP I

An employee who has a grievance, as defined herein, shall within twenty (20) work days of the occurrence of the action or event causing the grievance or of the date when the employee could have reasonably been expected to have learned of the act or event, contact their immediate supervisor for an informal face to face meeting to discuss the grievance. The supervisor shall immediately discuss the grievance with the employee and make a careful inquiry into the facts and circumstances of the complaint. The supervisor shall give the employee a verbal reply within six (6) working days following receipt of the complaint.

#### STEP II

If the grievance is not resolved as a result of Step I, the employee may within ten (10) work days thereafter file a written grievance with their department head utilizing Grievance Form A. The employee must be sure that the written grievance is complete in all detail at this state of the procedure and must specify the relief he expects to obtain through the use of the grievance procedure. No additions, deletions or adjustments to the original grievance will be allowed or accepted after this point within the procedure. The department head will then make a separate inquiry into the complaint and meet with the employee within five (5) work days. The only persons present at this meeting are the employee, the department head and appropriate witnesses. The department head shall inform the employee in writing on Grievance Form A of their decision and the reasons within five (5) calendar days following the date of the meeting.

#### STEP III

If the department head's response does not resolve the grievance, the employee may within ten (10) work days thereafter indicate the second step remedy to be "not acceptable" on Grievance Form A to initiate a hearing with the County Administrator. A copy shall also be sent to the employee's department head. Upon receipt of Grievance Form A indicating a hearing and verification that Steps I and II have been exhausted, the County Administrator shall within five (5) work days schedule the hearing requested. The persons present at this meeting are the employee, the County Administrator and appropriate witnesses. Both parties may also have a representative of his or her choice present. The County Administrator shall give the employee a written reply within five (5) days after the conclusion of the hearing. A copy of the reply shall be sent to the employee's department head.

#### STEP IV

If the County Administrator's reply does not resolve the grievance, the employee may within ten (10) work days thereafter indicate the third step remedy to be "not acceptable" on Grievance Form A, which will require the County Administrator submit his grievance to a panel hearing and serve as a request for a panel hearing. In submitting this request, it is not necessary that the employee again provide a written explanation of what has occurred as this was obtained in his written request submitted at Steps II and III and as part of the record will be made available to the grievance panel. Within seven (7) workdays after the date of the written request for a panel hearing or after referral by the County Administrator as one of his options in Step III, a panel shall be chosen. One member shall be chosen by the grievant, one member shall be chosen by the County Administrator and one member shall be chosen by the first two appointees. Member may be chosen from among County employees. If no agreement on a third member can be made, the selection shall be made by the Judge of the Circuit Court. The third panel member shall be the chairperson of the panel. The decision of the panel shall be final and binding and shall be consistent with provisions of law and written policies.

To insure an impartial panel, the panel shall not be composed of any persons having direct involvement with the grievance being heard, or with the problem-giving rise to the grievance. Also, managers who are in a direct line of supervision of the grievant are excluded from serving as panel members. No attorney having direct involvement with the subject matter of the grievance, nor a partner, associate, employee or co-employee of such an attorney may serve as a panel member. In addition, the following relatives of a participant in the grievance process or a participant's spouse shall not serve as a panel members; spouse, parent, child, descendants of a child, sibling, niece, nephew or first cousin.

#### Panel Hearing Date

The full panel shall set the time, the date and the location for the hearing, which should be held within ten (10) workdays following the selection of the full panel. The panel chairperson shall notify the grievant and the County of the hearing date.

#### Rules for the Panel Hearing

The rules for the panel hearing shall be those set forth below "Conduct of Panel Hearing" and those set forth in Virginia Code Section 15.1-7.2J2. The following procedures are to assist grievance panels in preparing for and conduction of panel hearings. A panel's responsibility is to insure the proper application of State and County policies and procedures. Panels do not have the authority to formulate or to change policies or procedures of the County; however, the panel may consider mitigating circumstances and modify County action concerning discipline. A panel by a majority vote may uphold or reverse the action of the County or may choose a modified remedy. Decisions of the panel must be consistent with the provisions of law and written policy. A panel might determine that a grievant is entitled to reinstatement with back pay and restoration of benefits; however, in no case does a panel have the authority to award damages or attorney fees. The panel hearing is the concluding step to an administrative process designed for the resolution of sensitive personnel matters. Therefore, it is recommended that persons present at the panel hearing be limited to the grievant, the panel members, the legal counsel and/or representatives of the grievant and the County, appropriate witnesses and official recorders. At the request of either party, the hearing shall be private.

#### Conduct of Panel Hearing

1. The County shall provide each panel member copies of all grievance forms and the County grievance procedure prior to convening of the panel in order that each member may review the documents. Other information shall be submitted at the hearing in the presence of the participating parties.
2. All evidence taken by the panel shall be under oath.
3. Opening statements may be made at the beginning of the hearing and the panel may ask for such statements in order to clarify the issue of grievance.
4. The County and thereafter the grievant, or their representatives, shall then present claims, proofs and witnesses who shall submit to questions or other examination. Each party has the right of cross-examination. Equal opportunity shall be given to all parties for presentation of any material or relevant evidence.
5. The panel, by majority vote, may decide procedural questions and rule upon objections raised during the hearing.

6. Witnesses, other than the parties, shall remain in the hearing room only while giving their testimony.
7. Members of the panel may question anyone giving testimony in order to clarify points being made.
8. Exhibits may be received in evidence by the panel, by the grievant or the County and shall be marked and made part of the record.
9. The parties shall produce additional evidence as the panel may deem necessary to better understand and make determination of the dispute. The panel shall be judge of the relevancy and materiality of the evidence offered. All evidence is to be taken in the presence of the panel and both parties.
10. After both parties have presented their evidence, the panel chairperson shall ask of all parties whether they have any further evidence to offer or witnesses to be heard. Upon receiving negative replies, both parties will be given an opportunity for a closing statement. After both sides have made a closing statement, the hearing shall be declared closed.
11. The panel shall render its decision within ten (10) workdays of the conclusion of the hearing. The reasons for the panel's decision must be set forth in writing.
12. Either party may petition the Circuit Court for an order requiring implementation of the panel decision.
13. The panel decision is final and non-appealable and shall be consistent with the laws and written policy.

### **C. Whistleblower Policy**

A whistleblower as defined by this policy is an employee of the County who reports an activity that he or she considers to be illegal or dishonest to one or more of the parties specified in this Policy. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with those responsibilities. Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered; misuse of credit card and/or payment information; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

If an employee has knowledge of, or a concern regarding illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the employee should contact his or her immediate supervisor. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Whistleblower protections are provided in two important areas -- confidentiality and retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained; however, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law, and/or to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense. The County will not retaliate against a whistleblower. This retaliation prohibition includes, but is not limited to, protection from adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases or poor work assignments, and threats of physical harm. Any whistleblower who believes he or she is being retaliated against should contact Human Resources immediately. The right of a whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing.

All reports of illegal and dishonest activities should be promptly submitted to Human Resources for investigation and coordination of corrective action.

An individual shall not be held criminally or civilly liable under any Federal or State trade secret law for the disclosure of a trade secret that is made in confidence to a Federal, State, or local government official or to an attorney solely for the purpose of reporting or investigating a suspected violation of law. An individual shall not be held criminally or civilly liable under any Federal or State trade secret law for the disclosure of a trade secret that is made in a complaint or other document filed in a lawsuit or other proceeding, if such filing is made under seal. An individual who files a lawsuit for retaliation by an employer for reporting a suspected violation of law may disclose the trade secret to the attorney of the individual and use the trade secret information in the court proceeding, if the individual files any document containing the trade secret under seal; and does not disclose the trade secret, except pursuant to court order.

Employees with any questions regarding this policy should contact Human Resources.

#### **D. Accommodations**

**Persons with Disabilities:** It is the policy of the County to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended, and all other applicable federal and state laws concerning the employment of individuals with disabilities. County policy prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities with regard to access, application, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. A qualified applicant or employee is any individual who can perform the essential functions of the job in question, with or without reasonable accommodation.

The County will afford reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and individuals with disabilities that will enable them to perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so would create an undue hardship or would cause a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual or others in the workplace that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation. Please contact Human Resources with any questions or requests for accommodation. Human Resources is responsible for implementing this policy, including the resolution of reasonable accommodation, undue hardship, and direct threat issues. In addressing reasonable accommodation requests or needs, Human Resources will engage in an interactive process with the applicant or employee to determine whether the accommodation can be afforded.

#### **Pregnant Workers and New Mothers: (added 07/24/2023)**

**Pump Act:** The County provides unlimited break times for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for 1 year after the child's birth each time such employee has need to express milk. The frequency and duration of each break may vary for each employee. A place other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, will be provided for these break times.

**Pregnant Workers Fairness Act:** Reasonable accommodations will be made to employees who may have limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation creates an undue hardship on the employer. Pregnant workers may not be fired or otherwise discriminated against on the basis of these medical conditions. Reasonable accommodations are changes to the work environment or the way things are usually done.

The County will not unlawfully discriminate against employees on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Employees have a right to reasonable accommodations for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The County will engage in a timely interactive process with employees who request an accommodation relating to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The County will reasonably accommodate employees making such requests, so long as it does not impose an undue hardship upon the County. The County will not force employees to take leave if another reasonable accommodation is available.

Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- temporary transfer to a less strenuous or hazardous position
- ability to sit and drink water
- closer parking
- later arrival for morning shifts
- additional meal breaks
- appropriately sized uniforms and safety apparel
- assistance with manual labor or excused from strenuous activities or exposure to compounds not safe for pregnancy
- job restructuring
- a modified work schedule
- light duty assignments
- leave to recover from childbirth
- more frequent or longer bathroom breaks

**\*\*For other accommodations, please inquire with Human Resources.**

**Public Service Authority – Duties and Responsibilities of Convenience Center Attendants – See Appendix F**

**Public Service Authority – Convenience Center Hours of Work/Operation – See Appendix G**

**Public Service Authority – Convenience Center Items Accepted for Disposal by Employees – See Appendix H**



## **Appendix A**

### **Public Service Authority Safety Awards Bonus**

The Pulaski County Public Service Authority allows employees who hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) an annual safety bonus in the amount of \$100. Sanitation Workers that work the back of the truck will receive a \$50 bonus for having no at-fault accidents.

## **Appendix B**

### **Public Service Authority CDL Incentive Bonus**

Public Service Authority employees who successfully obtain a Commercial Driver's License will receive a one-time bonus of \$1,000.

## **Appendix C**

### **Public Service Authority Water Treatment Plant License Incentive**

Water Treatment Employees who undertake and pass higher licensing standards, shall receive a 10% increase in their salary.

## **Appendix D**

### **Public Service Authority - Standard Operating Procedures and Code of Conduct**

The following Standard Operating Procedures and Code of Conduct apply to all employees of the Pulaski County Public Service Authority Sanitation Department and are the minimum guiding principles and expectations. It is a necessity that all employees work in a safe environment and treat the County/PSA property and property of our customers with the greatest of respect and care. Employees shall provide the same respect and care for co-workers, staff and customers served.

#### **Relationships with the Public**

1. Employees shall be courteous and respectful; refraining from any kind of discriminatory behavior toward the public, and fellow employees.
2. Vulgarity, profanity, harassment, false representation or disrespect will not be tolerated. Other offenses considered to be gross violations that will not be tolerated include but are not limited to physical altercations and theft.
3. County facilities or customer's property shall not be mishandled, damaged or vandalized.

#### **Daily Operations:**

1. Employees are expected to promptly report to work as scheduled and shall be ready to begin work. If an employee is unable to report to work, employees are required to text or call their supervisor at least 2 hours in advance of their work schedule to allow for providing coverage. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
2. Drivers shall conduct a daily pre-trip truck inspection before and after operation to maintain safety using the pre-trip checklist provided. Equipment checks shall include but not be limited to: first

aid kits, fire extinguishers, safety flares, triangles, vehicle registration, and overweight permits for applicable trucks.

3. Employees who are taking prescription or over the counter medications that could have a negative effect on your ability to safely operate PSA/County equipment or perform the essential duties of your job, must disclose such to your immediate supervisor. A release from your Doctor will be required for any medications that could alter your ability to drive or perform strenuous physical activity. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
4. Drivers are responsible for all aspects of safe truck operations and must maintain a current CDL license to operate a truck.
5. Relief drivers or workers and boom truck operators shall discuss with the supervisor assignments at the start of the shift.
6. Employees are authorized and encouraged to take a midmorning break and lunch break when assigned or scheduled work has been completed, employees shall check with the supervisor for other work to be assigned as needed.
7. Trash dropped on the roadway and orange bags from roadside clean-ups must be picked up.
8. Workers shall help each other empty trash containers weighing over 50 pounds. In the event there is only one worker on the truck, the driver must assist. In cases where the container weighs over 75 pounds, a tag shall be fastened to the container notifying the customer that the can is too heavy and requesting that the load be divided into smaller containers or a special pick-up requested.
9. Scavenging through items being disposed of or personally accepting items being delivered for disposal is prohibited.
10. Workers shall assist the driver in cleaning the inside and outside of the truck.

## **Appendix E**

### **Pulaski County Public Service Authority Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements**

#### **Sanitation Department:**

The Pulaski County Public Service Authority Sanitation Department is responsible for the collection of waste throughout the County. This department operates trucks and equipment on prescribed routes throughout the County and Town of Pulaski on a regular basis. There are many hazards associated with this job; therefore, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is required. The following PPE is required as follows for this department and must be worn at all times while working:

- Steel Toed Shoes
- Gloves
- ANSI Wear (Safety) - Vests must be worn at all times or short and/or long-sleeve ANSI wear shirts or coats. ANSI wear jeans are optional as long as the torso is covered in some sort of ANSI wear.
- Safety Glasses

### Pulaski County Public Service Authority Water & Waste Water Department & PSA Construction Inspector:

The Pulaski County Public Service Authority Water and Waste Water Department is responsible for the water and waste water throughout the County. This department operates various trucks and equipment on a daily basis throughout the County. There are many hazards associated with this job; therefore, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is required. The following PPE is required as follows for this department and must be worn at all times while working:

- Steel Toed Shoes
- Gloves
- ANSI Wear (Safety) - Vests must be worn at any time the employee is working along VDOT right of way.
- Safety Glasses

Pulaski County PSA will abide by all OSHA standards at all times; therefore, this policy may be updated as needed to ensure all hazards and safety standards have been identified.

Supervisors are required to provide training to new employees of these departments prior to the employee beginning work and annually to all employees as follows:

- When PPE is necessary
- What PPE is necessary
- How to properly don, doff, adjust and wear PPE
- The limitations of the PPE
- The proper care, maintenance, useful life and disposal of PPE

### Appendix F

#### **Public Service Authority Duties and Responsibilities for Convenience Center Attendants**

1. Inspect each load entering the convenience site and assist citizens with the disposal location of items.
2. Must be capable to operate some equipment (garbage truck used as a compactor).
3. Place as much debris as possible in trucks provided (Dora Highway and Dublin).
4. Debris that is not for recycling or placed in the trucks is to be placed in open top containers for disposal at NRRA. Containers are to be loaded level and not over the top.
5. Glass and plastics are to be comingled in the same container for recycling.
6. Metal for recycling is to be placed in the appropriate container for recycling.
7. Newspaper for recycling is to be placed in the appropriate container for recycling.
8. Batteries are to be placed on pallets for recycling.
9. Notify supervisors when containers are full and in need of being emptied.
10. Report any unauthorized dumping or dumping of unacceptable items left at the Convenient Centers.
11. Clean in and around all containers once they are removed for disposal at NRRA or

- recycling.
12. Must make sure that the grounds are kept clean and free of trash and that all waste and other items are placed in the proper location.
  13. Must lock and secure sites at the end of the workday.
  14. Attendants must adhere to the PSA Policy on the removal of items from the Convenience Center.
  15. This description is not all inclusive. Any questions about the daily operation of the convenient centers should be directed to the immediate supervisor as soon as possible.

## **Appendix G**

### **Public Service Authority Convenience Centers Hours of Work/Operation**

Dublin	Monday thru Saturday	8:00 am – 5:00 pm
	Sunday	1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Dora Highway	Monday thru Friday	1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
	Saturday	8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Daylight Savings Time Hours		
	Monday thru Friday	3:00 pm – 7:00 pm
	Saturday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Fairlawn	Monday thru Friday	1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
	Saturday	8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Daylight Savings Time		
	Monday thru Friday	3:00 pm – 7:00 pm
	Saturday	8:00 am – 5:00 pm

## **Appendix H**

### **Public Service Authority Convenience Center Items Accepted for Disposal by Employees**

Air conditioners	Refrigerators
Batteries	Tires
Building materials	Wood
Brush (less than 6" in diameter)	<b>Unacceptable Items:</b>
Glass	Asbestos
Household waste	Chemicals
Metals	Hydraulic Oil
Newspapers	Motor Oil
Plastics	Any type of hazardous waste

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of, or that I have been provided access to an electronic, downloadable version of, The07-0 County Employee Handbook dated **January 1, 2022** and agree that it supersedes and replaces all prior employee handbooks. I understand it is my responsibility to read, understand and comply with the policies, procedures and other information contained in the employee handbook and I agree I have or will do so.

I understand that the information in the employee handbook represents guidelines only and that The07-0 County reserves the right to modify this employee handbook or amend or terminate any policies, procedures, or employee benefit programs, whether or not described in this employee handbook, at any time, or to require and/or increase contributions toward any benefit programs.

I understand that this employee handbook is not a contract of employment, express or implied, between me and The07-0 County, and that I should not view it as such, or as a guarantee of employment for any specific duration. I also understand that my employment is at-will and either myself or The07-0 County may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice.

I further understand that no supervisor or representative of The07-0 County, other than the County Administrator, has any authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specified period of time. I also understand that any such agreement, if made, shall not be enforceable unless it is in a formal written agreement signed by both me and someone from the County's Management Team.

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Employee Name (Print)

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Employee Signature

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Date