



Wakulla County

PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Policy is to establish procedures, which will serve as a guide to cover most personnel actions. The final interpretation and application of these rules and regulations shall be made by the Board or its designee. The Board reserves the right to amend, alter, modify, delete and add to these policies and procedures as it deems appropriate to serve the best interest of the residents, employees, and citizens of Wakulla County, Florida. These provisions do not intend to, nor do they create a contract for employment. Wakulla County is an “At Will” employer.

OBJECTIVES

To recruit, select, and advance employees on the basis of their ability, knowledge, skill and demonstrated performance.

To provide a pay plan and employee benefits package that is fair and competitive.

To train and develop employees to assure successful performance and to provide for personal growth.

To retain and advance employees on the basis of their ability to successfully perform their jobs.

To assure fair treatment of applicants and employees in all aspects of human resources administration without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, marital status, or political affiliation; and with regard for their privacy and constitutional rights.

To provide employees with a clear understanding of their role in Wakulla County government, the benefits of that employment, and the duties and responsibilities required to ensure a successful employment relationship.

To promote a grievance procedure that will provide for prompt and appropriate resolution of employee grievances.

These are the official policies and procedures for employees of the Wakulla County Board of Commissioners for Wakulla County, Florida as approved by the Board. This document was prepared by Quest Management Consultants, LLC.

I. SCOPE

These policies shall apply to employees under the jurisdiction of the Board of County Commissioners except for the following categories:

Members of the Board

Board Appointees

Contractual Employees

Elected Officials, Constitutional Officers, and employees of those offices.

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II. DEFINITIONS

Affirmative Action: Any activity initiated by the County which contributes toward the greater utilization of the protected classes (minorities, females, the elderly, and the disabled).

Anniversary Date: The date one year from the full-time or the part-time regular employment date. For salary increases, the anniversary date shall be that date each year on the date (month, day) of employment unless the anniversary date has been adjusted due to a leave of absence or suspension, or period of emergency relief employment, then the new adjusted date of employment would be used.

At-Will Employment: The State of Florida is an "At-Will" state. This means it is the right of employers to terminate employees for any reason, or for no reason at all. It also gives employees the legal right to quit their jobs at any time for any reason.

Board: The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners.

Classification Plan : A systematic arrangement and inventory of positions. The plan shall group similar positions into classes which shall be ordered, according to their degree of difficulty and responsibility, into different skill levels for purposes of establishing pay relationships. The Classification Plan shall be based on a thorough job analysis and shall be maintained by Human Resources.

Compensatory Time: Time off with pay granted in lieu of cash overtime payments.

Continuous Service: Continuous service is employment which is uninterrupted except for an authorized leave of absence, suspension, or a separation due to a reduction in work force of six months or less.

Demotion: An action that results in an employee being moved from a position in one classification to a position in a lower classification assigned to a lower pay grade.

Dismissal: The involuntary termination of an employee.

E-Mail : Electronic Mail; i.e. messages typed into a terminal and sent via internet or computer network, such as documents, memoranda, notes, letters, statements.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Position: Those employees who work in the division of the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners that provide and/or support first response, basic and advanced life support medical services, support and transport. Employees in these positions have the right of grievance and appeal.

Employee: Any person appointed to a position with Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners for which they are compensated on a full or part time basis.

Equal Employment Opportunity: The provision of an environment which manifests the right of all persons to work and to advance on the basis of merit, ability and potential.

Exempt Employees: Those employees in administrative, executive, and professional positions as defined under the Fair Labor Standards Act, who are not subject to the overtime compensation provisions of the Act.

FLSA: The Fair Labor Standards Act. Federal legislation which sets minimum wage, overtime pay, equal pay, record keeping, and child labor standards for covered employment.

Full-Time Employee: An employee who works on a continuing basis 30 hours or more per week.

Grant Appointment: Positions created and funded by a grant. These positions may be either O.P.S. or regular status, depending upon the nature of the work, the duration of the grant, the likelihood for continuation, recruitment consideration, and budget provisions in the grant. The classification, rate of pay, and type of appointment of grant positions shall be approved by the Board.

Grievance: A dispute alleging a violation of a published county policy, rule, or procedure. No grievance will be considered unless the alleged violation has resulted from the deprivation of an expressly conferred right.

Hiring Authority: The Board, County Administrator, or designee, with authority to appoint or dismiss an employee from County employment.

Immediate Family: Spouse, the grandparents, parents, step-parents, brothers, step-brothers, sisters, step-sisters, children, step-children, grandchildren, and step-grandchildren of both the employee and the spouse.

Insubordination: The refusal to perform work when, and as assigned; failure to obey a direct legal order and /or any other act or acts of disrespect or disregard of supervisory authority.

Layoff: Termination of employment due to abolishment of positions necessitated by a shortage of funds, work, or a material change in the duties or organization of the County. A layoff shall be affected only upon prior approval of the Board.

Minimum Qualifications: Those minimum requirements as to education and experience that qualify an applicant to be considered for appointment. Additional requirements may also be indicated when necessary, such as licenses, certificates and others.

Non-exempt Employees: Those employees in positions subject to the overtime compensation provisions of the FLSA.

On-call employees: An individual employed at irregular intervals and specifically to meet operational needs during depleted staff situations or emergency response requirements.

Overtime: The hours worked in excess of 40 hours during the established workweek. These hours must be at the direction of the department head or other designated supervisory staff and must not include leave with pay.

Part-Time Employee: An employee who works on a continuing basis, but less than 30 hours per week.

Pay Range: The range of permissible pay from the "minimum" rate to the "maximum" rate. Such range is established to administer pay for positions in each skill level.

Performance Evaluation: A method of evaluating each employee on a periodic basis as to his/her performance on the job.

Position: An office or post in a department of the County involving duties requiring the services of one person. It can be part-time, full-time, temporary or regular, occupied or vacant.

Position description: A written description of sample duties, essential functions, responsibilities, and the knowledge, skills and abilities required for a position.

Probationary Employee (Extended): An employee placed in an extended probationary period. This period may not exceed 180 days past the initial six month probationary period. If the probation is extended due to a disciplinary action, the employee will not be eligible to use annual or sick leave and will not be eligible to be paid any annual leave if termination occurs prior to the end of the extended probationary period.

Probationary Employee (Initial): An employee serving the first six months of their appointment. They must pass this period of observation and evaluation successfully. The initial probationary period will be a six month period based on any continuous employment, whether it is full-time or part-time. Employees in the initial probationary period may be discharged for any or no reason and shall not have right to appeal or enter into the grievance process.

Probationary Employee (Promoted, Demoted or Reclassified): An employee placed in a probationary status, at the discretion of the department head, due to a change in their job title or classification and shall be entitled to use any benefits to which they were entitled prior to tile change.

Promotion: An action which moves an employee from a position in one classification to another position in a different classification having a higher minimum salary and requiring a greater scope of discretion and responsibility.

Protected Class : As defined by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and/or the Florida Civil Rights Act.

Public Area: Those areas to which the general public has unrestricted access.

Reclassification: The assignment of a position from one class to a different class due to a significant change in the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Regular Employee: Satisfactory completion of the probationary period by an employee results in that employee achieving regular status. Regular employees have the right to appeal a dismissal as well as participate in the grievance process. They may be regular full time or regular part time.

Relative: An individual who is related to an employee: father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother or half sister.

Resignation: The termination of an employee at their request.

Separation: The severing of employment with Wakulla County.

Separation Pay: Earned leave pay, severance pay and any other pay entitlements due at the time of separation.

Senior Management Service Position: Members of management team whose primary duties are to manage a department or administer a County program. They are exempt positions, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, who are not subject to overtime compensation. These positions have the authority to use discretion and judgment in administering programs. They act on behalf of the Board; have the responsibility to recommend the appointment or dismissal of employees, and may execute special assignments of a sensitive nature.

Suspension: An enforced leave of absence for either disciplinary purposes or pending investigation or charges against an employee.

Temporary (O.P.S.) Position: Positions of specific duration not to exceed two years. The positions may be full-time or part-time. Temporary employees are not entitled to participate in the grievance procedure.

Termination: The dismissal or removal of an employee from the County's employment roster. This may be involuntary (in cases of dismissal) or voluntary (in cases of resignation).

Transfer: The assignment of an employee from one position to another within the same classification or the assignment of an employee to a lower classification when requested by the employee.

Vacancy: A position duly created and still existent but not occupied by an employee.

Work Area: Areas where work of employees is performed.

Work week: The number of hours regularly scheduled to be worked during any seven (7) consecutive days or other work period allowed by the Fair Labor Standards Act and adopted by the Board for an employee or group of employees.

Working Hours: An employee's normally scheduled hours of work (excluding lunch breaks and rest breaks).

III. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

The Wakulla County Commission advocates of the concept that the quality of public service can attain maximum efficiency and effectiveness through a personnel management system based on merit principles.

The attitude and deportment of all County employees shall at all times be such as to promote the good will and favorable attitude of the public toward the County Commission and its programs and policies. All employees are required to maintain their personal appearance in a manner, which will reflect a proper image to the public; they are encouraged to develop skills and seek formal training that will enhance their personal development and the overall expertise of the organization.

It is the policy of the County to expect the employees to comply with all rules and regulations of the County, State Statutes, and federal regulations in the performance of their duties, as well as compliance with all safety rules and standards. Any employee who violates any of these rules and regulations shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including dismissal.

All employees shall be required to take an Oath of Loyalty, as prescribed by Florida Statutes, Chapter 876.05. The Oath must be signed prior to earning any salary or employee benefits and a copy of the Oath will be filed in the employee's official personnel file.

An employee's conduct while off duty shall not effect their employment except under the following conditions:

- The activity impairs the reputation of the County
- The employee is unable to perform their regular work responsibilities or appear at work
- The activity leads to the refusal or reluctance on the part of others to work with the employee, barring protection under the law
- The employee is representing the County at a function or location other than their normal work location
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A. Equal Employment Opportunity

Wakulla County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and, as such, states its commitment to providing equal employment opportunities to all persons in matters affecting, but not limited to, recruitment, employment, compensation, benefits, promotions, training, discipline, transfer and layoff practices without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital or family status, disability, political opinions or affiliations, or Veteran's status (except where age or non-disability are bona-fide occupational qualifications).

The County Administrator shall designate an employee to serve as Wakulla County's equal employment opportunity officer who shall have the responsibilities for administering all equal employment opportunity programs. In addition, any employee who witnesses or learns of any harassment and/or discrimination has an affirmative obligation to immediately report the information to the Equal Employment Officer. Unless otherwise designated, the County Human Resources Director shall have that responsibility.

Any employee of Wakulla County who believes he/she has been discriminated against should contact the person whom the County Administrator has appointed as Equal Employment Officer. This person shall, along with the County Administrator and the County Attorney, attempt to resolve the problem within fifteen (15) working days. Any Department Director, Supervisor, or manager who is made aware of a potential violation, either by the victim, another employee, or a member of public is required to advise the Equal Employment Officer so that the matter may be investigated. Any employee who believes that they have been subjected to any retaliation must immediately report this conduct to the County's Equal Employment Officer.

It shall be prohibited for any person employed by Wakulla County to discriminate or take any other retaliatory action against an individual who in good faith has: Opposed an alleged unlawful employment practice or has made a charge, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

Veterans' preference shall be given to eligible veterans in accordance with existing State Laws.

B. Prohibition of Harassment

The purpose of this policy is to make all employees of the County aware that it is the policy of the County that sexual, racial or other forms of illegal or improper harassment will not be tolerated.

1. Statement of Policy

Sexual harassment is included among the prohibitions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits sex discrimination in employment, and is prohibited by the County.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical acts of a sex-based nature, where submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment, or an employment decision is based on an individual's acceptance or rejection of such conduct, or such conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment involves not only members of the opposite sex but also of the same sex.

Other forms of harassment in addition to sexual harassment are improper and will not be tolerated. Such harassment involves unwelcome language or actions involving race, religion, national origin, age, marital status or disability.

Sexual as well as other illegal or improper harassment of County employees by other employees or by persons who are not employed by but do business with the County will not be tolerated.

In addition, the County will not allow any retaliation against any employee who raises a concern about improper or illegal harassment or participates in an investigation involving improper or illegal harassment and tells the truth to the best of his knowledge and belief.

2. Examples of Prohibited Sexually Related Conduct

The County considers the following conduct to be examples of conduct that violates its prohibition of sexual harassment.

Unwelcome physical assaults or touching of a sexual nature, including:

- Rape, sexual battery, molestation, or attempts to commit such acts.
- Intentional physical contact which is sexual in nature such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, rubbing, hugging, or poking another employee's body.

Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, and other sexual comments, such as sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience directed at or made in the presence of an employee who has indicated in any way that such conduct in his or her presence is unwelcome.

Job actions related to sexual matters such as:

- Preferential treatment for submitting to sexual activity, including soliciting or attempting to solicit an employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward.
- Threatening to, or actually making an employee's job more difficult, or taking away any benefit or privilege to entice an employee to submit sexually.

Display of sexually related material, such as:

- Pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading or other material of a sexually suggestive or sexually demeaning nature is not permitted in the workplace.
- Reading or otherwise publicizing in the work environment materials that are sexually revealing, pornographic, or sexually demeaning.

3. Examples of Other Illegal or Improper Harassment

Derogatory, critical or uncomplimentary jokes, comments, displays, posters, other written materials as well as actions based on age, race, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability are often unwelcome and hurtful to others and can be illegal. Such actions have no place in the work environment at the County and will not be tolerated.

The above examples are not to be considered a comprehensive list of prohibited conduct, but set forth examples of the types of conduct which is prohibited.

4. Making Complaints of Sexual or Other Illegal or Improper Harassment or Retaliation

Anyone who has suffered sexual or other illegal or improper harassment or retaliation or who has observed such conduct should report it to his Division Manager, the Human Resources Director, or the County Administrator. In the event a complaint involves the County Administrator or any member of the County Commission, the complaint shall be made to the County Attorney. Any individual who is made aware of a potential violation, either by the victim, another employee, or a member of public is required to advise the Human Resources Director, County Administrator, or Deputy County Administrator so that the matter may be investigated.

All complaints will be investigated expeditiously. Upon completion, and a determination that a complaint is valid, the County will take appropriate remedial action, including disciplinary action up to dismissal of employment. If the complaint is found to be without merit, no disciplinary action will be taken against the employee against whom the complaint was made.

5. Bad Faith Claims of Sexual or Illegal or Improper Harassment

Bad faith claims of sexual or other illegal or improper harassment are claims made when the person making the claims knows the claim is false but makes it anyway. Persons who make bad faith claims under this subsection will be subjected to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

C. Safety

Wakulla County is interested in the safety and well-being of its employees and continuously monitors working conditions and equipment for compliance with safety requirements.

Safety equipment and devices are provided to protect employees in potentially hazardous jobs. All employees are encouraged to act in a safe manner.

Individual Departments may have specific safety programs or requirements based upon the nature of the work performed. Those procedures will be made available to the employee and must be followed explicitly. The following rules must be observed at all times:

- **No Alcohol or drugs will be used on the job at any time.**
- **Report all job accidents in the same day the accident happens.**
- **Obtain authorization from your supervisor for all non-emergency treatments for accidents.**

- **Wear seat belts at all times in County vehicles**
- **Keep the area where you work neat and clean at all times.**
- **Do not remove or bypass any guards on any machinery at any time.**
- **Ask your supervisor when you need additional equipment or instructions to get the job done safely.**
- **Lift with your legs, not your back, and get assistance with loads over 50 pounds.**
- **Advise your supervisor of any hazardous conditions.**
- **Follow all other written and spoken safety rules.**

D. Violence in the Workplace

It is the policy of Wakulla County to provide a work environment that is reasonably safe, secure, and free from threats, intimidation, abusive behavior and physical violence. Acts of physical violence, direct or indirect verbal threats, stalking, aggressive or intimidating behavior, or provocation which could lead to violence will not be tolerated and if confirmed will result in discipline up to and including termination.

E. Attendance

1. Hours of Operation

The hours of operation for each Department shall be determined by the County Administrator and Department Head in accordance with the needs of the County. Work schedules may vary according to the needs of the individual department, subject to the approval of the Department Head and the County Administrator.

2. Attendance and Leave Records

The County Administrator and the Clerk's office shall maintain complete and accurate attendance and leave records. Timesheets must reflect the actual time worked and the type of leave utilized to bring the total to the regular working hours, whether the leave be sick, annual, leave without pay, administrative leave, unauthorized leave, etc. For example, if the employee worked 30 hours out of a 40 hour week, the remaining 10 hours must be documented and associated with a specific leave type.

3. Attendance Standards

In order to ensure the efficiency and productivity of County operations, regular attendance and arriving to work on time are requirements of continued employment. As a general guideline, the absence from work of more than eight (8) hours per month, over a six (6) month period, will be considered excessive absenteeism, except as noted below:

Absences due to disability leave, parental leave, compensatory leave, administrative leave, or annual leave which has been scheduled and approved in advance shall not be counted towards any excessive absenteeism. A lengthy illness (with appropriate documentation) as well as other unusual circumstances may be considered in the context of the overall attendance and employment in applying this standard.

4. Notification of Absenteeism or Tardiness

If an absence or tardiness is unavoidable, employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor of such absence no later than the beginning of their work shift. Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, and failure to notify a supervisor of an absence are grounds for disciplinary action. Three (3) successive work days missed without notifying a supervisor shall be considered abandonment of the position and shall be grounds for automatic dismissal.

5. Unauthorized Absence

An absence of an employee from duty, including any absence for a single day or part of a day that is not authorized by a specific grant of leave of absence under the provisions of this policy, shall be deemed an unauthorized absence. Any such absence shall be without pay and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

F. Political Activities

Every employee will have the right to express his or her views as a citizen, to cast his or her vote as he or she chooses, to hold membership in and to support a political party, or maintain political neutrality. Employees may also attend political meetings and take an active part in political campaigns during off duty hours. However, every employee is prohibited from:

- Using his/her official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or nomination for office.
- Directly or indirectly coercing, attempting to coerce, commanding, or advising a County employee to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization,

agency, or person for political purposes.

- Participating in political activities during scheduled work time.
- Participating as a candidate for public elective office in a partisan primary, general, or special election, if they are principally employed in a federally funded program
- Wearing or displaying political badges, buttons or stickers when on duty. "Political" badges, buttons or stickers shall include endorsements of issues, causes or candidates.

The County Administrator may request employees take a leave of absence when running for public office, when it is deemed in the best interest of the County.

G. Nepotism

For purposes of this policy, "relative" means an individual who is related to an employee as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, or half sister. There shall be the following restrictions on the employment of employee relatives with the County: A relative of any County employee with supervisory responsibility shall not be eligible for employment in or advancement to any position which reports directly to the supervisory employee. Likewise, a County employee shall not be eligible for advancement to any position with direct supervisory responsibility over a position in which a relative is employed.

H. Outside Employment

Employees who desire to accept outside employment in addition to their regular County position shall inform their respective department head in writing of the nature and extent of such outside employment utilizing the Outside Employment Disclosure Form. The department head shall thereupon determine whether or not such employment conflicts with the duties and responsibilities of said employee and forward a recommendation to the County Administrator. Approval for outside employment shall be made by the County Administrator or his designee. Employees shall not engage in any employment activity or enterprise which has been or may be determined to be inconsistent, incompatible, or in conflict with the duties, functions, or responsibilities of their County employment.

If the employee's outside employment causes absences, tardiness, or otherwise interferes with the operations of Wakulla County or his/her responsibility as an employee of Wakulla County, including but not limited to availability for scheduled and unscheduled overtime and/or call-ins, the employee may be required to terminate the outside employment. Upon refusal to do so, the employee may receive disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

I. Smoking

At no time will the use of tobacco products be allowed in a Wakulla County Facility or vehicle. Smoking on County property shall be limited to designated areas.

J. Solicitation

No employee or other person may solicit or be solicited during working hours or in work areas, unless approved by the Board.

No employee may distribute literature in his\her work area or during work hours.

No person may distribute literature to an employee in that employee's work area or during working hours.

No group insurer or provider of County Benefits may be permitted access to employee work sites except with prior permission from the County Administrator or designee. Such access, if granted, shall be limited to communication and implementation of new plans and/or administration of existing group policies and shall not be used for the purpose of unapproved solicitation. Use of County property (printers, supplies, etc.) for the purpose of generating outside materials for solicitation purposes is strictly prohibited.

K. Access to County Property

Employees shall have access to County property and facilities during their normally scheduled hours of work, and outside their normal hours of work when on County business. However, when not engaged in County business, access shall be limited to public areas.

Employees or other persons, not specifically authorized, shall not be permitted to post materials on bulletin boards which are intended for official County business. Employees shall not be permitted to use County facilities, meeting rooms, or conference rooms, or County equipment for other than County business, unless such facilities or equipment are available in accordance with established policy on a regular basis to the general public in which instance the use of such shall be on the same conditions as for the general public.

L. Telephone Use

The County's telephones are to be used for conducting County business only. Local personal calls are permitted to the extent that they are brief and few in number. Long distance personal calls are not allowed; however, if an emergency requires the employee to place a personal long distance call, the employee will be responsible for the charges. This policy covers use of County owned cell phones assigned to employees. Any charges resulting from personal use that increase the normal and regular monthly fee will be paid by the employee.

M. Public Access to E-mail

This policy is designed to protect the County, its employees and its resources from the risks associated with use of E-Mail and Internet. Therefore, E-Mail and Internet are to be used to facilitate County business and only highly-limited, reasonable personal use is permitted. Employees are permitted to briefly visit other non-sensitive Internet sites during non-work time, such as break, lunch, and before or after work hours (with prior permission of his or her supervisor). The County's E-Mail or Internet access systems may NEVER be used in any of the following ways:

- To harass, intimidate, or threaten another person.
- To access or distribute obscene, abusive, libelous, or defamatory material.
- To distribute copyrighted materials that are not authorized for reproduction/distribution.
- To impersonate another or mislead a recipient about your identity.
- To access another person's E-Mail, if not specifically authorized to do so.
- To bypass the systems' security mechanisms.
- To distribute chain letters.
- To participate in political or religious debate.
- To automatically forward messages (e.g., with mailbox rules) to Internet E-Mail addresses.
- To communicate the County's official position on any matter, unless specifically authorized.
- To make such statements on behalf of the County.
- For any purpose which is illegal, against County policy, or contrary to the County's best interests.
- To pursue an individual's business interests that are unrelated to the County.
- To conduct any type of personal solicitation.
- The County has not forbidden all personal use of E-Mail. Acceptable uses of E-Mail can be compared to those involving the telephone: the communication must be brief, must not interfere with work, must not subject the County to any additional costs, and must be consistent with the requirements set forth in this Internet and E-Mail policy.
- There exists no right of privacy in of any communication on the network including e-mail and internet usage; authorized system administrators may access private correspondence and files if use is believed to be in violation of this policy.

Electronic communications created or received using County equipment or addressed to County e-mail addresses may be considered public records and are subject to the requirements of Florida Statute 119, providing for public access.

N. Conflict of Interest

The County's policy in regard to conflict of interest shall be in accordance with the regulations specified in Sections 112.311-43 of the Florida Statutes. The intent of this law is to prohibit any public official or employee from having interests, from engaging in business activities, and from incurring any obligation "which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties in the public interest." The law prohibits the following:

- The solicitation or acceptance by any County employee of any gift, loan, favor, reward, or service that would cause a reasonably prudent person to be influenced in the discharge of official duties, or that is based upon any understanding that the action and/or judgment of the official or employee "would be influenced thereby."
- A County employee from transacting business on behalf of the County with any agency in which either the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family has a "material interest."
- A County employee from accepting compensation to influence any action in his/her official capacity with the County.
- A County employee from using his/her position to secure a special privilege, benefit, or Exemption for him/herself or others.
- A County employee from holding any employment or contractual relationship with any business entity or any agency which is subject to the regulation of, or is doing business with, Wakulla County Government. Employees seeking outside employment shall request approval by completing the Outside Employment form and submitting to the County Administrator's Office.
- A County employee from disclosing or using information not available to the general public for his/her personal gain or for the gain of any other person or business entity.

All contractors and suppliers engaging in business transactions with Wakulla County Government shall be hereby advised of these prohibitions. This policy shall not be interpreted to prevent an employee from engaging in a bona fide business transaction for goods and services from a firm doing business with the County when no special privilege or benefit is granted or sought by the employee because of his or her status as a County employee. This law also requires that any County employee who is "an officer, director, partner, proprietor, associate, or general agent" of, or who has a material interest in, any business entity regulated by the county or doing business with the County, must file a disclosure of such with the Clerk of the Circuit Court. Other employees may be required to file disclosure statements at the request of the County Administrator.

O. Substance Abuse

The use, sale, dispensing or possession of illegal drugs, narcotics, and alcoholic beverages are prohibited on County premises or during work time. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against employees who are in possession of or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on County premises up to and including dismissal.

P. Dress Code

A neat and professional appearance is a requirement at the County. It is expected that all employees will exercise good judgment and dress appropriately for their jobs. These are factors that should be taken into consideration when determining appropriate dress:

- The nature of their work
- Safety considerations, such as necessary precautions when working near machinery or hazardous work areas
- The nature of their public contact, if any, and the normal expectations of outside parties with whom they will work.
- The prevailing dress practices of other workers in similar jobs.

Shorts shall not be permitted unless an employee's physical condition necessitates such dress or it is part of an official County uniform.

Q. Department Work Rules

Subject to the approval of the County Administrator, Department heads are authorized to establish certain work rules and regulations governing their operations in regard to hours of work, employee conduct, and work procedure, as long as those rules do not conflict with those specified in this Personnel Policy. All employees are required to adhere to departmental rules as well as the County Personnel Policy. Violation of department rules and regulations may result in disciplinary action.

IV. RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

Recruiting efforts to fill current or projected vacancies shall be the responsibility of the Human Resources Director. As a goal, the work force of Wakulla County should be representational of the population of the County. Wakulla County is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer and applicants shall be evaluated based upon the required knowledge, skills and abilities required for the position without regard to that person's age, race, color, sex, religious creed, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, marital status, disability or handicap, except when such requirement constitutes a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to perform the task associated with the position.

Qualified current employees should be given an opportunity to apply for any vacancy. Notice of vacancies are provided through postings on County bulletin boards, paid advertisements, the County website, public service notifications, notifications to community organizations and any other means deemed necessary by the Hiring Authority.

A. Applications

1. Apply in Writing

Any applicant, including employees of the County must apply in writing using the County approved Wakulla County Employment Application form for announced position vacancies.

2. Receipt of Applications

In order to be eligible for consideration, all applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the closing date.

3. Applying for more than one position

Applicants must complete a separate employment application for each position for which they are applying.

4. Criteria for Consideration

In order to be considered a valid application, the application must:

- Be substantially complete
- Reflect that the applicant possesses the required knowledge, skills, ability, and experience required for the position
- Not be falsified, misleading or misrepresent/omit pertinent facts in any way
- Reflect that the employment of the applicant would not violate the County's nepotism policy
- Reflect that the applicant meets other valid and lawful employment requirements for the position for which they are applying

5. Maintenance of Files

Applications which do not result in position appointment will be placed on active status for a period of one year. Applicants wishing to apply for other positions during that time may update the existing application to indicate changes and appropriate position. After a period of one year, the applications will be placed in inactive status and will be placed in storage for the minimum amount of time as required by the Florida Records Retention guidelines.

6. Screening Process

The Human Resources Director will screen each application as to the person's ability and qualifications to perform the task required for the vacancy. After the screening process, the Department head, in coordination with the Human Resources Department, will set a date for interviews. The Department head, or designee, will notify each selected applicant of the time, date, and place of the interview.

7. Hiring Process

Interviews shall be conducted by an interview panel, consisting of at least three (3) County employees. Panels should include at least one (1) exempt position, one (1) from a protected class, and one (1) member from a similar classification or pay grade. All panels must be submitted for recommendation to the Human Resources Director and approved by the County Administrator.

The Department Head will work with the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer to prepare interview questions and list any tests that will be administered. The Human Resources Director

must approve all interview questions prior to the interviews. All interview comments will be made on an approved interview questions/comments form.

After completion of the interviews the Department Head or designee shall conduct employment reference checks by phone on the top candidate. Reference checks shall be documented on an approved Telephone Reference Check form. After completion of satisfactory reference checks, the recommendation to hire, accompanied by all back up materials shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Director and County Administrator for final approval.

New employees shall report to the County Administrator's Office at the beginning of their first day to receive a copy of the Personnel Policy and any other orientation information to be provided. At this time, employees will be asked to sign for the receipt of the Personnel Policy and complete other human resource forms as required.

B. Medical Examination

Applicants/employees may be required, prior or subsequent to their employment to undergo a medical examination to determine fitness to perform the duties of the position.

C. Drug Screening

Applicants/employees will be required, prior or subsequent to their employment, to undergo a Drug Screening urinalysis. Wakulla County is a Drug Free Workplace.

D. Probationary Period

All regular full or part time employees shall serve a probationary period. The probationary period should be considered the "working test" portion of the evaluation process. It shall be utilized to closely observe the employee's work, determine suitability for continued employment and for ensuring the most effective adjustment of an employee to the position. During the probation period an employee may be dismissed for any or no cause. Employees dismissed during the probationary period will not be entitled to an appeal or grievance process.

At least two weeks before the expiration of an employee's probationary period, the Department Head shall submit a written performance evaluation to the Human Resources Director and the County Administrator indicating whether or not the employee is recommended for regular status. The Department Head may recommend that the employee's probation be extended for up to an additional six (6) months. No extension shall be allowed which would make the probation longer than twelve (12) months.

E. Recruitment of Temporary Positions

Temporary positions may be filled either from the pool of applications on file or may be advertised at the direction of the Board.

F. Temporary to Regular Employment

Employees filling temporary (OPS) positions may be considered for transition to permanent positions via the normal application process.

When appointed to a regular position, the employee shall be placed in probationary status. The date of hire as a regular employee shall serve as the anniversary date and beginning of the length of service for purposes of establishing the accrual of leave times.

G. Emergency Appointment

When an emergency makes it impossible to fill a regular position utilizing normal procedures, the hiring authority may request the appointment of any qualified person to such position. Such a request shall be submitted to the County Administrator with justification for the appointment. Upon approval by the County Administrator, the appointment shall be made.

Emergency appointments are expected to be temporary. Once the emergency appointment is made, the hiring authority should immediately begin the process to fill the position under the provisions of these policies for a regular or temporary position.

H. Americans With Disabilities Act

This Federal Act of 1990 prohibits employment discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities who can perform the essential function of their position with or without an accommodation.

Wakulla County sets the following as a guideline to be followed by all departments:

Physical standards for employment shall be fair, reasonable, and adapted to the realistic requirements of the job. These standards must reflect actual work conditions, hazards and essential physical requirements of the job. Such standards shall not be used to eliminate disabled persons from consideration. To the extent feasible reasonable accommodations will be made for the qualified individuals with disabilities.

I. Veterans Preference

In order to recognize and reward those who served their country in time of need, Wakulla County will give preference to veterans and spouses of veterans as prescribed in Florida Statutes Chapter 295. In order to claim Veterans Preference, the appropriate documentation must be provided at time of application.

V. CLASSIFICATION & PAY PLAN

The Classification and Pay plan provides for the establishment, maintenance, and administration of an equitable pay plan and shall be applicable to all positions. The salary schedules shall include a minimum and maximum rate of pay for all skill levels. The Classification Plan consists of:

- Grouping positions into classes so that each position class:
 - Requires basically the same entry qualifications;
 - Can be filled by substantially the same methods of selection;
 - Is of comparable value and therefore deserves the same pay range
- Class titles which are descriptive of the work of the class and do not construe discriminatory bias.
- Written class specifications for each classification containing a statement describing the nature of the duties of the class, job qualifications, and special requirements necessary (See Appendix B).

A. Administration

The County Administrator shall have the responsibility for the administration and maintenance of the Classification Plan and Salary Schedule. The Classification Plan will be audited on a regular schedule, and modified as needed. Within a three year cycle all positions will be reviewed.

Through the audit process, and upon requests from Department Heads, all positions will be reviewed to establish the need for new positions, reclassifications, consolidation, or eliminating classes to provide for the most appropriate classification of positions. Additionally, the salary schedule shall be reviewed and modified to consider the prevailing pay rates and fringe benefits within the appropriate marketplace.

B. Initial Placement

The starting salary for those meeting the minimum qualifications will be the minimum in the pay grade for the classification to which the position is assigned.

Upon prior approval of the County Administrator, placement within the range of up to 10% above the minimum may be negotiated by the Department Head based on verified related experience or education which exceeds the minimum requirements for the position. Such experience or educational qualifications must be documented and included in the employee personnel file and hiring documents.

Upon the written recommendation of the Department Head, the County Administrator may consider placing an individual at more than 10% above the minimum of the salary schedule when the combination of experience and education is above the minimum requirements.

C. Reclassification

Positions may be reclassified when:

- There have been significant changes in the actual duties and responsibilities, and/or the changes are the result of organizational, technical, legal or other advancement which is of a permanent nature.
- An error has occurred in the original classification process

Positions may not be reclassified when:

- An increased workload has the effect of creating the need for a new position.
- The added duties and responsibilities are minor in nature and would be a logical function of the class.
- The added responsibilities are temporary in nature – not extending more than six (6) months.
- The effect is justification of a pay raise for an employee who has reached the maximum in his or her pay range or a reward for good performance.

When an upward reclassification occurs, the employee shall be placed at the appropriate step of the new pay grade with a one grade level change upward.

A reclassification downward is an administrative action independent of an employee's performance and should not be confused with a demotion. In this case, the employee's salary would remain unchanged. If the current salary exceeds the maximum of the new pay range, the salary would be frozen (other than cost of living increases) until changes in the pay grade schedule raise the maximum above the employee's salary.

If reclassification results in the position being assigned to a class in a skill level with the same pay range as the original classification, an incumbent employee shall maintain the same pay as before reclassification.

D. Creating a New Position

Requests to establish new positions shall be submitted by the Department Heads in writing to the County Administrator. The County Administrator shall analyze the new position requested and recommend to the Department Head the appropriate title and rate of pay in accordance with the County's Classification Plan. The request, with the County Administrator's recommendations, shall then be submitted for budget approval during the normal budget process. The creation of new positions within the existing fiscal budget year, causing a need to amend the current budget, is discouraged. However, when deemed in the best interest of the County, the County Administrator may submit a request for budget amendment to the Board for consideration and approval.

E. Promotion

Upon a promotion of one or more grade or classification level, the employee will be placed at the minimum of the new grade or will receive a pay adjustment not to exceed 10%.

In no case shall the promotional increase place an employee's salary above the maximum of the assigned pay grade.

F. Demotion

Upon demotion for cause, the employee's salary will be placed on the new pay grade at a rate determined by the Department Head based upon the recommendation of the County Administrator.

G. Other Pay Adjustments

It is anticipated that the needs of the employees and departments will be met within the framework of the Classification and Pay Plan; however, should unforeseen circumstances occur which may be considered in the best interest of the County, the Department Head may request a rate adjustment. This request may be submitted to the County Administrator for approval.

H. Part Time Pay Plan

Regular part-time employees shall be on an hourly basis or salaried in proportion to the average number of hours worked weekly.

I. Overtime

The established work week is forty (40) hours within a seven (7) day period, Monday through Sunday. Overtime is earned when the employee physically works more than forty (40) hours and is calculated at one and one-half (1 ½) times an hour on hours worked over the established workweek. All overtime work must have prior authorization by Department Head or designee. Not securing this authorization may result in disciplinary action. The use of any type of paid leave, including workers compensation, sick, annual, Holiday, administrative, etc., is not to be considered when calculating actual hours worked during the week.

Leave time earned and used is recorded daily on the official Wakulla County Employee Timesheet and submitted to the Department head bi-weekly on the Friday at the end of the bi-weekly pay period. Compensation for overtime shall be administered by the following guidelines:

- Employees in exempt positions, as identified in the US Department of Labor Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) shall not receive overtime pay for hours worked above forty (40) within a seven (7) day period. These employees may submit a request to the County Administrator for compensatory time to be granted for excess hours. Compensatory time for

Exempt employees shall be on an hour for hour basis. Upon approval of the compensatory time, the employee may not accumulate more than 80 hours without further approval by the County Administrator.

- Regular employees who are not exempt from the FLSA overtime provisions; AND, who have received prior approval to work overtime, shall be granted either compensatory time at the rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times for each overtime hour worked or cash payment for overtime worked at the rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times that employee's regular hourly rate of pay, at the discretion of the County Administrator. The maximum accumulation of compensatory leave is 240 hours. Overtime worked after the accumulation of the 240 hours shall be paid directly to the employee and be included in the regular pay check.
- Compensatory leave shall be requested and scheduled following the County's regular leave request procedure. Every effort will be made by the Department Head and Senior Management to see that this leave is approved in a timely manner.
- If overtime is authorized using compensatory leave only, employees must be notified before the overtime is worked.
- Overtime may be assigned when operating requirements or other needs of the County cannot be met during regular working hours. These assignments will be made as fair and equitably as practical in ensuring that qualified employees are on hand to perform as required. Any scheduled work time is required duty and failure to perform overtime, except in cases of personal emergency or other appropriate reasons, is deemed to be insubordination. Exceptions shall be granted on a case by case basis.
- Compensatory leave time shall be used prior to annual or sick leave when available.

J. Payroll

Each Department is required to keep an accurate account of all hours worked and leave used by employees on the Wakulla County Employee Timesheet. All leave taken must be documented on a Notice of Employee Absence Form and on the weekly timesheet.

VI. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A. Health Insurance Coverage

- Health insurance is available to all eligible employees and their eligible family members. Employees not eligible for this benefit include temporary, OPS, and on-call employees.
- Flex spending account – for employees who are eligible, but choose not to participate in the County health insurance program.
- This coverage is available through Capital Health Plan
- Life, dental, disability, and accident insurance is available for purchase.
- For more information contact the Human Resources Director.

B. Retirement

Wakulla County participates in the State of Florida Retirement System (FRS) by providing a retirement income in addition to the usual Social Security benefits. This program covers all regular full-time, regular part-time and temporary full-time employees, if temporary employment is six (6) consecutive months or longer. The cost of this program is paid for by the County and no deductions will be made from employee's pay for retirement.

Enrollment into the Retirement system is effective the first date of employment and after six (6) years of participation the employees have vested rights in the FRS Pension Plan. An employee may opt for the FRS Investment Plan whereby employees qualify for a benefit after one (1) year of service. It is the responsibility of the employee to educate themselves on the FRS in order to make appropriate choices regarding their personal retirement benefits (visit MyFRS.com).

C. Credit Union

Any Wakulla County employee is eligible to join the Wakulla Credit Union or the Envision Credit Union. Deposits and loan payments may be payroll deducted.

D. Direct Deposit

Direct Deposit of employees' payroll checks is available and encouraged. Forms are available in Human Resources and in the Clerk of the Courts Office to sign up for automatic or "direct" deposit of employees paychecks.

E. Parking

Parking space in close proximity to the courthouse is available to those employed at the Courthouse. All other County facilities have employee parking available free of charge.

F. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

A referral program for all employees in need of personal help is available. EAP is a worksite-based program designed to assist:

- Organizations in addressing productivity issues; and
- Employees and employers in identifying and resolving personal concerns, including but not limited to, health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal issues that may affect job performance.

All employees can contact their supervisor, Department Head, Human Resources Director or County Administrator for information regarding the County's EAP.

G. Educational Attainment Compensation

Regular full-time and part-time employees with two years of service earning diplomas or degrees (GED, associate, bachelor, masters, and doctorate) or professional certifications, in job-related areas may be eligible to receive up to a 5% pay increase for each job-related diploma or degree above that required for the position at the time the employee was hired into the position.

The maximum lifetime educational compensation benefit is 10%. No additional compensation will be approved for educational attainment once the 10% maximum has been reached. Employees who participate in the Tuition Reimbursement Program will not be eligible to participate in the Educational Attainment Compensation Program.

All diplomas, degrees or certifications considered for educational attainment increases must be completed while employed with Wakulla County. Requests for educational attainment increases must be received within six (6) months of completing the degree, diploma or certification. No retroactive pay increases will be granted for degrees, diplomas, or certifications completed prior to initial placement in the current position. Employees contemplating completion of education or certification to qualify for educational attainment compensation should consult with their supervisor, Department head, and Human Resources to determine whether the education or certification is eligible for educational attainment compensation. In cases where an employee was previously enrolled in a certification, diploma or degree program the eligibility for educational attainment compensation will be determined by the Human Resources Director and the Department head on a case-by-case basis.

The qualifying criteria for educational attainment compensation shall have a direct relationship with either the employee's present position or preparation for a promotional opportunity, and shall be determined by the Human Resources Director after consultation with the respective Department Director. Diplomas, degrees, or certifications used for educational attainment compensation must have a study requirement or study guidelines for completion. The study required must be at least 42 clock hours. The diploma, degree, or certification must also include an assessment of knowledge or skills required for successful completion. Class time without assessment is not sufficient. Diplomas or degrees must be from an educational institution that is accredited by one of the accrediting bodies approved by the U. S. Department of Education. Educational Attainment compensation is not an entitlement and is contingent upon the availability of funds. In no case will an educational attainment increase place an employee's salary above the maximum of the assigned pay grade.

All educational attainment compensation must be approved by the County Administrator. The effective date of the salary increase shall be the date of approval. This policy will become effective immediately, regardless of when certification or degree was obtained.

Wakulla County encourages employee development and knowledge expansion. After employment, should an employee obtain a job related higher level of education, the supervisor shall request proof of attainment. This proof is presented to the Human Resources Director with a letter of justification for salary adjustment. The Human Resources Director will evaluate the request in accordance with County policy, and will make a recommendation to the County Administrator.

H. Tuition Assistance and Staff Training and Development

To participate in the Tuition Assistance Program, employees must:

- Be full time regular employees;
- Have been employed for at least one year and have successfully completed probation;
- Received a satisfactory performance evaluation;
- Have not received any disciplinary action during the last six months, and;
- Complete a Tuition Assistance Approval Form

Exceptions to the above participation criteria may be granted with the approval of the County Administrator.

Employees may be reimbursed for up to six (6) semester credit hours per semester, (per participating employee) with a maximum of 18 semester credit hours per fiscal year.

Approval for tuition reimbursement will be based upon the following criteria:

- Course work will improve the employee's capability to perform the duties and responsibilities officially assigned to the position currently occupied by the employee.
- Course work will develop or improve the employee's skill, ability, and knowledge within the employee's occupational field, or will provide cross-training deemed beneficial to meeting the needs of the County.
- Undergraduate or graduate level college programs, vocational training courses, and correspondence courses meeting the above criteria may be eligible for reimbursement.
- Diplomas or degrees must be from an educational institution accredited by an accrediting body approved by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Grants and scholarships that cover full tuition costs will not be eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- Employees who participate in the Tuition Assistance Program will not be eligible to participate in the Educational Attainment Compensation Program.
- To be eligible for reimbursement, the tuition must be approved prior to the start of classes and will be assigned on a first come-first serve basis, with approval based on the availability of funds.
- All reimbursements shall be based on local market public institution rates.

Subject to the availability of funds at time of pre-approval, Human Resources will recommend payment of tuition reimbursement after successful completion of the course(s) based on the following scale:

- Grades A and B - 100% reimbursement

- Grade C – 50% reimbursement
- No reimbursement for a grade below a C

Course-connected laboratory fees and required books are considered part of tuition. Other expenses such as late registration, transportation fees, health fees, and certification or examination fees are not eligible expenses for tuition reimbursement.

Wakulla County shall not provide tuition reimbursement to any employee who separates from employment with the County, voluntarily or involuntarily, prior to successful completion of approved course(s). Employees, who participate in the Tuition Assistance Program will be obligated to remain with Wakulla County for a minimum of two (2) years after the completion of the last class attended for which they were reimbursed. Those employees who voluntarily resign or terminate employment for whatever reason, prior to the expiration of the two (2) year period, shall repay the County 100% of the monies received by the employee from the Tuition Assistance Program.

Procedure:

Tuition reimbursement must be requested and approved prior to the beginning of the training or class, using the Tuition Assistance Approval Form. The form shall be submitted to the Department Director, who will make a recommendation to the County Administrator's Office. Upon consideration by the County Administrator, or designee, a copy of the Tuition Assistance Approval Form will be returned to the employee. If the request has been approved, the employees may then proceed with the continuing education. After completion of approved credit-earning courses, the employee may request tuition reimbursement by submitting the following documents to Human Resources:

- A. Grade report (computer printout is acceptable)
- B. Itemized payment receipt (computer printout is acceptable)
- C. Completed and signed Tuition Reimbursement Form

Reimbursement for tuition must be requested within sixty (60) working days following the completion of the approved courses. This policy shall become effective for new classes starting after January 1, 2008.

I. Deferred Compensation

A deferred compensation program is available. Please see the Human Resources Director for additional information.

J. Holidays

- Holidays shall be designated by the Board of County Commissioners
- A regular employee normally scheduled to work on the designated holiday shall be paid for the number of hours normally worked that day at his or her regular rate of pay. Additionally, the employee shall receive compensatory time off at a rate of one and one-

half (1 ½) the regular rate of pay, or the employee may be paid additional Holiday pay at the rate of one and one-half (1 ½) the employee's regular rate of pay.

- Should the designated holiday not fall on a normal workday of a full-time employee, the employee shall be paid for an additional eight (8) hours at his or her regular rate of pay for the holiday. When work schedules are adjusted by mutual agreement between employee and County Administration, Holiday Pay will be based on a 40 hour workweek.
- An employee who is not on approved paid leave, and fails to report on the scheduled workday before or after a holiday, shall not be paid for the holiday. Employees who work less than full-time shall be paid for the holiday in proportion to their hours regularly worked during the week.

K. Holidays Observed

The following holidays will be observed by the County. These days may be changed from time to time as the Board determines and upon reasonable notice to the employees. Offices may be closed on the days listed without further notice. Any other holidays proclaimed by the Board of County Commissioners will also be observed.

New Year's Day	January 1 st
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	3 rd Monday in January
President's Day	3 rd Monday in February
Good Friday	Friday before Easter Sunday
Memorial Day	Last Monday in may
Independence Day	July 4 th
Labor Day	1 st Monday in September
Veterans Day	November 11 th
Thanksgiving (2 days)	4 th Thursday and Friday in November
Christmas (2 days)	December 25 th and 1 day
New Year's Eve	December 31st

L. Annual Leave

Annual leave is provided for the purpose of rest, recreation, time with family, travel, and other forms of renewal by getting away from the job. It also enables employees to take care of other time consuming personal matters which may arise from time to time. Annual leave is not intended as a substitute for regular on-time attendance and will not be approved by supervisors to make up for habitual lateness. All regular employees shall be entitled to earn and accrue annual leave. Employees who work less than full-time shall accrue leave in proportion to their hours worked.

Creditable service for annual leave shall begin to accrue immediately upon employment. For employees joining the County, creditable service for accrual rate purposes shall include state, local government or special district service (only eligible service under Florida Retirement System) as long as any break in service prior to County employment does not exceed thirty (30) working days.

Credits for annual leave shall be allowed on the following basis for regular employees:

- Eight (8) hours per calendar month effective upon employment.
- Ten (10) hours per calendar month after completion of five (5) years service.
- Thirteen (13) hours per calendar month after completion of ten (10) years service.
- Fifteen (15) hours per calendar month after completion of twenty (20) years service.

Credits for annual leave shall be allowed on the following basis for Senior Management Service employees:

- Ten (10) hours per calendar month effective upon employment.
- Twelve (12) hours per calendar month after completion of five (5) years service.
- Fourteen (14) hours per calendar month after completion of ten (10) years service.
- Fifteen (15) hours per calendar month after completion of fifteen (15) years service.

Annual leave may be accumulated as stated above, but may not exceed thirty (30) days or two hundred forty (240) hours as of December 31st of each year unless approved in writing by the County Administrator.

During the initial month of employment, annual leave will accrue at one quarter of the regular monthly rate for each 40 hours of work. For example, an employee earning 8 hours per month would receive two (2) hours leave for each week of service during the first month.

1. Request for Leave

A request for annual leave shall be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor on the official "notice of employee absence" form. Annual leave of four (4) days or more should be requested as soon as possible, but not less than two (2) weeks in advance. Leave may be taken only after approval of the Department head. Consideration of all requests will be made on a timely basis.

2. Emergency Call In

In cases when approved leave is interrupted due to a County emergency which requires the employee to return to work, the employee may request that non-reimbursable costs of travel plans be paid by the County. This request must be in writing with full documentation and submitted to the Department Head. The Department Head will review the request and make a recommendation to the County Administrator. The County Administrator will have final approval.

3. Duration of leave

Annual Leave shall be limited to fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days unless approved in advance by the County Administrator.

4. Treatment of Leave for Less Than One Day

Leave time or absence from work for less than one day need not be recorded by Senior Management or those salaried employees who are exempt from overtime. Regular employees paid on an hourly basis must report all time absent from work to their supervisor and it must be recorded on the official time sheet. Leave must be approved by the supervisor or Department Head.

5. Payment of Annual Leave Upon Separation

Regular and Senior Management employees who voluntarily separate from the County through resignation or retirement will be paid for all accrued Annual Leave up to 360 hours. Probationary employees who separate for any reason shall not be paid for any accrued leave. Any employee who is dismissed for cause shall not be paid for accrued annual leave time.

M. Sick Leave

All full time and permanent part-time employees will accrue sick leave at a rate of eight (8) hours per month with no limit on the amount of time which may be accumulated. Part-time employees who work a fixed percentage of time per pay period shall accrue hours on a pro-rated basis. Example: An employee working 20 hours per week will earn four (4) hours sick leave per month.

During the initial month of employment, sick leave accrual will be based upon one quarter of the accrual rate for 40 hours of work (two hours per week).

1. Uses of Sick Leave

Illness, debilitating injury, pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, medical or dental appointments and care for employee's immediate family are valid uses of sick leave. An employee on annual leave is allowed to convert such leave to sick leave when the employee becomes ill or injured and proper documentation is submitted to Human Resources.

When requesting sick leave for immediate family illness, the person who is ill or injured, as well as the general nature of the illness or injury, must be identified.

2. Request for Sick Leave

An employee who is to be absent from work and wishes to request sick leave shall submit a “notice of employee absence” form, in advance when possible. Otherwise, the employee shall notify his or her supervisor prior to the beginning of the scheduled work time. Upon returning to work, the employee shall immediately submit to the supervisor an official “notice of employee absence” form. Failure to do so may result in a loss of pay for the absence. A Supervisor may require a medical statement from a physician for use of sick leave when a pattern of abuse is indicated.

If Sick Leave has been exhausted, the employee may request the use of annual leave. If no leave is available and the employee is unable to return to work, they may request “Leave Without Pay”

3. Abuse of Sick Leave

Use of sick leave under false pretenses, or non-compliance with attendance standards, may be grounds for disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal.

4. Transfer of Sick Leave

Regular employees hired from the state government, local government, or special district (only eligible service under Florida Retirement System) may transfer up to thirty (30) days (240 hours) of accumulated sick leave to their sick leave account with the County, if the break in service prior to County employment does not exceed thirty (30) working days.

5. Payment of Sick Leave Upon Separation from the County

Employees who voluntarily separate from the County shall be paid for 25% of the accrued sick leave up to 240 hours. No payment will be made on sick leave accrued above 240 hours.

N. Sick Leave Donation

Employees may donate a portion of their sick or annual leave to a fellow employee who has had a personal injury or who is caring for an immediate family member who is seriously ill or requires the care of the employee under the following conditions:

- The employee wishing to make the donation must:
 - Have been employed with Wakulla County for at least one year.
 - Have accumulated a combined balance of at least one hundred sixty (160) hours leave (sick and annual leave)
 - Not transfer so much leave that the combined balance falls below 160 hours or that the sick leave balance falls below 80 hours.
 - Complete an appropriate form requesting that a specified number of their leave hours be transferred to the other employee.
- The employee who is to receive the donation must:

- Have been employed with Wakulla County for at least one year.
- Have exhausted all available sick, annual, and compensatory leave.
- Utilize the donated leave for their illness or that of an immediate family member.

Donated leave will be approved by the County Administrator and will be used as needed by the recipient. When there are multiple donations, the hours first offered and approved will be utilized first, then the others as needed. Transfers will occur during the regular payroll schedule and will not be banked by the recipient.

O. Parental Leave

Parental leave shall be granted to any regular full-time employee, for the purpose of pregnancy, infant care, recuperation, etc. Parental leave shall also be granted on the same terms for purposes of child adoption. An employee shall be permitted to utilize accumulated sick or annual leave during the parental leave period for purposes of receiving pay during that period.

Parental leave granted for pregnancy, maternity, spouse's maternity and adoption purposes may be without pay.

At the expiration of parental leave, the employee shall be entitled to return to the position that they temporarily vacated.

P. Leave Without Pay

Leave without pay may be granted for Parental Leave, or when other leave resources have been exhausted. A written request for Leave Without Pay must be submitted to the Department Head for consideration. The Department Head may approve leave without pay for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days. Requests for leave without pay for periods more than thirty (30) days and less than one year must be approved by the County Administrator subject to the following:

- When it is in the best interest of the County;
- When it will not be detrimental to the Department operations and;
- When the funds required to provide temporary staff and related operating expenses do not exceed the amount that would have been expended if the employee had remained on the job.

At the expiration of the leave without pay, the employee will be returned to the same position left temporarily vacated if available. The County is not obligated to hold the same or an equivalent position open for an employee on leave without pay.

No annual or sick leave may be accrued during leave without pay. No Holiday pay will be paid during leave without pay.

If an employee requests leave without pay on a part-time basis, during which they work a portion of their regular hours for pay and have leave without pay for hours not worked, they shall accrue sick and annual leave at a rate proportionate to the amount of time they actually work.

Failure to return to work promptly, or if there is no position available at the expiration of the approved leave without pay may be cause for dismissal.

1. Insurance Coverage during leave without pay

Upon approval of leave without pay for more than twenty (20) days, the employee must decide if they wish their insurance coverage to continue.

During the first thirty (30) days of leave without pay the employee shall continued to be covered by County insurance benefits, provided that the employee pay the employee portion, if any, that they normally pay. After thirty (30) days, the employee may choose to pay the full cost of the insurance premium and maintain coverage.

Q. Workers Compensation

An employee who sustains a job-related disability that is compensable under the Workers' Compensation Law shall be carried in full pay status for a period not to exceed seven (7) calendar days without being required to use accrued leave credits. Such pay will be contingent upon written confirmation of inability to work from the attending physician treating the employee. If the employee receives Workers' Compensation benefits for this period of leave with pay, the employee shall reimburse the County the amount of the benefits. Such reimbursement shall not include payments for medical, surgical, hospital, nursing, or related expenses, or lump-sum of scheduled payments of disability losses.

If the employee is unable to return to work at the end of the seven (7) day period, the employee may elect to use accrued sick, compensatory, or annual leave in an amount necessary to receive salary payment that will supplement the Workers' Compensation payments to the total salary that was received prior to the occurrence of the disability. In no case shall the employee's combined salary and Workers Compensation benefits exceed the amount of the employee's regular salary payments. If the employee elects not to use accrued leave, the employee shall receive normal Workers' Compensation benefits.

1. Reporting an Accident

When an employee is injured on the job, the following procedures should be implemented.

In cases of very serious or life threatening accidents, the health and welfare of the employee is the first consideration and they, their co-workers, or supervisor should seek immediate medical attention.

In cases where the injury is not urgent or life threatening, the employee may seek medical attention from the County's designated Workers Compensation physician.

After ensuring that the injured employee receives medical attention, the accident/injury shall be reported to the immediate supervisor by the employee or coworker on the First Report of Injury or Illness Form. The Supervisor is responsible for filing an accident report within 24 hours after the injury occurs and submitting this report to the Human Resources Director.

Even when medical attention is not desired or required, it is the injured employee's responsibility to report all work related injuries, no matter how minor, to his/her supervisor. The injured employee must describe to his/her supervisor how the injury occurred and what part of the body was affected so an accurate documentation may be prepared. This will assist in tracking accidents and injuries and may prevent future injury to this or other employees.

R. Elections Leave

An employee may be granted up to two (2) hours of leave for the purpose of voting. This will be considered Administrative Leave by the Human Resources Department and shall be reported as such on the timesheet.

S. Administrative Leave

In cases of natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, or floods, bomb threats and loss of electrical power which exceeds 3 hours, the County Administrator or designee, may close County offices and grant Administrative Leave with pay to the affected employees. Affected employees who are required to remain at work to provide essential services shall receive compensatory leave credit.

Administrative leave may also be granted for educational training, Employee Assistance Program appointments, and other job related purposes not paid for by the County or otherwise provided for within this Policy when it is deemed to be a benefit to the County and in the best interest of the County to do so.

T. Veterans Leave

Veterans may request up to six (6) calendar days per year for Veteran's Administration re-examination and treatment. Documentation of appointments must be attached to the "notice of employee absence" form. This will be treated as "Administrative Leave" upon approval by the Human Resources Director.

U. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

In accordance with the Family and Medical leave Act of 1993, eligible County employees are entitled to extended leave without pay under specified conditions. Employees shall utilize all

accrued annual, compensatory, or sick leave for all or any part of the 12 weeks of leave granted under the Act.

1. Eligibility

An employee who has worked with Wakulla County at least twelve (12) months and who has worked at least 1250 hours in the last twelve (12) months prior to the beginning date of leave may be entitled to twelve (12) work weeks of paid/unpaid leave in any rolling twelve (12) month period under the provisions of the FMLA of 1993. A rolling twelve (12) month period will be measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

2. Approved Uses of FMLA

- To care for a newborn child or for placement of a child with the employee through foster care or adoption.
- To care for a child, parent or spouse who has a serious or terminal health condition.
- To attend to a personal serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job.

3. Request of FMLA Leave

Employees are requested to provide thirty (30) days notice of intent to take leave for foreseeable events, such as the expected birth of a child or planned medical treatments. Requests should be made on the “Request for Medical Leave” form. In cases where the need is unexpected, employees are requested to provide as much notice as possible.

Documentation qualifying the FMLA leave must be submitted to the Human Resources Department so that approval may be granted. In the case of an employee’s own personal illness or injury, physician’s certification form must be filled out by the employee’s treating physician. Failure to request FMLA or to provide timely notice of the need for FMLA may result in discipline, up to and including termination and/or the denial of FMLA leave.

4. Benefits while on FMLA Leave

Employees will retain all accrued benefits while on FMLA leave. No sick or annual leave will accrue during FMLA leave without pay. Health plan coverage will be maintained by the County to the extent they are provided prior to the FMLA leave. Provisions for the collection of employee contributions to health plan coverage shall be made on an individual basis. Employees may be required to pay the contribution of the health insurance premium that they were paying prior to commencing FMLA.

5. Restoration

Eligible employees returning from family and medical leave have the right to be returned to the job position that they held when they went on leave, or they may be placed in an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

6. Periodic Reporting

Employees will be required to report periodically on their status and plans to return to work.

7. Failure to Return to Work

An employee who fails to return to work on the date specified on the leave request form without receiving an extension in advance is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

V. Bereavement Leave

An employee may, upon request, be granted up to three (3) days paid administrative leave upon the death of an immediate family member as described in the Definitions of this Policy.

Employees must notify the supervisor of the deceased relative name and relationship to the employee and request leave time on the official “notice of employee absence” form. The Supervisor may request a certification or proof of the death.

If additional time is required for bereavement or travel, the employee may request to use sick, annual, or compensatory leave.

W. Jury Duty or Court Leave

Upon official summons not involving a personal litigation, the employee will be granted leave with pay (Administrative Leave) to serve on a jury or testify as a witness. Employees shall be required to remit any funds received as a result of Jury Duty or Court Leave back to the County. Employees shall not be reimbursed by the County for meals, lodging or travel expenses incurred while serving as a juror or witness. The employee shall be required to submit a copy of the summons or subpoena when requesting this type of leave.

X. Domestic Violence Leave

In accordance with Florida Statutes, employees may be granted up to 3 days of unpaid leave in any 12 month period if the employee or a family or household member of an employee is the victim of

domestic violence. Employees must exhaust the use of annual leave and compensatory leave before going into unpaid leave status.

Eligible Employees: To be eligible for leave an employee must have 3 months of service with Wakulla County.

Reasons for Leave: Eligible employees may request leave for the following activities:

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

Notice Requirement: Except in cases of imminent danger to the health and safety of the employee or family member, the employee shall provide advance notice of the need for leave along with sufficient documentation of the act of domestic violence. This documentation may include copies of restraining orders, law enforcement reports, orders to appear in court, certification from attorney, certification from domestic violence service provider, etc; that the employee is being subjected to domestic violence. Any request for use of this leave will be kept confidential and is exempt from public disclosure until one (1) year after the leave is taken in accordance with Florida law. Employees in need of leave under this provision shall contact Human Resources for the appropriate leave request form. Leave shall be reported as Administrative Leave on the employee timesheet.

Y. Military Leave

Long term leave is extended to an employee who is drafted or who volunteers for active military service. This leave begins the day of induction and ends ninety (90) days after the date of separation from service or from hospitalization continuing after discharge. Active military service includes active duty with any branch of the Armed Services.

When an employee is granted military leave for active military service, the employee's position may be filled by another employee. Upon separation from the military service, not more than five (5) years from date of induction, the employee shall be eligible to return to the position held. However, the employee may be placed in another class with duties the employee is able to perform. Application for reinstatement following extended leave must be made within ninety (90) days after completion of military service and within thirty-one (31) days after completion of initial active duty for training of not less than three (3) months.

An employee who is a member of the United States Armed Forces Reserve, including the National Guard shall, upon presentation of a copy of the employee's official orders, be granted leave with pay for periods during which the employee is ordered to active duty for training. Whether continuous or intermittent, such leave with pay shall not exceed seventeen (17) working days in any one annual period.

VII. EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The performance evaluation program is intended to inform employees how well they are performing their work and how they can improve their work performance. The program may also:

- be used as a guide for determining merit pay increases;
- be considered in selecting employees for promotion;
- provide essential information for employee career development;
- serve as a basis for establishment of layoff rosters; or
- be used in determining whether an employee's work is so deficient as to warrant corrective action, up to and including dismissal.

The Human Resources Director shall be responsible for the establishment and administration of a performance evaluation program for all employees of the Board of County Commissioners. The performance evaluation shall be in a standard written form as prescribed by the Human Resources Director. The performance evaluation is not subject to any grievance or formal complaint policy.

A. Evaluation Periods

Probationary Reviews - All regular employees shall be evaluated at the end of their initial probationary period

Annual Reviews - All full-time and part-time employees shall be evaluated annually.

Special Review – may be initiated during periods of disciplinary action, when the employee's performance is in decline, or when the employee has been assigned additional responsibilities.

B. Evaluation Review Process

- Evaluations shall be prepared by the immediate supervisor of each employee and reviewed by the appropriate department head.

- Supervisors must use the comments section on the evaluation forms in order for them to be considered complete.
- The evaluator shall discuss each performance evaluation with the employee.
- The employee, supervisor and department head shall sign the evaluation.
- The employee will be encouraged to participate in the evaluation process and will have the opportunity to provide written documentation of their concerns or comments to the evaluation. Such documentation will be attached to the evaluation form and will become a part of the employee's evaluation packet.

VIII. STANDARDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The purpose of this section of the Personnel Policy Manual is to set forth the rules for disciplinary action. The purpose of these rules is as follows:

- To address the personnel rules of Wakulla County employees concerning misconduct and deficiencies in work performance.
- To establish standards for administering disciplinary action to County Employees.
- To clearly define the standards of conduct and other policies which are applicable to a given work situation.
- To establish standard ranges of penalties for various types of misconduct and deficient work performance in order to promote reasonable consistency in the disciplining of County employees involved in similar situations.
- To assure quality service to the public.

It is not the purpose of these rules to make the failure of the Department Head to comply with technical requirements contained herein a basis for invalidating any disciplinary action. It is contemplated that such action will be invalidated only where the County's failure to comply with these rules materially affects the ability of an employee to make use of the procedures provided for herein.

A. Authority

The authority to take disciplinary action as specified below is hereby delegated to the following persons or to those persons who are in a supervisory position to the persons listed below.

<u>Disciplinary Action</u>	<u>Persons Delegated Authority</u>
Oral Reprimand	Department Head, Supervisor or County Administrator
Written Reprimand	Department Head
Suspension	Department Head with County Administrator's approval (24 hours)
Extended Suspension	Department Head approved by County Administrator
Dismissal	County Administrator

Department Heads shall be responsible for assuring that all disciplinary actions taken within their respective departments comply with these rules.

The Human Resources Director shall provide guidance with regard to the administration of disciplinary actions and for assuring that such actions are accomplished in accordance with these rules. Employees may not be disciplined because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, political affiliations, age, marital status, or handicap.

B. Types of Disciplinary Action

The following types of disciplinary actions are provided: Oral Reprimand, Written Reprimand, Suspension, Demotion, and Dismissal. Disciplinary actions shall be submitted to the Human Resources Director and County Administrator on the Employee Disciplinary Report.

Oral Reprimand – This is the least severe disciplinary action. The purpose of an oral reprimand is to inform the employee of a particular disciplinary problem. Where possible, the oral reprimand should be delivered to the employee in a location that provides privacy from the employee's coworkers. The supervisor shall clearly state that the employee is receiving an oral reprimand, clearly indicate the nature of the improper behavior, and explain precisely what corrective action is expected. In addition, it should be pointed out that future violations may result in more severe disciplinary action. Before concluding the meeting, the employee shall be allowed to make comments and clarify any issues concerning the situation.

A brief written documentation stating that the employee received the oral reprimand, giving the date and time of the reprimand and stating the nature of the problem must be provided to Human Resources for insertion into the employee's personnel file. A copy shall also be provided to the employee.

Written Reprimand – The purpose of a written reprimand is to help an employee who violates a disciplinary standard to recognize the error, to prescribe an action to correct the

error and prevent it from recurring, and to document disciplinary action. The content of the report of written reprimand must specifically state that the employee is receiving a written reprimand, describe the facts giving rise to the disciplinary action, and indicate the corrective action expected. It should include a statement that future violations may result in more severe disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal. The report of written reprimand should be presented to the employee in private. There shall also be a signature line in the report of written reprimand for the employee to acknowledge receipt. In the event the employee refuses to sign the report, the Department Head should note such refusal on the original and a copy of the report. Employees who refuse to sign an acknowledgement receipt may be disciplined, up to and including termination. All reprimands will be forwarded to the Human Resources Office for inclusion into the employee's personnel file, and a copy will be provided to the employee.

Suspension – Suspension up to twenty-four (24) hours is action taken by the Department Head to temporarily relieve the employee of duties and place the employee on leave without pay. This is a severe form of disciplinary action, which may result from the commission of one offense or as a result of cumulative offenses.

Extended Suspension – The extension of a suspension beyond the 24-hour period.

Dismissal – This is action taken by the County Administrator upon recommendation of the Department Head to separate the employee from County service. This is also a severe form of disciplinary action that may result from the commission of one offense or as a result of cumulative offenses.

C. Procedure

The affected employee shall be notified of the proposed personnel action, suspension, or dismissal, and the reasons in writing by personal delivery or by Certified Mail – Return Receipt Requested at his/her last known address. Employees who are on probationary status are not afforded the opportunity to appeal any disciplinary action.

D. Standards for Disciplinary Procedures

In general, the basic pattern of discipline for regular employees is progressive and cumulative. Specifically, written reprimands are retained on record and can have a cumulative effect leading to progressive discipline up to and including dismissal. Once a written reprimand is issued, it becomes a permanent part of the employee's record. The age of prior disciplinary action(s) will be taken into account in determining appropriate future discipline.

Progressive disciplinary action may also be administered for dissimilar offenses or deficiencies. If the employee has received a second disciplinary action for similar or dissimilar offenses or deficiencies, it may be considered cumulative and will allow the supervisor to progress to a more severe form of discipline when warranted.

E. Guidelines for Disciplinary Action for First Offenses

Listed below are guidelines for disciplinary action involving first offenses. The list is not intended to be exhaustive nor are the suggested actions for any offense required. The circumstances of each case shall govern the disciplinary action

Misconduct normally resulting in an Oral Reprimand for the first offense:

- Excessive Absenteeism
- Excessive Tardiness
- Failure to perform assigned duties properly or in a timely manner

Misconduct normally resulting in a Written Reprimand for the first offense:

- Offensive conduct or abusive language
- Improper use of County equipment
- Unauthorized absence or leaving assigned work station without permission, when responsibility mandates a presence
- Abuse of sick leave

Misconduct normally resulting in suspension for the first offense:

- Flagrant violation of safety rules, resulting in a dangerous situation
- Insubordination
- Sleeping on the job
- Fighting
- Sexual Harassment
- Discrimination

Misconduct normally resulting in dismissal for the first offense:

- Conviction of a felony
- Abuse or theft of County property
- Willfully making false statements about the County or its employees
- Falsification of records
- Illegal acceptance of gratuities
- Possession or use of intoxicants or controlled substances on the job
- Violence leading to the injury of another or destruction of County property
- Abandonment of job (three successive work days missed without notification to supervisor)
- Threat or use of weapon on the job

IX. EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE POLICY – DISCIPLINARY

The internal grievance procedure is established to provide opportunity to regular full-time and regular part-time employees who have successfully completed their initial probationary period to appeal disciplinary actions more serious than a written reprimand. The submission of an appeal by an employee in good faith shall in no way adversely affect the employee or his employment with the County. Violations of the discrimination or sexual harassment policies shall not be considered under this section, but shall be brought to the immediate attention of a supervisor, Human Resource Officer, or County Administrator and the County shall react swiftly to investigate and take appropriate action.

A. Appeal to Department Head

The employee may appeal the discipline in writing by filing his appeal with the Department Head or the Human Resources within five (5) working days from receipt of Notice of Disciplinary Action.

The appeal shall be in writing, and shall include:

- The date the grievance arose.
- The policy, rule, and/or procedure claimed to have been violated.
- A statement of the facts as seen by the employee.
- The relief requested.

The Department Head shall meet with the employee within five (5) working days after receipt of the grievance. The Department Head shall give the employee an opportunity to explain his position, and listen to any witnesses the employee brings to the meeting. The Department Head may require other employee witnesses to be present or may conduct further investigation into the matter on his own. The Department Head shall give a written answer to the employee within five (5) working days after the investigation is completed, and within ten (10) days after receipt of the written grievance.

B. Appeal of Department Head Decision

If the employee does not receive timely written response from the Department Head, or the employee is unsatisfied with the decision of the Department Head, the employee may then appeal to the County Administrator.

The appeal to the County Administrator shall take place within ten (10) working days of receipt of the decision of the Department Head. If the Department Head does not provide written response within the prescribed time, their lack of response shall be considered a denial of the appeal and the employee should proceed with their appeal to the County Administrator.

The County Administrator shall consider the appeal and shall:

- Give both the employee and the Department Head an opportunity to explain their positions;
- Consider the information before him;

- Further investigate the matter if he feels it is necessary; and
- Make the final decision for the County

C. Dismissal/Termination Appeal

A dismissal may be appealed directly to the County Administrator's Office within fifteen (15) days of written notification of the dismissal. Upon receipt of the appeal, the County Administrator shall initiate a Hearing Board review. The Hearing Board shall meet with the employee and the Department Head, give them an opportunity to explain their respective positions, listen to any witnesses they wish to present, call any witnesses the Hearing Board feels will be helpful in making its recommendation, review all documents submitted, and make a recommendation to the County Administrator. The County Administrator shall have the final decision in the matter.

1. Composition of the Hearing Board

The Hearing Board shall be made up of three current employees of the County. In order to be eligible to serve, the employees must have been employed with the county for at least three (3) years and must have met or exceeded expectations on their last two (2) performance evaluations. The Hearing Board shall be composed of the following:

- one (1) employee selected by the grieving employee
- one (1) employee by the Department Head
- one (1) employee selected by the other two selected individuals

If the two (2) selected Hearing Board members cannot agree on the third Board member, the third member shall be appointed by the HR Director.

D. General Procedures

All appeals or grievances must be in written form. Employees may request assistance from the Human Resources Department regarding grievance procedures and this guidance may be provided during the employee's regular working time with no loss of pay.

Attorneys will not be permitted to participate in any aspect of the internal grievance procedure. County employees are employed in an at-will capacity and have no property right in their employment, nor does the internal grievance procedure create any property right.

Attorneys will not be allowed to participate in these meetings without prior approval from the County Administrator, unless it is required by law. The participation of an attorney representing the employee shall, in most cases, elicit the participation of the County Attorney and these proceedings shall then be considered a legal matter, which will be coordinated through the County Attorney's Office.

The time limits of this grievance procedure may be extended for reasons considered appropriate by the Human Resources Director or County Administrator. Failure of an employee to file a grievance

or an appeal in a timely fashion will constitute an automatic abandonment of the grievance unless he has obtained an extension in advance.

X. EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE - NON-DISCIPLINARY

It is the purpose of this grievance procedure to assure regular full and regular part-time employees that their non-disciplinary problems and complaints will be considered fairly, expeditiously and without reprisal. It is expected that the procedures set forth below will encourage employees to discuss with their supervisors matters pertaining to conditions of employment as they affect individual employees. In addition, free discussion between employees and supervisors will lead to better understanding of practices, policies, and procedures, which affect employees. This will serve to identify and eliminate conditions which may cause misunderstandings and grievances.

The following will not be considered as grievances under this policy:

- Disciplinary Actions
- Sexual Harassment (Please refer to the sexual harassment policy)
- Layoffs and reductions-in-force
- Budget Appropriations
- Changes in the workforce due to restructuring and/or re-organization
- Changes in County Policy

A. First Step – Immediate Supervisor

An employee shall present his grievance to his immediate supervisor within five (5) working days from the time of occurrence of the problem. The supervisor shall attempt to resolve the problem within five (5) working days after the complaint is made to him.

B. Second Step – Department Head

If the employee has not received an answer from the immediate supervisor within five (5) working days, or if the employee feels the answer received is not satisfactory, he will reduce to writing the facts and circumstances of the problem and present the written statement to his Department Head within five (5) working days after the supervisor's deadline as outlined above. The Department Head will investigate the grievance and meet with the employee to discuss the grievance within five (5) working days. The Department Head will notify the employee of his decision within five (5) days following the meeting date.

C. Third Step – County Administrator

If the employee has not received an answer from the Department Head within five (5) working days, or if the employee feels the answer received is not satisfactory, he may appeal in writing to the County Administrator within five (5) working days after the supervisor's deadline as outlined above. The County Administrator, or his designee, will investigate the grievance and meet with the employee to discuss the grievance within five (5) working days. The County Administrator, or designee, will notify the employee of the decision within five (5) days following the meeting date. The decision of the County Administrator, or designee, will be final and binding.

XI. SEPARATION

A. Resignation

To resign in good standing, except in the case of an emergency, an employee should give at least two weeks (14 calendar days) notice in writing to his or her supervisor. In the case of an emergency, the reason should be fully documented in the notice. Regular employees who resign shall receive payment for all accrued annual leave credit, up to 360 hours, compensatory time credit and 25% of sick leave credit.

B. Dismissal

Employees have no expectation of continued employment and their employment may be terminated whenever it is determined that it is in the best interests of the County. Probationary employees have no right to the County's internal grievance procedure. Employees who are involuntarily terminated will not receive payment for any sick or annual leave accrual.

1. Procedure for Dismissal/Termination

Upon decision by the Department Head that a dismissal is in the best interest of the County, the Department Head shall notify the County Administrator, provide written documentation of the circumstances, a prepared Notice of Dismissal, and a written recommendation requesting approval of the dismissal.

The County Administrator will review the request and consider the recommendations of the Department Head. The County Administrator may call a conference with the employee and/or the Department Head or investigate the matter to whatever extent he feels necessary. Upon approval by the County Administrator, the signed Notice of Dismissal shall be delivered to the employee in person, if possible. A copy shall also be mailed certified-return receipt requested to the employees last known address.

The written Notice of Dismissal shall contain the following:

- The employee's name, position title, home address and phone number
- Reason for dismissal
- Any existing documentation considered by the Department Head or County Administrator in considering the dismissal
- A list of any previous disciplinary action taken into account during dismissal consideration
- Notice of the employee's right to appeal following the process outlined in Section XI. Employee Grievance Procedure – Disciplinary Action

C. Layoff

Regular employees who are filling positions to be abolished may be transferred to vacant positions for which they are qualified. Employees must be notified in writing of the transfer. The letter will include notification to the employee of the reporting date, time, and place. Failure to report to the new position will constitute abandonment of position. Employees who are filling positions to be abolished shall be given priority consideration for vacant positions for which they qualify. No original appointment of a new employee may be made to fill a vacant position until all eligible and interested employees facing layoff have been considered. If the hiring authority does not wish to appoint an affected employee, justification for the action is to be provided to the Human Resources Director prior to advertising for recruitment to fill the position.

Employees scheduled for Layoff who cannot be transferred to vacant positions shall be notified in writing of their scheduled Layoff and the effective date.

Employees occupying temporary OPS positions shall be among the first considered for layoff, followed by probationary employees, then regular employees. Probationary employees are subject to termination or layoff with or without cause and will not be afforded further consideration under this section.

No regular employee in any classification may be laid off while an employee who does not hold regular status in the classification remains in service in the same classification.

Employees in grants funded positions may have the opportunity to transfer only within the scope of the grant.

Length of service to the County shall be the primary consideration when layoffs are necessary, followed by the employee's performance record and the specific skills and abilities required within the individual departments.

As provided by the Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), employees, spouses and dependants of employees who are laid off shall have the right to continue Health Insurance coverage at the group rate by taking responsibility for any premium payments previously covered by the County, as well as any employee portion. The rate may be higher because the employer is not required to pay any portion for the coverage. Written notification must be provided to the employee containing the specific details of continued coverage within fourteen (14) days of the effective date of layoff.

All layoffs will be approved by the County Administrator.

1. Call Backs

Within a period of one year when a vacancy occurs, or a new position is established in a class from which an employee was adversely affected, preference for reinstatement will be given to employees in the following order:

(1) Regular employees who voluntarily transfer to vacant positions in different classifications

(2) Employees who were laid off

Reinstatement may be with permanent status at the discretion of the hiring authority, when the employee had previously completed the probationary period. An employee who refuses an offer of reinstatement forfeits any priority rights to subsequent placement offers. Employees who are reinstated shall have their seniority restored.

D. Retirement

An employee of the County may retire subject to the provisions of the Florida Retirement System. An employee planning to retire shall notify Human Resources at least ninety (90) days prior to the planned date of retirement.

At the time of regular retirement, the employee shall be paid for all accrued annual and compensatory leave time, up to 360 hours and for 25% of the accrued sick leave up to 240 hours. No payment will be made on sick leave accrued above 240 hours.

E. Death While Employed

The official date of termination shall be the date of death. All compensation and benefits due to the employee as of the effective date of termination shall be paid to the beneficiary of record, surviving spouse, or to the estate of the employee as determined by law or by forms executed by the employee.

F. Exit Interview

Department Heads shall make every reasonable effort to interview separating employees utilizing the Exit Interview Form. The Exit Interview Form or reason for not conducting the interview shall be forwarded to the Board office with the Personnel Action Form. Employees who do not participate in an exit interview will be contacted by mail and requested to complete a short survey and return it to the County. The purpose of the exit interview or exit interview survey form is to gain insight into the concerns and issues faced by employees and to gain important knowledge and ideas for continued improvement of public service and County personnel services.

XII. Appendix A. – Forms

Oath of Loyalty

Outside Employment Disclosure Form

Wakulla County Employment Application

Telephone Reference Check Form

Employee Performance Evaluations

Wakulla County Employee Timesheet

Direct Deposit Enrollment Form

Tuition Assistance Approval Form

Tuition Reimbursement Request Form

Notice of Employee Absence Form

First Report of Injury or Illness Form

Request for Medical Leave Form

Employee Disciplinary Report

Exit Interview Form

XIII. Appendix B Pay and Classification Plan

CLASSIFICATION	RANGE	PROPOSED	
		MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
Administrative Assistant	109	25,507	40,811
Assistant County Administrator	120	53,688	88,585
Assistant Housing Director	110	27,292	43,667
Assistant Parks and Recreation Director	112	31,247	49,995
Assistant Planner	110	27,292	43,667
Budget Analyst	114	35,775	59,029
Building Inspector - Multiple	113	33,434	55,166
Building Inspector Assistant	112	31,247	49,995
Building Maintenance Coordinator	107	22,279	35,646
Building Plans Reviewer/Inspector	115	38,279	63,160
Building Technician I	108	23,838	38,141
Building Technician II	109	25,507	40,811
Building/Fire Official	117	43,825	72,311
Cartographer (AutoCAD or GIS)	110	27,292	43,667
Chief Building Inspector	115	38,279	63,160
Code Enforcement Officer	111	29,203	46,725
Community Development/Planning Director	119	50,176	82,790
Cooperative Extension Director	Set by UF		
County Administrator	125	75,300	124,245
Deputy County Administrator	122	61,467	101,421
Emergency Medical Services Director	117	43,825	72,311
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	110**	27,292	43,667

XIII. Appendix B Pay and Classification Plan

Executive Assistant to County Administrator	112	31,247	49,995
Extension Agent I (4H/Youth Development)	Set by UF		
Extension Office Manager	109	25,507	40,811
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent	Set by UF		
Fire Chief	117	43,825	72,311
Firefighter	111*	29,203	46,725
GIS Specialist	113	33,434	55,166
Grants Coordinator	110	27,292	43,667
Housing Director	113	33,434	55,166
Human Resources and Purchasing Coordinator	115	38,279	63,160
Library Assistant I - Circulation	105	19,459	31,134
Library Assistant II -Cataloger	107	22,279	35,646
Library Children & Youth Svcs Specialist	109	25,507	40,811
Library Director	116	40,958	67,581
Library Lifelong Learning Coordinator	110	27,292	43,667
Maintenance Worker - Correctional Certified (P&R)	105	19,459	31,134
Maintenance Worker (P&R)	103	16,996	27,194
Office Assistant	104	18,186	29,098
Office of Management and Budget Director	118	46,893	77,373
Paramedic	112**	31,247	49,995
Parks and Recreation Director	115	38,279	63,160
Parks Attendant	104	18,186	29,098
Parks Facilities Coordinator	109	25,507	40,811

XIII. Appendix B Pay and Classification Plan

Planner I	114	35,775	59,029
Planner II	115	38,279	63,160
Planning Tech I	109	25,507	40,811
Policy and Public Information Coordinator	114	35,775	59,029
Probation Assistant	109	25,507	40,811
Probation Director	116	40,958	67,581
Probation Officer I	110	27,292	43,667
Probation Officer II	111	29,203	46,725
Recycling Coordinator	109	25,507	40,811
Right of Way Acquisition Agent	109	25,507	40,811
Secretary	106	20,821	33,314
Section 8 Coordinator	109	25,507	40,811
Special Projects Coordinator	115	38,279	63,160
Veterans Services Officer	109	25,507	40,811
Weatherization Coord/SHIP Rehab Spec/Sec 8 Inspector	109	25,507	40,811

* based on 2912 hrs annually

** based on 2912 hrs annually with 16 hours of built in overtime per week

VERIFICATION OF RECEIPT

I, _____ affirm and acknowledge, by providing
(*printed name*)

my signature below that I have received a copy of the Official Wakulla County Personnel Policy and Procedures. Further, I understand that I should contact my supervisor or the Human Resource Director should I have questions as to any of the requirements or regulations contained herein. Wakulla County is an At-will employer and I understand that the nature of my appointment with Wakulla County is at-will and may be terminated by either party at any time for any or no reason.

Employee Signature

Date

Witness – (County Staff)

Date