

# **Hood County Texas Handbook**

1410 W. Pearl St. Annex 1

Granbury, Texas 76048

817-408-3450



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

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## **Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures**

### **Administrative Leave Policy**

Administrative leave with or without pay can be given when it is in the best interest of Hood County for an employee to leave the worksite, or not to return to the worksite, for a specified period of time. Although administrative leave may be used in conjunction with disciplinary action, it is not, in itself, a form of disciplinary action.

#### **Administrative Leave with Pay**

An employee may be placed on administrative leave with pay for the remainder of the employee's work day.

- When it is perceived to be of an urgent or serious nature that an employee be immediately removed from the worksite for the remainder of the employee's workday.
- When it is in the best interest of the County to remove an employee from the worksite during the investigation of an alleged violation of law or of Hood County Policy.

To place an employee on administrative leave with pay for periods of time longer than the remainder of the employee's workday, the department official must notify the Personnel Department for approval.

In no event may the Personnel Department approve administrative leave with pay for periods of time in excess of 30 days without prior approval from Commissioners Court.

Time designated as Administrative Leave with pay will not be charged to the employee's paid leave.

Extended Administrative Leave with pay may also be granted in non-disciplinary cases when an employee has used all leave-with-pay entitlements and the leave period would be in the best interests of Hood County.

#### **Administrative Leave without Pay**

An employee may be relieved of duties without pay for offenses that may result in termination, or if the employee's continued employment could clearly jeopardize the well-being of Hood County or any of its employees.

Before placing the employee on administrative leave without pay, the department official must notify the Personnel Department for guidance.

### **Return to Work**

When employees are absent from work on administrative leave, their positions are held for them, unless it is determined through the process of **disciplinary action** that the employee is to be terminated. Following administrative leave, an employee returns to her/his former position.

### **Notification**

Written notification to the employee is required when an employee is placed on administrative leave with pay for periods of time greater than the remainder of the workday or placed on administrative leave without pay. A copy of the notification is submitted to the Treasurers' Department for payroll purposes and a copy is placed in the employee's file with the Personnel Department.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



## Hood County Policy

### Open Purchase Order Encumbrance at Year End

The policy of Hood County Commissioners Court regarding purchase order encumbrance shall be that all valid and enforceable Open Purchase Orders at each fiscal Year-End shall remain encumbered; further, the existing budget appropriation for each Open Purchase Order will carry over, and be added to the County budget that has been approved for the new (succeeding) year. However, if a given Purchase Order was already encumbered and carried over in a previous year, then it will require advance approval of Commissioners Court to encumber that purchase order again and advance the budget appropriation again to a second year. (This policy will take the place of the current practice for the Purchasing and Auditing Offices of bringing open purchase orders to Commissioners Court on the second September meeting. If the Auditor or Purchasing Agent questions any given purchase order encumbrance, then only those exceptions are to be brought to Commissioners Court for specific consideration.)

Approved, this 26th day of January, 2016.

Attest: Hood County Clerk, Katie Lang \_\_\_\_\_



## Hood County Policy

### Spending Limit on Official Leaving Office

The policy of Hood County Commissioners Court regarding 1/12th budget expenditure limits is hereby replaced. In its place, Hood County will observe the provisions of Local Government Code 130.908 (stated below); further, Hood County Commissioners Court hereby establishes the limit for expenditures subject to provisions of Local Government Code 130.908 shall be 1/12th of the annual budget for any given budget line for any elected official or other precinct official who becomes subject to the limitations of Local Government Code 130.908; and, said limit will be applied each month that is affected.

Approved, this 26th day of January, 2016.

Attest: Hood County Clerk, Katie Lang \_\_\_\_\_

"LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE

TITLE 4. FINANCES

SUBTITLE B. COUNTY FINANCES

CHAPTER 130. MISCELLANEOUS FINANCIAL PROVISIONS AFFECTING COUNTIES

SUBCHAPTER Z. OTHER MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 130.908. APPROVAL OF SPENDING BY CERTAIN COUNTY AND PRECINCT OFFICERS. If an incumbent county or precinct officer is not renominated or is not reelected to the county or precinct office of a county, during the time following the date the results of the official canvass of the primary or election returns are announced, the commissioners court must approve any expenditure by the incumbent county or precinct officer who was not renominated or reelected that is over an amount set by the commissioners court."



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Automated Time and Attendance  
Policy**

**Purpose:**

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every Hood County employee. Federal and State laws require Hood County to keep accurate records of time worked in order to appropriately calculate employee pay and applicable benefits provided under Hood County policies. Time worked is considered as time spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Hood County utilizes an automated time keeping system to compute time worked and record payroll compensation, including but not limited to vacation time, sick time and overtime worked. The timekeeping system computes time worked based on the county's defined work-week of Monday through Sunday.

The normal work week for Hood County is Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Commissioners Court encourages all county offices to remain open during those times. It is the expectation of Hood County that employees arrive at their work site on time. The timekeeping system will automatically document and deduct for excessive tardiness under the guidelines established in this policy.

**Procedures:**

Non-exempt employees, will have their hand scanned into the biometric time clocks provided in the building in which the county employees' main office is located. Non-Exempt employees will be assigned an individual employee code and are required to clock in and out using the biometric time clock in the county building in which they work. Non-exempt employees who fail to clock in and out will be considered "absent" for the day. Failure of the department head to notify payroll of any problems with the employees' ability to clock in and out could result in a monetary adjustment to the employee's payroll. Any adjustments that have to be made after payroll has been processed will be performed on the following pay period. The Treasurer's office will not issue a separate check to an employee whose check is incorrect due to their failure to clock in or out or for their Supervisors' failure to notify payroll of any problems with the employees' ability to clock in and out. Any notification of this nature must be in writing and emailed or faxed to the Treasurer's Office as soon as the problem has been identified.

Patrol Deputies may utilize the telephone call-in-system known as U.S. Tele-punch in order to clock in and out as approved/assigned by the Sheriff and/or the employees' supervisor. These employees will call in on a dedicated phone number and enter their employee code, which will allow them to automatically clock in at the beginning of the shift and out at the end of the shift. Disclosure of the employees' code by the employee for clocking in and out for another employee is specifically prohibited and is grounds for termination. **The call in system does not apply to Deputies, Investigators, Deputy Constables, Fire Marshal or other Law Enforcement Personnel who go into the office daily.**

The U.S. Tele-punch call-in system may also be utilized by Juvenile Probation Officers on a weekend or evening call-out or by the Fire Marshal part-time deputies who are not scheduled but have been called out for emergency purposes.

The timekeeping system for Hood County is designed to extend a five (5) minute grace period for clocking in and out. This grace period begins five minutes before the employees' scheduled shift and ends five (5) minutes after the end of the employees' scheduled shift. This five (5) minute grace period is designed to correspond with a set schedule established when the employee is hired. In absence of the employees' supervisor to notify the Treasurers' Office of a set schedule, the Treasurer's Office will put the schedule in the time-keeping system's employee "master" file. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to notify the Treasurer's Office of any changes to an employee's schedule so that they can make the appropriate changes in the timekeeping system. It is further the responsibility of the employees' supervisor to record all leave time taken through the scheduling portion of the timekeeping system. The Treasurer's Office is not responsible for the Department Supervisor's failure to utilize the benefit or scheduling portion of the timekeeping system.

An employee is not allowed to clock in earlier than their shift begins without prior approval from the employee's supervisor. Likewise the employee is not allowed to work past their shift without prior approval from their supervisor. Although Hood County utilizes a 5-minute grace period, the employees' time is calculated based on the county's defined 40-hour work week of Monday through Sunday. ***Hood County complies with the DOL/FLSA rules in calculation of overtime for actual time worked in excess of 40 hours in the employer's (county's) defined workweek.*** Overtime is calculated at time and one half and is credited to the non-exempt employee in the form of compensatory time. Please refer to "comp time policy". (Exceptions: 14-day cycle employees have a separate policy for calculation of overtime/camp time).

Time worked and leave time taken shall be approved by each supervisor on the Monday immediately following the end of the pay period no later than 9:30 a.m. (exception: county holidays that fall on Monday). In the event of a county holiday on a Monday, the supervisors shall review their employees' timesheets by the end of the work day on Friday at the end of that specific pay period. However, authorization or lock-in of the timesheet itself may be done on the Tuesday immediately following the end of the pay period no later than 8:30a.m.

It is the recommendation of the Commissioners' Court that all non-exempt employees clock in and out for lunch specifically for timekeeping purposes. An elected/appointed department head may choose not to require their employees to clock in or out for lunch for legitimate business purposes. The rule will apply to all non-exempt employees in that department. Unless the Treasurer's Office is otherwise notified in writing the timekeeping system is set up to automatically deduct a one hour lunch for non-exempt employees. (Exceptions: Specific 14-day cycle law enforcement personnel and dispatch personnel)

Law Enforcement 14-day cycle employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis just as any other employee. 14-day cycle adjustments will be performed on the payroll following the end of each 14-day cycle.

Training on the operation of the timekeeping system for recording employees leave time, scheduling, and time approvals will be provided to the supervisors by the Treasurer's Office in written instructional format. Any additional training will be provided at any time upon written request by the supervisor.

**Holidays:**

Please see Holiday Policy

**Overtime/Comp Time:**

Please see Overtime/Comp Time Policy



**HOOD COUNTY FULL TIME  
BENEFIT PROGRAM**

**VACATION**

Accrual begins with hire date. 3.08 hours per pay period. Employee can accrue a maximum of 240 hours. Employee receives a maximum of 80 hour payout upon separation from County.  
0-4 Years.....10 days per year  
5-9 Years.....15 days per year  
10-19 Years....20 days per year  
20+ Years.....25 days per year

**SICK LEAVE**

Accrual begins with hire date. 1 day per month. (3.70 hours per pay period)

**HOLIDAYS**

Approximately 13 days per year/Approved annually by Commissioners' Court

**COUNTY & DISTRICT  
RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

Mandatory pre-taxed deduction of 6% w/County matching at 185% upon retirement. Upon enrollment, your TCDRS packet will arrive in 4-6 weeks.

**HEALTH INSURANCE**

Employee coverage the first of the month following 60 days (Dependant coverage available at employee's expense.)

**DENTAL INSURANCE**

Available as a payroll deduction.

**VISION INSURANCE**

Available as a payroll deduction.

**DEFERRED COMP  
(Nationwide)**

Optional Pre-tax retirement up to 25 percent per pay period. Can elect to start or stop at any time.

**CREDIT UNION**

Optional after tax savings.

**LIFE INSURANCE POLICY**

\$25,000 life policy paid by County after 60 days of employment

**CAREFLITE/TEXAS EMS**

We pay membership fees for entire household (effective with health benefits)



**Hood County  
Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

Hood County recognizes the need for time away from work in instances of personal loss. Should a death occur in the immediate family of any full-time employee, he/she may be granted up to three (3) days off with pay. If employees need time in excess of three days, they may request a leave of absence or use accrued vacation or comp time with the approval of their supervisor and the Director of Personnel and Risk Management.

The term "immediate family" is defined as:

- Spouse of employee
- Parent of employee or spouse
- Grandparent of employee or spouse
- Child of employee or spouse
- Grandchild of employee or spouse
- Brother or sister of employee or spouse
- Ward of employee or spouse
- Any other relative of employee or spouse living in the same household with the employee or spouse

Bereavement pay is calculated based on the base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, overtime or shift differentials.

**DEATH OTHER THAN FAMILY**

In the event of the death of a county employee or someone closely associated with Hood County, a department head may approve representation at the funeral. Those who attend at the direction of their elected official or department head are considered representing Hood County, and therefore their hours will be compensated as worked hours; up to a maximum of 4 hours.

In all situations Hood County reserves the right to request a copy of the obituary notice from the local newspaper.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**CERTIFICATION AND SPECIALTY PAY POLICY**

**Subject: Certification and Specialty Pay**

Hood County is committed to the professional development of County employees through continued education and training. In an effort to retain experienced personnel and provide the needed service to the various Courts, additional compensation is paid for achieving certification in the field of Law Enforcement and Translating services to the Courts.

**Certification Pay**

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards in Education (TCLEOSE) awards various levels of certifications to employees who have met training requirements and completed years of service. Law Enforcement employees who attain additional TCLEOSE certifications higher than the Basic Certification may be provided with additional compensation in accordance with the following schedule. Proper documentation is required in order to receive certificate pay.

The following is the authorized pay for employees that receive schooling and/or training that will enhance their ability to perform their respective positions. **The certification pay is contingent upon annual budget and approval of the Commissioners' Court; with a maximum of 1 TCLEOSE & two (2) Specialty Certifications. Certificates must be sent to Personnel prior to pay being authorized, as well as appropriate documentation of annual renewal or required C.E. hours for annual recertification.**

**TCOLE Law Enforcement Certification Compensation Pay**

Intermediate	\$46.15 per Pay Period	\$1,200.00 per year
Advanced	\$60.00 per Pay Period	\$1,560.00 per year
Master	\$92.31 per Pay Period	\$2,400.00 per year

**TCOLE Jail Certification Compensation Pay**

Intermediate	\$46.15 per Pay Period	\$1,200.00 per year
Advanced	\$60.00 per Pay Period	\$1,560.00 per year
Master	\$92.31 per Pay Period	\$2,400.00 per year

**TCOLE Telecommunications Certification Compensation Pay**

Intermediate	\$46.15 per Pay Period	\$1,200.00 per year
Advanced	\$60.00 per Pay Period	\$1,560.00 per year

**Specialty Pay**

FTO/TCO Training Officer	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
K-9 Handler	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
Breathalyzer/Intoxilyzer	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
S.W.A.T. Team	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
Dive Team	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
Instructor Proficiency-FM	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
Arson Investigator-FM	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
Polygraph Examiner	\$115.39 per Pay Period	\$3,000.00 per year

In certain circumstances, the need for a translator (Spanish) in court proceedings and in various offices throughout the County is required. Employees chosen for this specialty area must be approved by both the Elected Official/Department Head and be submitted to the Human Resources Office for certification testing (Please see Interpretation Pay Policy). Upon completion of Language testing, the employee will receive a certification stating that they are proficient in Spanish translation to meet the needs of their respective department. The following is the translator pay:

Translator Pay	\$23.08 per Pay Period	\$600.00 per year
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**Note: The translator pay is not a guaranteed salary and is subject to annual budget approval by Commissioners' Court.**

**Approved in Commissioners' Court 10/11/2016**



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**POLICY FOR CHECK ACCEPTANCE**

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for Hood County to follow regarding acceptance of checks.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

All Hood County departments receiving checks for deposit to the County will instruct the payer to make the check payable to "Hood County". Checks reflecting an individual's name other than the current elected official or to the department that the payment is payable will be returned to the payer. Checks not payable to Hood County will not be deposited with the county's Depository Bank.

In the event a check is made payable to a former elected official the department will return the check to the payer and request a new check to be made properly payable to Hood County.

**Note in all Cases:**

- A. No check may ever be cashed or made for "cash back".
- B. No third-party checks endorsed by payee can be accepted.
- C. Payers must present valid, current, credible identification.
- D. Checks must be deposited upon receipt, not "held".
- E. No check can be accepted with Restrictive Endorsement (i.e., "in total satisfaction of all claims from Payee", etc.)
- F. Hood County will not alter checks.

Any deposits submitted to the Treasurer's Office for receipt that contains checks made payable to anyone other than Hood County will be returned, without receipt, to the department submitting the deposit.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**CODE OF CONDUCT AND  
FILING OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS**

**PURPOSE**

Hood County expects all employees to observe certain standards of behavior while at work, at County sponsored events and while attending Commissioners' Court meetings. These standards are not intended to restrict employees but to ensure consistent application of the policies and procedures for all employees. These standards include, but are not limited to:

- Refraining from any manner or form of discrimination and/or harassment, regardless of whether it is sexual, racial, religious, or related to another's gender, age, sexual orientation or disability.
- An employee may not possess any type of weapons on the County premises; with the exception of peace officers or authorized fire personnel.
- An employee will be courteous to the public and fellow employees. An employee's conduct will always be civil and orderly. The employee will be diplomatic and tactful in the performance of assigned duties, controlling his/her temper and exercising reasonable patience and discretion.
- The employee will refrain from fighting, threatening, intimidating or coercing other employees or members of the public during working hours, at County sponsored functions or while attending Court proceedings.
- Performing duties and operating equipment with care to protect the safety of the employee, co-workers and the public.

Failure to observe the above standards could lead to disciplinary action up to, and including termination.

## **FILING OF COMPLAINTS**

### **PURPOSE**

When any employee of Hood County or any member of the public wishes to file an official complaint on a Hood County Employee, the sequence of events should be as follows:

- The complaint should be in written form stating the exact problem that has occurred
- Once the complaint form is completed, the complaint needs to be notarized. By doing this, the complaint now becomes private until a decision is determined.
- The formal complaint will then be returned to the Personnel Director so that it can be logged and given to the appropriate Elected Official and/or Department Head. If the complaint concerns the Personnel Director, it shall be delivered to the Hood County Judge.
- Once the Elected Official and/or Department Head have reviewed the complaint, they will determine if any disciplinary action is to be taken. Consultation with the Personnel Director concerning disciplinary action is encouraged. All disciplinary actions will be in writing and will be placed in the employee's permanent personnel file.
- The person issuing the complaint will be provided a written document that states the disciplinary action, if any, taken on the complaint.

It should be noted that Elected Officials are not governed by this policy, but by the laws set by the State of Texas.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 3/13/2012***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Compensation for Terminated Employees**

This policy applies to all Hood County employees that receive payroll compensation. It is intended to establish procedure for payment of final payroll to terminated employees. County Government is not subject to the Texas Payday Law. This policy is in compliance with FLSA, DOL, Federal, State and Local laws.

Hood County's payroll is based on a 26 pay period cycle. Checks are issued biweekly on Fridays. In the event that the Friday falls on a county holiday, the county will issue payroll on the first working day preceding the holiday.

Department Supervisors shall immediately notify the Treasurer's Office as well as the Personnel Department of an employees' termination of employment with Hood County. A check will not be generated for any period in which the terminated employee has not submitted a time record as required by Hood County's Timekeeping system policy.

Terminated employees will receive their final payroll check on the payday immediately following the date of the employees' termination. In the event the payroll process has already begun when the notice of termination has been received in the Treasurer's Office, the final paycheck will then be issued on the next scheduled payroll date.

Final payroll checks will be in the form of a direct deposit to the account information on file. All Hood County mandatory deductions will be deducted from final paychecks. In the event the employee has made a contribution to the county's benefit program, he or she will be reimbursed for any portion not due.

Final checks will also include payment for any eligible unused balance of vacation (see vacation policy) or comp time accrued by the employee during his or her employment with Hood County. The terminated employee shall notify his or her immediate supervisor of any discrepancies in their final paycheck.

For W-2 purposes, terminated employees are responsible for reporting any address changes to the Treasurers' Office.

**Responsibility for Implementation**

The Treasurer's Office as the Payroll Department for Hood County employees has the specific responsibility to enforce this policy.

*APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 09/13/2016*



## **Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures**

### **Conflict Management**

#### **PURPOSE**

Hood County recognizes that in the course of employment relationships, there may be disagreements, conflicts and disputes between employees; or between employees and management, or between elected officials, employees, and/or department heads. It is the intent of the county to resolve all such conflicts constructively and fairly as possible. The county further seeks:

- to reduce costs of conflict, both in time and money for the county and county employees
- to provide a positive working environment for county employees
- to improve productivity
- to resolve conflicts in a manner satisfactory to all parties, whenever possible
- to provide positive, long-term working relationships with county employees and management, including elected/appointed officials and department heads.

#### **DEFINITION**

This policy applies to all employees who have completed an orientation period of ninety (90) days of service and have become full-time employees. It provides an effective method for resolving work-related problems, including possible discrimination and harassment concerns. However, it will be considered misuse of this policy if an employee uses his or her rights in bad faith or solely for the purposes of delay or harassment, or repeatedly raises unfounded conflict issues. An employee presenting a grievance in good faith need not fear retaliation for filing a complaint. No adverse action will be taken against an employee for exercising his or her rights under this policy. Excluded from this policy are: (1) complaints concerning performance-related dismissals during the initial ninety (90) day orientation period and Administrative Separations, (2) complaints regarding wages and salaries, as these are not negotiable issues, and (3) complaints of harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability. Implementation of this policy by an employee does not limit the right of Hood County to proceed with any disciplinary action, up to and including termination, which is not in retaliation for the use of this policy.

#### **GENERAL (Informal Complaints)**

The county encourages each employee and their immediate supervisor to make every reasonable effort to resolve a problem informally. If the problem cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, the employee may consult with the Personnel Department (See Appendix "A"). If, after consulting with the Personnel Department, a resolution is not possible, the employee may continue to any level of supervision within their department. Levels of supervision vary depending on whether an employee is employed within a department ultimately governed by the Commissioners' Court or a department governed by an elected/appointed official or department head not under the control of Commissioners' Court. If due to the nature of the problem or complaint, the employee believes it is inappropriate to bring the problem or complaint to the attention of the immediate supervisor or other

levels of departmental supervision, the employee may discuss the problem or complaint with the Personnel Department without first approaching any level of supervision within their department.

### **POLICY (Formal Complaints)**

Most employment-related issues should be resolved through the process described above. However, if the informal procedure fails to resolve the problem(s) to the employee's satisfaction, he or she may file a formal, written complaint with the Personnel Department. It is the county's intent for Personnel to assist in resolving all formal complaints through direct discussions with all parties involved.

**Employees should understand that the decision of the elected or appointed official for the employee's department shall be final in all conflicts.** Only after both the informal and formal procedures at conflict resolution have been followed, will the policy of Hood County be to refer the conflict to a mediation committee, recommended by Human Resources and approved by the Commissioners' Court, for possible resolution.

The Mediation Committee will consist of three (3) persons outside the complainant's line of management made up of one (1) elected/appointed official, one (1) supervisor, and one (1) support staff employee. The Committee will have only the power to hear both sides of the conflict. If the Committee determines that a resolution different than the one under consideration is appropriate; the Committee may revisit the issue with the appropriate elected/appointed official or department head with a recommended solution. The Committee shall encourage and assist the parties in reaching a settlement. However, in no way may The Committee compel or coerce the parties to enter into a settlement. **The Mediation Committee is advisory only. The final decision remains with the elected/appointed official or department head.**

Hood County's intent concerning the following types of conflicts is:

#### **Sexual Harassment**

Most employment-related issues should be resolved through one of the above processes. However, due to the nature of sexual harassment complaints, they should be addressed through the process outlined in Hood County's Sexual Harassment policy.

#### **Terminations**

Complaints concerning terminations will not be processed as outlined above, but will be referred to the final step, Mediation Committee, described above in detail.

#### **Criminal Complaints**

Criminal complaints will not be processed as outlined above, but will be referred to the proper authorities for investigation.

In all phases of any type of conflict, the county encourages a resolution at the earliest possible time frame in the life of the dispute.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

All complaints will be processed subject to strict confidentiality as described by the Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Section 154.053©. Unless all parties agree otherwise, all matters, including the conduct and demeanor of the parties during the settlement process, are confidential and may never be disclosed to anyone unless by court order. Any breach of confidentiality will be cause for disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

**Note: Confidentiality cannot be maintained on information pertaining to threat of bodily harm. This information is subject to the full Reporting Laws of Texas. The county is obligated by law to report this information to the proper authorities for investigation.**

*APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011*

**APPENDIX A**  
**To**  
**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT POLICY**  
**Hood County Commissioners' Court**  
**Dated June 25, 2001**

**EMPLOYEE CONFLICT FORM**

(This form is to be used to report complaints other than those involving discrimination.)

**I. COMPLAINANT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**II. DESCRIPTION OF COMPLAINT**

Please provide a description of each complaint as well as the date and description of any incident, act or omission, supporting the same. (Additional sheets may be attached if necessary.)

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Description</b> :
_____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
_____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
_____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

**APPENDIX A  
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT POLICY (Hood County)  
Dated June 25, 2001**

**(WITNESSES)**

Please list the names, addresses and telephone numbers (if known) of any witnesses supporting the complaint(s) set forth above. (Additional sheets may be attached if necessary.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**III. REQUESTED REMEDIAL ACTION**

Please state the action that you wish to be taken to resolve your complaint.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that my complaint will be reviewed by the Human Resources Department and my elected/appointed official or department head. I agree to follow the Conflict Management procedures as set forth in the Hood County Policies and Procedures Manual. I further certify, by my signature below, that the foregoing information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Complainant's Printed Name

**An employee presenting a grievance in good faith need not fear retaliation for filing a complaint. No adverse action will be taken against an employee for exercising his or her rights under this policy. However, it will be considered misuse of this policy if an employee uses his or her rights in bad faith or solely for the purposes of delay or harassment, or repeatedly raises unfounded conflict issues. Implementation of this policy by an employee does not limit the right of Hood County to proceed with any disciplinary action, up to and including termination, which is not in retaliation for the use of this policy.**



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Policy for Overtime during "Declaration of Disaster"**

In the event of a "Declaration of Disaster" for Hood County, Texas, Ordered by the Hood County Judge and further ratified by the Hood County Commissioners Court; employees are **eligible** for, but not guaranteed additional compensation in lieu of compensatory time accrued and may be paid at an overtime rate of pay for hours worked as deemed necessary by the Hood County Commissioners Court in relation to a disaster. This overtime compensation **does not apply** to exempt status employees of Hood County.

Time and attendance records must be documented through the County's Time-keeping system and must be maintained specifically denoting the disaster hours worked. These hours will be verified by the County Treasurer through the payroll process.

*Approved in Commissioners' Court on 6/11/2013*



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**DONATIONS POLICY**

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the guidelines for the acceptance of donations by all Hood County departments.

**GUIDELINES:**

This policy requires all donations/gifts to the county be brought before the Hood County Commissioners' Court for consideration. The Court bears full responsibility for the acceptance or declination of any donation/gift to the county or any department therein.

A donation may be defined as money, grants, goods, services, property, merchandise, and food. The department involved shall be responsible to inform the court of any and all donations prior to acceptance. (This policy does not include jury check donations.)

Donations valued at less than **\$100.00** can be accepted without Court approval if they are not given in exchange for the performance of County business. **All cash and negotiable instruments shall be deposited in a timely manner with the Treasurer's Office in exchange for a receipt, pending Court approval.**

When the donor specifies use of the donation, the department will advise the Court of how the donation is to be used. The Court may accept or decline the restriction, thus accepting or declining the donation in full. Any department receiving a donation that is designated for a specific purpose must coordinate receipt of funds with the Treasurer and Auditor's offices.

No commitment shall be made to any donor/grantor prior to the acceptance of the donation by the Court.

Real property may be donated to the county. The donation of real property is governed by §280.002 of the Local Government Code.

Vendors who wish to donate goods to the county, a county office, or a county employee must be referred to the Purchasing Department.

**GRATUITIES:**

A gratuity may be defined as a gift given in exchange for a service.

**REFERENCES:**

Further information regarding gifts to a county can be found in Texas Local Government Code Chapter 81 *Commissioners' Court* and Chapter 323 *County Libraries*.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY  
ZERO TOLERANCE**

The purpose of this policy is to identify and remove the adverse effects of alcohol and drugs on job performance, and to protect the health and safety of our employees by providing education and treatment.

Use and misuse of alcohol or drugs can and does impair the ability of an employee to perform his/her duties and may endanger the employee, his/her co-workers, and the public as well as property. The county seeks to prevent the use/abuse/misuse of drugs and alcohol by employees in any way which impairs their ability to perform their duties.

**POLICY**

1. Hood County shall implement a comprehensive alcohol abuse education program. As part of that program, information will be provided to all employees concerning the effects of alcohol and drugs to their health and well-being and the county's Zero Tolerance Position.
2. Alcoholism and other drug addiction are recognized as diseases responsive to proper treatment, and if the employee notifies the department head of treatment, this will be an option as long as the employee cooperates and volunteers prior to testing positive for drugs and alcohol.
3. The manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, sale, purchase or use of a controlled substance on county property is prohibited.
4. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on county property is prohibited. The unauthorized use or unauthorized possession of prescription drugs on county property is prohibited.
5. Employees who violate this policy are subject to immediate termination.
6. The policy applies to all employees of the county regardless of rank or position and includes temporary and part-time employees.

**DEFINITIONS**

**County Premises**

All county property including vehicles, lockers, and parking lots.

**County Property**

All County owned or leased property used by employees such as vehicles, lockers, desks, closets, etc.

**Controlled Substance**

Any substance listed in schedules I-V of section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act 21U.S.C.s812), as amended. Copies

are maintained for employee review by the Personnel Director.

<b>Drugs</b>	A drug is any chemical substance that produces physical, mental, emotional or behavioral change in the user.
<b>Drug Paraphernalia</b>	Equipment, a product, or material that is used or intended for use in concealing an illegal drug or use in injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing into the human body an illegal drug or controlled substance.
<b>Fitness for Duty</b>	To work in a manner suitable for performing their assigned job satisfactorily. To determine fitness for duty a medical evaluation may be required and may include drug and/or alcohol testing.
<b>Illegal Drug</b>	An illegal drug is any drug or derivative thereof which the use, possession, sale, transfer, attempted sale or transfer, manufacture or storage of is illegal or regulated under any federal, state, or local law or regulation. Also any other drug, including (but not limited to) a prescription drug, obtained illegally, used for any reason and inhalants used illegally. Included is marijuana or cannabis in all forms.
<b>Reasonable Suspicion</b>	Supported by evidence strong enough to establish by evidence that a policy violation has occurred.
<b>Testing</b>	<p>Is generally defined as a urine or breath test to determine chemical or drug content. Any employee may be tested for drug or alcohol use when there is a reasonable suspicion that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The use of a drug or alcohol is affecting performance</li><li>2. The employee is engaged in any of the prohibited acts or activities listed in this policy</li><li>3. The employee sustains an on-the-job injury, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the employee's supervisor and the director of Personnel and Risk Management.</li></ol>
<b>Policy Violation</b>	Under the influence of alcohol is defined as having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.04 or more, where alcohol concentrations has the meaning assigned to it in Article 67011-1, revised statutes: or the state of not having the normal use of mental or physical faculties resulting from the voluntary introduction into the body of an alcoholic beverage.

Using, selling, purchasing, transferring any of the following actions constitute a violation of the policy and will subject an employee to immediate termination.

Possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia, or attempting or assisting another to do so, while in the course of employment or engaged in a county sponsored activity on county premises, in county owned leased or rented vehicles, or on county business. Working or reporting to work, conducting county business or being on premises or in a county owned leased or rented vehicle while under the influence of an illegal drug, alcohol or in an impaired condition.

Search procedures such as inspections of employee's personal property including briefcase, lunch boxes, or toolboxes, will be utilized as part of the county security measures. All employees will be required to cooperate as a condition of continued employment with special drug/alcohol searches in personal vehicles on county property, purses, clothing, briefcase, or other employee personal property when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee may be in possession of drugs and alcohol and/or under its influence. Searches on county premises and county property can be conducted at any time. Failure to cooperate will lead to immediate termination of employment.

Employees taking drugs prescribed by an attending physician must advise their department head in writing on the possible effects of such medication regarding their performance and physical/mental capabilities. This written information must be kept confidential and communicated to their department head prior to the employee commencing work. All medical information will be kept confidential and Hood County elected officials, without exception, will discipline any employee who is responsible for a breach of privacy and confidentiality in this regard. All prescription drugs must be kept in their original container.

Any employee involved in a work related accident where alcohol or drugs are believed to be a contributing factor will be tested and if the results prove positive, the employee will be terminated immediately.

#### DEPARTMENT HEADS AND EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Department Heads will receive training regarding the drug and alcohol policy. All employees will receive copies of the County Drug and Alcohol Policy.

Hood County operates under the concept of **Zero Tolerance** in the use/abuse of alcohol and drugs. Self-referral by employees or family members is strongly encouraged. The earlier a problem is addressed, the easier it is to deal with and the higher the success rate. Employees who seek help and refrain from future violation of this policy in using drugs or alcohol while at work will not be disciplined. Doctor/clinic appointments will be treated on the same basis as other personal business or health matters with regard to use of sick or compensation leave. Sick leave or compensation time may be taken as needed, with appropriate notification to your supervisor to allow for the work flow to be managed appropriately.

The sale, use, purchase, transfer or possession of an illegal drug or drug paraphernalia is a violation of both state and federal laws. The county will report information concerning possession, distribution, or use of any illegal drugs to law enforcement officials and will turn over to the custody of law enforcement officials any such substances found during search of an individual or property. Searches will only be conducted on individuals based on reasonable suspicion and only of their vehicles, lockers, desks, and closets. The county will cooperate fully in the prosecution and/or conviction of any employee violating drug and alcohol laws.

The county reserves the right to interpret, change, suspend, cancel or dispute, with or without notice, all or any part of this policy, or procedures or benefits discussed herein.

Although adherence to this policy is considered a condition of continued employment, nothing in this policy alters an employee's status and shall not constitute nor be deemed a contract or promise of employment. Employees remain free to resign their employment at any time for any or no reason,

without notice, and the county retains the right to terminate any employee at any time, for any legal reason or no reason at all, with or without notice.

The provisions of this policy shall apply in addition to, and shall be subordinated to, any requirements imposed by applicable federal, state or local laws, regulations or judicial decisions. Unenforceable provisions of this policy shall be deemed to be deleted.

Any employee who registers an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater and for illegal drugs at any level on any test administered by or for Hood County will be terminated. Refusal to take a test or cooperate in taking a test when directed by their Department Head is grounds for immediate dismissal. An employee's failure or refusal to take a random or scheduled drug and alcohol test may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. An employee who refers him/herself for an alcohol or drug problem (prior to testing positive) and who wishes to seek counseling/rehabilitation or other assistance will not be terminated and will be sent to a substance abuse professional for evaluation at the employee's expense in a paid status (to the extent they have sick leave or choose to use their accrued vacation or comp time.)

An employee will be terminated by the county if he/she refuses to provide adequate breath for alcohol testing without a valid medical explanation after he/she has been directed to be tested in accordance with the requirements of this policy, or who engages in conduct that clearly obstructs any testing procedure.

The Personnel Department will receive the results of all drug tests and maintain the records under lock and key, separate from the employees personnel file. Results of drug and alcohol testing will only be released to those with a need to know, usually only the immediate department head.

Titles of those personnel who will be making the reasonable suspicion determinations will receive 60 minutes of education on the detection of alcohol and drug misuse.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT 9/27/2011***

**DRUG  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This is to acknowledge that I have received and discussed the County of Hood Drug Policy. I acknowledge that this policy is intended to provide information on procedures and policies pertaining to Hood County's Drug Policy. It may be revised and modified by the County at any time.

I understand that I am to observe and will abide by all amended and additional rules and regulations that may be given me in writing and/or notices that appear on the department bulletin boards from time to time.

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This is to inform you that we are placing a memo in your personnel file stating that you have refused to sign the acknowledgment form for the receipt and total agreement to abide by Hood County's newly adopted drug and alcohol policy.

The fact that you have refused to sign the acknowledgment form does not relieve you of the responsibility to read and familiarize yourself with this new policy and abide by it.

Your continued employment with Hood County acknowledges that you intend to abide by all of Hood County's policies.

Hood County is and has been an at will employer, which means that the county may terminate your employment at any time for any legal reason or no reason at all, with or without notice and likewise you are free to terminate your employment at any time for any reason or no reason at all, with or without notice.

Should you wish to sign the acknowledgment form (without any alterations), please contact me and I will remove the aforementioned memo from your personnel file.

Sincerely,

Robert Blessing  
Director of Personnel and Risk Management



HOOD COUNTY

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

CDL EMPLOYEES

CDL Drivers are an extremely valuable resource for Hood County's business. Their health and safety is a serious County concern. Drug or alcohol use may pose a serious threat to driver health and safety. It is, therefore, the policy of the County to prohibit CDL employees from being under the influence of or using illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours.

The Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA") has issued regulations, which require the County to implement a controlled substance testing program. The County will comply with these. All CDL drivers are advised that remaining drug-free and medically qualified to drive are conditions of continued employment with the County.

Specifically, it is the policy of Hood County that the use, sale, purchase, transfer, possession or presence in one's system of any controlled substance (except medically prescribed drugs) or alcohol by any CDL driver while on County premises, engaged in County business, while operating County equipment, or while under the authority of the County is strictly prohibited. Mandatory testing must apply to every person who operates a commercial motor vehicle in interstate or intrastate commerce and is subject to the CDL licensing requirement. Hood County will conduct pre-employment, random, reasonable suspicion and post-accident drug testing in accordance with federal law.

A detailed policy and procedure is available at the Human Resource Office.

Approved in Commissioners' Court on June 14, 2016



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Employee Status Definitions**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) does not define full-time or part-time or temporary/seasonal employment. FLSA considers this a matter to be determined by the individual employer. Whether an employee is considered full time, part time, or temporary/seasonal does not change the application of the FLSA. This policy shall apply to all Hood County employees.

**Full Time Employee Definition:**

A full time employee is defined as an employee who works an average of 40 hours or more per week. Full time employees are eligible for all Hood County Full Time employee benefits. Participation in the county's retirement program, TCDRS, is mandatory.

**Part Time Employee Definition:**

A part time employee is defined as an employee who works up to a maximum of 24 hours per week. Part time employees may be on set schedules. Part time employees are not eligible for the Hood County Full Time Benefit Program with the exception of the Care-flight benefit offered by Hood County. Participation in the county's retirement program, TCDRS, is mandatory for part time employees.

**Temporary/Seasonal Employee:**

A Temporary/Seasonal Employee is defined as an employee who is hired into a position which is expected to last for some specific duration (not to exceed 6 months). Temporary/Seasonal Employees work a schedule not to exceed 40 hours per week and are not eligible for any Hood County employee benefits. Temporary/Seasonal employees are not eligible to participate in the county's retirement program (TCDRS).

**Notes:**

Employee definitions do not guarantee employment with Hood County.

All employment positions are contingent upon available budgeted monies and are subject to the approval of Hood County Commissioners' Court.

Effective January 1, 2007, all employees with the exception of temporary/seasonal employees are eligible and are required to participate in the county's retirement program, Texas County and District Retirement System in accordance with new legislation and TCDRS rules.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/10/2013***



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Hood County Ethics Policy

#### **Purpose:**

Hood County employees will maintain the highest ethical standards in the conduct of county affairs. Intent of this policy is that each employee will conduct the county's business with integrity and comply with all applicable laws in a manner that excludes considerations of personal advantage or gain. It should be noted that elected officials are governed under a separate set of ethical standards that are governed by state law.

#### **General Policy Application:**

##### A. Gifts, Favors, Entertainment and Payments Received by County Employees:

1. County employees shall not seek or accept for themselves or members of their families, any gifts, favors, entertainment, or payments without a legitimate business purpose nor shall they seek or accept personal loans other than at conventional market rates from lending institutions from any persons or business organizations that do or seek to do business with Hood County. In the application of this policy:

a. Employees may accept for themselves and members of their families common courtesies usually associated with customary business practices. These include but are not limited to:

\*Lunch and/or dinner with vendors sometimes including spouses as long as the vendor extends the invitation.

\*Gifts of small value from vendors such as calendars, pens, pads, etc.

\*Tickets to events (such as sports, arts, etc.) are acceptable if offered by the vendor and the vendor accompanies the employee to the event. These are not to be solicited by the county employee and must be approved by the Director of Personnel.

\*The receipt of alcoholic beverages is discouraged.

\*Gifts of perishable items usually given during the holidays such as hams, cookies, nuts, etc., are acceptable.

b. Any gift, entertainment or meal is to be limited at under \$50.00 in value. It is never permissible to accept a gift in cash or cash equivalent such as stocks or other forms of marketable securities of any amount.

**B. Conflicts of Interest:**

County employees should avoid any situation which involves or may involve a conflict between their personal interest and the interest of Hood County. As in all other facets of their duties, employees dealing with customers, suppliers, contractors or any person doing or seeking to do business with the county, are to act in the best interest of the County. Each employee shall make prompt and full disclosure in writing to his or her Department Head of any potential situation, which may involve a conflict of interest. Such conflicts include:

1. Ownership by an employees or a member of their family of a significant interest in any outside enterprise, which does or seeks to do business with the County.
2. Serving as a director, officer, partner, consultant, or in a management or technical capacity with an outside enterprise which does business or is seeking to do business with Hood County. The Commissioners' Court must approve exceptions to this policy.

**C. Confidential Information:**

The revelation or use of any confidential information, data, plans, or any other information, which might be contrary to the interest of Hood County without prior authorization, is prohibited.

**D. Compliance:**

Any violation of this policy will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any county employee having knowledge of any violation of the policy shall promptly report such violation to their Department Head. Each Department Head is responsible for compliance in their area. When questions arise concerning any aspect of this policy, contact the Director of Personnel and Risk Management.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioner's Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Exempt Status Employees**

**Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Hood County to be in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and to ensure that employees in exempt and non-exempt positions are classified and paid appropriately. The Human Resources Department is responsible for determining the classification of positions as exempt or non-exempt based on FLSA criteria. The Human Resources and Treasurer's offices are responsible for ensuring that all employees are paid in accordance with federal laws.

**Pay for Employees in Exempt Positions**

Exempt employees routinely receive full salary for any week in which they perform any work, without regard to the number of days or hours worked.

**Permissible Deductions from Pay for Employees in Exempt Positions**

- Absences of one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability when the employee has exhausted all vacation time or the employee has requested leave without pay.
- Absences of one or more full days due to sickness or disability when the employee has exhausted all paid leave benefits or is still in the probationary period as a new hire.
- Unpaid disciplinary suspension of one or more full days in accordance with Hood County policies.
- Deductions for unpaid leave taken in accordance with a legitimate absence under the Family Medical Leave Act.
- Deductions for the first and last week of employment, when only part of the week is worked by the employee.

**Responsibilities**

Exempt employee:

1. Responsible for submitting the proper documentation to the supervisor to document any paid or unpaid leave request. Requests must be submitted within the pay period in which the leave occurred.
2. Responsible for submitting a complaint in writing to the Human Resources Department if he or she believes pay is incorrect. The complaint should include the dates and circumstances of the pay deduction.

Treasurer's Office:

1. Responsible for administering a comprehensive FLSA Compliance Program.
2. Responsible for ensuring that all employees are paid in accordance with federal laws.
3. Receives requests for payroll adjustments, processes adjustments and communicates with employees and departments regarding FLSA compliance.

Human Resources Office

1. Responsible for administering a comprehensive FLSA Compliance Program.
2. Responsible for ensuring that all employees are paid in accordance with federal laws.
3. Responsible for reviewing positions to determine whether positions are exempt or non-exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA.
4. Responsible for reviewing all employee pay complaints.



## **Fair Labor Standards Act**

### **Safe Harbor**

The policy and practice of Hood County is to accurately compensate employees and to do so in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws.

#### **Non-Exempt Employees**

Employees eligible for overtime/compensatory time must maintain a record of the total hours worked each day. These hours must be accurately recorded by the employee using the biometric time clock provided by the County. Each employee must verify that the time recorded is complete and accurate (and that there is no unrecorded time or "off-the-clock" work). The time recorded must accurately reflect all regular and overtime hours worked, any absences, early or late arrivals, early and late departures and meal breaks. At the end of each week, the employee should submit their actual work time on their timekeeping system for verification and approval. Upon receipt of each paycheck, the employee should verify immediately that he/she was paid correctly for all regular and overtime hours worked.

#### **Exempt Employees**

Employees who are exempt from overtime will receive a salary which is intended to compensate them for all hours worked. This salary will be established at the time when the employee becomes classified as an exempt employee. While the salary may be subject to review and modification from time to time, such as during salary review times, the salary will be a predetermined amount that will not be subject to deductions for variations in the quantity or quality of work performed. However, under federal law, an employee's salary may be subject to certain deductions.

#### **Permitted Deductions**

- Full day absences for personal reasons, such as vacation or personal days
- Full day absences for sickness or disability which may be charged to accrued sick time
- Full day disciplinary suspensions for major violations or significant infractions of important written workplace conduct rules
- Full or partial Family and Medical Leave absences
- To offset amounts received as payment for jury and witness fees or military pay
- The first and last week of employment in the event an employee works less than a full week
- Any full workweek in which an employee does not perform any work
- The employee's portion of health, dental, life insurance or any other approved employee benefits.
- Social security, state, federal and local taxes.
- Pension plan or contributions to a voluntary retirement plan.

## **All Employees: Review your paycheck**

Hood County takes appropriate measures to ensure our employees are paid correctly. Occasionally, however, inadvertent mistakes can happen. When a mistake does happen and is called to our attention, we will promptly make a correction. Please review your paycheck and paycheck stub on the Employee Self Serve System to make sure all pay and deductions are correct. If you believe a mistake has occurred or if you have any questions, please use the reporting procedure outlined below.

## **To Report Violations of the Policy, Communicate Concerns or Obtain More Information**

It is a violation of Hood County policy for any employee to falsify a time record, or to alter another employee's time record. It is also a violation of policy for any employee or manager to instruct another employee to incorrectly or falsely report hours worked or alter another employee's time record to under or over-report hours worked. If any supervisor or employee instructs another employee to (1) incorrectly or falsely under or over-report hours worked, (2) alter another employee's time records to inaccurately or falsely report that employee's hours worked, or (3) conceal any falsification of time records or to violate this policy, do not do so. Instead report it to the Human Resources Office immediately.

**Non-Exempt Employees** should not work any hours outside of their scheduled work day unless the supervisor has authorized the unscheduled work in advance. Non-exempt employees should not start work early, finish work late, work during a meal break or perform any other overtime work unless authorized to do so in advance and that time is accurately reported in the timekeeping system. Employees are prohibited from doing any "off-the-clock". "Off-the-clock" work means work performed but not reported. Any employee who fails to report or inaccurately reports any hours worked will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

**Exempt Employees** who believe that an improper deduction has been made to their salary should immediately report this information to their direct supervisor and notify the Human Resources Office. Reports of improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an incorrect deduction has occurred, the employee will be promptly reimbursed for any improper deduction. If a violation of policy has occurred, the matter will be fully investigated corrective action will be taken, up to and including discharge.

**If you have questions,** concerns or would like to obtain more information on this policy, inquiries can be mailed to the Human Resources Office at the address shown below:

Human Resources Office  
1410 West Pearl  
Granbury Texas 76048

**In addition,** Hood County will not tolerate any form of retaliation against individuals who report alleged violations of this policy or who cooperate in Hood County's investigation of such reports. Retaliation against employees is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.



## **FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE GUIDELINES**

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible for benefits under this policy, an employee must:

- 1) have worked for Hood County at least 12 months (it is not required that these 12 months be consecutive; however a continuous break in service of 7 years or more will not be counted toward the 12 months); and
- 2) have worked at least 1250 hours during the previous 12 months.

### **Duration**

Eligible employees will receive up to 12 weeks leave per 12 month period. The County will measure the 12 month period as a rolling 12 month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy. All leave taken under this policy during the prior 12 month period shall be subtracted from the employee's 12 week leave eligibility and the balance is the leave the employee is entitled to take at that time.

### **Qualifying Reasons for Family & Medical Leave**

Family or medical leave under this policy may be taken for the following situations:

- the birth of a child and in order to care for that child
- the placement of a child in the employee's home for adoption or foster care
- to care for a spouse, child (under the age of 18 or if over 18 incapable of self-care due to a disability), or parent with a serious health condition
- the serious health condition of the employee that make the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job
- a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that an employee's spouse, child or parent is a covered military member of the Armed Forces (Regular, Reserve or National Guard), deployed to a foreign country or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in a foreign country
- to care for a covered service member (Regular, Reserve or National Guard) with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, child, parent or next of kin (nearest blood relative) of the service member
- to care for a covered veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, for a serious injury or illness and who was a member of the Armed Forces (Regular, Reserve or National Guard) at any time during the period of 5 years preceding the date on which the veteran began that medical treatment, recuperation or therapy

Serious health condition of the employee shall be defined as a health condition that requires overnight inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential care medical facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Serious health condition of a spouse, child, or parent shall be defined as a condition which requires overnight inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential care medical facility, or a condition which requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider.

A serious health condition involving continuing treatment by a health care provider includes any one or more of the following:

- a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also

involves: a) treatment two or more times within 30 days of incapacity, or b) treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion which results in a regimen of continuing treatment by a health care provider. This treatment must occur within the first seven days of incapacity

- any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or pre-natal care
- any period of incapacity or treatment due to a chronic serious health condition that requires periodic visits to a health care provider and continues over an extended period of time
- any period of incapacity which is permanent or long term due to a condition that treatment is not effective
- any period of incapacity or absence to receive multiple treatments by a health care provider

Eligible employees may take FMLA leave when an employee's covered military member (spouse, child of any age or parent) is on active duty or called to active duty status in a foreign country. The following qualify as exigency leave:

- leave may be taken to address any issue that arises because the covered military member was given seven or less days notice for active duty deployment in support of a contingency operation. Eligible employee may take up to 7 days beginning on the date the covered military member receives the call or order to active duty
- leave may be taken to attend any official ceremony, program or event sponsored by the military that is related to the active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country of a covered military member
- leave may be taken to attend family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military, military service organizations or the American Red Cross that are related to active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country of a covered military member
- leave may be taken to arrange for alternative childcare, provide childcare on an urgent basis (not as routine), to attend school or daycare meetings, to enroll or transfer covered children under age 19 when it is necessitated by the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member
- leave may be taken to make or update financial or legal arrangements to address the covered members absence while on active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country
- leave may be taken to act as the covered military member's representative before a governmental agency for obtaining, arranging or appealing military service benefits while the covered military member is on active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country and for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered member's active duty status
- leave may be taken to attend counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider for oneself, for the covered military member or covered child provided the need for counseling arises from the active duty status or call to active duty status in a foreign country of a covered military member
- leave may be taken to spend time with a covered military member who is on a short-term, temporary, rest and recuperation leave during leave during the period of deployment. Eligible employees may take up to fifteen (15) days of leave for each instance of rest and recuperation
- leave may be taken to attend post-deployment activities for the covered military member for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered member's active duty status
- leave may be taken to address issues that arise from the death of a covered military member while on active duty status in a foreign country
- certain activities related to the care of the military member's parent who is incapable of self-care where those activities arise from the military member's covered active duty
- leave may be taken to address any other additional events that may arise out of the covered military member's active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country

provided the County agrees the leave shall qualify as an exigency and agree to both the timing and the duration of such leave

If a husband and wife both work for the County the maximum combined leave they shall be allowed to take in any 12 month period for the birth or placement of a child, or care for a parent with a serious health condition is 12 weeks. The combined limit is 26 weeks in a single 12-month period if leave is to care for a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness.

An eligible employee is entitled up to 26 workweeks of leave to care for a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness during a single 12-month period:

- the single 12 month period begins on the first day the eligible employees takes FMLA to care for covered service member or covered veteran and ends 12 months after that date
- if an eligible employee does not take all of their 26 workweeks during this 12 month period, the remaining part of the 26 workweeks of leave entitlement to care for the covered service member or covered veteran is forfeited
- this leave entitlement is applied on a per-injury basis such that an eligible employee may be entitled to take more than one period of 26 workweeks of leave if the leave is to care for different covered service members or covered veterans or to care for the same covered service member or covered veteran with a subsequent serious illness or injury, except that no more than 26 workweeks may be taken within any single 12 month period.
- If an employee has accrued leave, the employee shall be required to use the following paid leave as detailed below: compensatory time, vacation, holiday and sick. The remainder of the leave shall be unpaid.

An employee taking leave because of their own serious health condition, or the serious health condition of an eligible family member shall be required to first use all earned compensatory time, then sick leave, vacation, and any other paid leave, with the remainder of the 12 week leave period being unpaid leave.

An employee taking leave for the birth of a child shall be required to use paid sick leave first, then earned compensatory time, vacation and holiday leave for the recovery period after the birth of the child and prior to being on unpaid leave.

After the recovery period from giving birth to a child, the employee shall be required to first use all earned compensatory time, then vacation and other available paid leave, except for sick leave with the remainder of the 12 week leave period being unpaid leave.

An employee who is taking leave for the placement of a child in the employee's home for adoption or foster care shall be required to use first earned compensatory time, then vacation, then vacation and other available paid leave, except for sick leave, with the remainder of the 12 week leave period being unpaid leave.

An employee taking leave for a qualifying exigency for a covered military member shall be required to use first earned compensatory time, then vacation and other available paid leave, except for sick leave, with the remainder of the 12 week leave period being unpaid leave.

An employee taking leave for the care of a covered service member or covered veteran shall be required to first use all earned compensatory time, then sick leave, vacation, and any other paid leave, with the remainder of the 26 week leave period being unpaid leave.

The maximum amount of paid and unpaid leave that may be used under this policy in any 12 month period is 12 weeks, except for qualifying leave to care for a covered military member with a serious injury or illness with the maximum leave being 26 weeks in a single 12 month period.

While on leave under this policy, the County shall continue to pay the employee's medical plan premium at the same rate as if the employee had been actively at work. The employee shall be required to pay for dependent coverage, and for any other coverage for which the employee

would normally pay, or the coverage will be discontinued. Payment for coverage shall be made through regular payroll deduction while the employee is on leave paid leave. While on unpaid leave, the employee shall be required to pay for premiums due to the County no later than 30 days after the due date which the County sets or the coverage shall be discontinued.

At the end of the 12 weeks leave all eligible employees will be offered COBRA if they are unable to return to work, except for the care of an injured covered military member where the eligible employee will be offered COBRA at the end of 26 weeks in a single 12 month period.

Intermittent leave under this policy shall be allowed only where it is necessary for the care and treatment of the serious health condition of the employee, the employee's eligible family member or the care of a covered military member or covered veteran.

A reduced schedule under this policy shall be allowed only where it is necessary for the care and treatment of the serious health condition of the employee, the employee's eligible family member, or the care of a covered military member or covered veteran.

All work time missed as the result of intermittent leave or a reduced work schedule under this policy shall be deducted from the employee's 12 week leave eligibility. If the time missed is for the care of a covered military member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness the time will be deducted from the employee's 26 week leave eligibility in a single 12 month period.

The County shall have the right to ask for certification of the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's eligible dependent when the employee requests or is using leave under this policy.

The employee must respond to the request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. If an employee does not respond, leave may be denied.

Certification of the serious health condition of the employee shall include:

- the date the condition began
- its expected duration
- the diagnosis of the condition
- a brief statement of the treatment
- a statement that the employee is unable to perform work of any kind or a statement that the employee is unable to perform the essential functions of the employee's job

Certification of the serious health condition of an eligible family member shall include:

- the date the condition began
- its expected duration
- the diagnosis of the condition
- a brief statement of treatment
- a statement that the patient requires assistance and that the employee's presence would be beneficial or desirable

Certification for leave taken because of a qualifying exigency shall include:

- a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military which indicates that the covered military member is on active duty or called to active duty status in a foreign country
- the dates of the covered military members active duty service
- a statement or description, signed by the employee, of appropriate facts regarding the qualifying exigency, sufficient to support the need for leave
- the approximate date on which the qualifying exigency will start and end
- if the request is for an intermittent leave or reduced schedule basis, an estimate of the frequency and duration of the qualifying exigency
- if the qualifying exigency involves meeting with a third party, appropriate contact information such as: name, title, organization, address, telephone number, fax number

and e-mail address and a brief description of the purpose of the meeting  
Certification for leave taken for a serious injury or illness of a covered military member or covered veteran shall include:

- if the injury or illness was incurred in the line of duty while on active duty
- the approximate date on which the illness or injury occurred and the probably duration
- a description of the medical facts regarding the covered military members or covered veterans health condition, sufficient to support the need for care
- if the covered military member is a current member of the Regular Armed Forces, the National Guard or Reserves and the covered military member's branch, rank and unit currently assigned to
- the relationship of the employee and the covered military service member or covered veteran
- in lieu of certification, an ITO(invitational travel orders) or an ITA(invitational travel authorizations) issued is sufficient certification for a eligible employee to be allowed to take FMLA to care for a covered military member. The employee may be required to provide confirmation of the family or next of kin relationship to the seriously injured or ill covered military member or covered veteran.

### **Intermittent or Reduced Schedule**

If the employee plans to take intermittent leave or work a reduced schedule, the certification shall also include dates and the duration of treatment and a statement of medical necessity for taking intermittent leave or working a reduced schedule. Certification for intermittent or reduced schedule leave may be requested every 6 months in connection with an eligible absence.

The County shall have the right to ask for a second opinion from a physician of the County's choice, at the expense of the County, if the County has reason to doubt the certification, except FMLA to care for a seriously injured or ill covered service member supported by an ITO or ITA.

If there is a conflict between the first and second certifications, the County shall have the right to require a third certification, at the expense of the County, from an health care practitioner agreed upon by both the employee and the County, and this third opinion shall be considered final.

Except where leave is unforeseeable, an employee shall be required to submit, in writing, a request for leave under this policy to his or her immediate supervisor.

### **Request for Leave**

Where practicable, an employee should give his or her immediate supervisor at least 30 days notice before beginning leave under this policy. Where it is not reasonably practicable to give 30 day notice before beginning leave, the employee shall be required to give as much notice as is reasonably practicable. If an employee fails to provide 30 days notice for foreseeable leave, the leave request may be denied until at least 30 days from the date the County receives notice. It is the supervisors responsibility to notify the Human Resource Office when an employee misses 3 days of work, regardless of whether or not they are consecutive, for a potentially FMLA qualifying reason.

The County may send out to an employee who has been out for 3 or more days a Medical Certification to determine the employees FMLA eligibility. The employee should have their physician complete and return the certification within 15 days of receipt to be eligible for FMLA. Failure to return the medical certification may result in denial of FMLA. Employees will be required to provide a Fitness-for-Duty certification prior to returning to work.

### **Returning from Leave**

Employees returning from leave under this policy, and who have not exceeded the 12 week maximum allowed under this policy, shall be returned to the same job or a job equivalent to that the employee held prior to going on leave. Employees who have not exceeded the 26 week maximum, in a single 12 month period, allowed to care for a seriously ill or injured covered

military member, shall be returned to the same job or a job equivalent to the job they held prior to going on leave.

Where an employee is placed in another position, it will be one which has equivalent status, pay, benefits, and other employment terms and one which entails substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility, and authority.

The County shall have no obligation to reinstate an employee who takes leave under this policy and who is unable to return to work after using the maximum weeks of leave allowed under this policy, or who elects not to return to work after using the maximum leave; this includes employees who may still have sick leave or vacation leave still available.

Except in situations where the employee is unable to return to work because of the serious medical condition of the employee or an eligible family member, or other situations beyond the control of the employee, an employee who does not return to work after using the maximum leave allowed under this policy shall be required to reimburse the County for all medical premiums paid by the County while the employee was on leave without pay.

While on leave without pay under this policy, an employee shall not earn vacation, sick leave, be eligible for holidays, or earn other benefits afforded to employees actively at work, except for those stated in this policy.

Employees who are out on approved FMLA may not take trips outside of the county unless the travel is related to the employee's own serious health condition, the serious health condition of the child, spouse or parent of the employee or to attend qualifying military events. Employees may ask for permission from their immediate supervisor to take other trips outside of the county and supervisors may grant employee requests at their discretion.

Any area or issue regarding family and medical leave which is not addressed in this policy shall be subject to the basic requirements of the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the regulations issued to implement it.

Approved in Commissioners' Court on 2/9/2016



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Fraud Policy

It is the intent of Hood County to promote consistent behavior among County Officials, department heads and employees by providing guidelines and assigning responsibility for the implementation of controls.

This policy applies to any irregularity or suspected irregularity involving employees, vendors or any other parties doing business with the County. Any irregularity that is suspected or detected must be reported immediately to the Auditor's office.

Examples of Fiscal irregularities include, but are not limited to:

- Any dishonest or fraudulent act.
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other assets.
- Impropriety in the handling or reporting of money or financial transactions.
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of County activities.
- Disclosing confidential and proprietary information to outside parties.
- Disclosing to other persons securities activities engaged in or contemplated by the County.
- Destruction, removal, or inappropriate use of records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment.

Characteristics and Circumstances:

Certain characteristics or circumstances may increase the susceptibility of assets to misappropriate such as:

- Large amounts of cash on hand or cash volume being processed.
- Items that are small in size, of high value, or in high demand and are marketable.
- Inadequate segregation of duties.
- Inadequate record keeping (poor accounting records).
- Inadequate physical safeguards over cash, inventory, investments or fixed assets.
- Lack of complete and timely reconciliation of assets.
- Inadequate access controls over automated records.

The Auditor's office has the primary responsibility for the investigation of all suspected fraudulent acts as defined in the policy. If the investigation substantiates that fraudulent activities have occurred, the Auditor's office will issue reports to the Commissioners' Court.

The Auditor's office will also contact the District Attorney for a decision to prosecute or other disposition.

The Auditor's office will treat all information received confidentially. Any employees who suspects dishonest or fraudulent activity will notify the Auditor's office directly and immediately, and **should not** attempt to personally conduct investigations or interviews or notify their department head related to any possible fraudulent act.

No information concerning the status of an investigation will be given out. Under no circumstances should any reference be made to "the allegation", "the fraud", "the misappropriation" or any other specific reference.

The following code of conduct is reflective of the County's Fraud Policy.

- A. The County and its employees must, at all times, comply with all applicable laws and regulations. The County will not condone the activities of employees who achieve results through violation of the laws or unethical business dealings. The County does not permit any activity that fails to stand the closest possible public scrutiny.
- B. All business conduct should be above the minimum standards required by law. Accordingly, employees must ensure that their actions cannot be interpreted as being, in any way, in contravention of the laws and regulations governing the County's operations.
- C. Employees who have access to County funds in any form must follow the prescribed accounting procedures for recording, handling, and protecting money. The County imposes strict standards to prevent fraud and dishonesty.
- D. County funds and all other assets of the County are for County purposes only and not personal benefit. This includes the personal use of County assets, such as computers.
- E. Accurate and reliable records of many kinds are necessary to meet the County's legal and financial obligations and to manage the affairs of the County. The County's books and records must reflect in an accurate and timely manner all business transactions. The employee's responsibility for accounting and recordkeeping must fully disclose and record all assets, liabilities, or both, and must exercise diligence in enforcing these requirements.
- F. Employees must not make or engage in any false record or communication of any kind, whether internal or external, including but not limited to:
  - 1. False expense, attendance, production, financial, or similar reports and statements.
  - 2. False advertising or other misleading representation.
- G. When communicating publicly on matters that involve County business, employees must not presume to speak for the County on any topic, unless they are certain that the views they express are those of the Commissioners Court, and it is the Court's desire that such views be publicly disseminated.

If any investigation results in a recommendation to terminate an individual, the recommendation will be reviewed for approval by the Director of Personnel and Risk Management and the Commissioners Court and if necessary, by outside counsel, before any such action is taken. The Auditor's office does not have the authority to terminate any employee. The decision to terminate an employee is made by the Commissioners' Court.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Guidelines on Terminations

When termination is due to a shortcoming in the employee's performance, it is essential that you have documented performance appraisals to support your decision. To help ensure that your termination decision is for good cause, the language in your written documentation should spell out the following factors:

- ✓ Failure to meet performance standards;
- ✓ Failure to show up for work; or
- ✓ Gross misconduct, either on or off the job, which undermines the performance of other employees and/or the county.

If the employee's record includes commendations or previous favorable appraisals, prepare a detailed description of the reasons the performance is no longer considered satisfactory.

When the discharge is for disciplinary reasons, it is equally important that all events and actions be fully documented in the progressive disciplinary process. This includes the incidents leading to disciplinary action, with the dates and other circumstances; the disciplinary steps taken; the policies violated; and the consequences of the employee's actions. The record should also note any previous violations of a similar nature and any corrective actions taken as a result.

Don't terminate an employee for rules violations until you've checked all your termination documentation for loopholes.

Ask:

- ✓ Is the policy or rule that was violated reasonably related to the job?
- ✓ Has a thorough and fair investigation of the complaint turned up proof of the violation?
- ✓ Does the termination take into account the employee's previous work and discipline record?
- ✓ Is the proposed termination consistent with past practice?
- ✓ Does your documentation provide a factual basis that justifies the termination?

### Documentation ABCs

Strong documentation systems must be built on three basic principles.

1. **Accuracy**- which goes hand in hand with immediacy. Memory is a shaky defense, so be sure to take notes right after an incident occurs. That makes it much harder for an employee to cast doubt on your motives if the written explanation comes right after the action, with no intervening events. You get an added plus in case you need a record of what happened down the line after someone leaves the county.

2. **Believability**- when an outside observer (EEO investigator, judge or jury) is called to assess your side of a story, detailed observations add authenticity. Hang your hat on facts, not impressions, to reflect objectivity.
3. **Consensus**- if both sides agree on what happened; it's much tougher for either side to later change claims. Try to get employees involved in the documentation process. Have them summarize their feelings about what happened and compare it to yours. If you can't reach an agreement, try to get detailed statements from any witnesses.

### **Effective Date of Termination**

The effective date of any employee's termination will be the last day that employee actually worked, unless the employee was placed on Administrative Leave prior to termination. This applies to both voluntary and involuntary terminations.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/10/2013***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Harassment Policy/Zero Tolerance**

**PURPOSE**

Hood County is committed to a workplace free of harassment. This policy affects all County Personnel including full-time, part-time, reserves, interns, and volunteers. Harassment includes unlawful, unwelcome words, profiling and/or targeting, acts or displays based on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, genetic information, pregnancy, disability, family or military leave status or veteran's status. Such conduct becomes harassment when (1) the submission to the conduct is made a condition of employment; (2) the submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision; or (3) the conduct creates an offensive, intimidating or hostile environment or interferes with work performance.

Harassment is strictly prohibited by Hood County whether committed by an elected official, appointed official, department head, co-worker or non-employee with whom the County does business. Employees engaging in harassment shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees who feel they have been harassed should immediately report the situation to the elected or appointed official who is responsible for the department in which they work. If, for any reason, the employee feels that reporting the harassment to the department head may not be the best course of action, the report should be made to the Human Resource Office.

Every reported complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The official or department head to which a claim has been reported shall be responsible for seeing that prompt action is taken to investigate the claim.

Once the investigation is complete, the employee making the claim shall be notified of the result of the investigation and any actions which are to be taken.

Retaliation against an employee who reports harassment or who cooperates in the investigation is prohibited by law as well as this policy. Employees who feel they have been subjected to illegal retaliation should immediately report the situation to the elected or appointed official who is responsible for the department in which they work. If, for any reason, the employee feels that reporting the retaliation to the department head may not be the best course of action, the report should be made to the Human Resource Office.

Remedial action will be taken in accordance with the circumstance when the county determines unlawful harassment or retaliation has occurred, up to and including termination.

***Approved in Commissioners' Court July 26, 2016***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Inclement Weather and Emergency Procedures**

**I. Policy Statement**

To establish a procedure to evaluate and coordinate decisions related to the closure of Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related County Governmental Operations due to Inclement Weather Conditions or Extraordinary Emergency Situations.

**II. Procedural Content**

- A. Evaluation
- B. Determination
- C. Executive Order
- D. Notification(s) of Delays or Closures
- E. Absence or Incapacitation of the County Judge
- F. Absence of Incapacitation of the Director of Personnel and Risk Management

**III. Definitions**

Executive Order- Order issued by the County Judge, issued in accordance with the intent and procedures established by the County Commissioners Court and specified herein.

Inclement Weather and Natural Disasters- For the purposes of this policy, Inclement Weather shall be considered any weather that by its very nature directly causes or may cause travel to and from County Offices unusually hazardous in nature. Inclement Weather may be the result of, but is not limited to icing, snow, flooding, stormy weather, fog, fire, or other natural disasters.

Non-Natural Emergency- On rare occasions other incidents of a non-natural nature may arise requiring operational evaluation of Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related County Services. Examples of Non-Natural Emergencies or Disasters can be those that are Nuclear related, Arson, Terrorist's Threat's or Assaults, Weapons-of-Mass Destruction Alerts or Assaults, or any Non-Natural event which causes the travel to or the operations of Non-Public Safety County Offices, impractical or Hazardous.

Senior Member of the County Commissioners Court- The Senior Member of the County Commissioners Court shall be defined as the member who has the greatest uninterrupted tenure on the court.

**IV. Procedures**

- A. Evaluation- During any circumstance(s) related to the conditions of travel in severe inclement weather, or during a situation involving an on-going emergency situation, the County Judge is hereby commissioned to evaluate the County's Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related Governmental Operations. In such circumstances and

it time permits, the County Judge shall, prior to making a delay or closure decision, perform the following procedures.

1. Inclement Weather or Natural Disasters- If it appears that due to inclement weather or natural disaster, travel to and from county offices or the operations of non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related offices would pose an unnecessary risk, the County Judge shall:
    - a. If at all possible, contact the Sheriff's Office Communications Center and speak directly with the Senior Communications Officer on duty and obtain any and all information possible regarding the weather conditions and predictions issued by the National Weather Service.
    - b. If at all possible, speak directly with the Supervising Deputy Sheriff on duty at the time, and obtain from he/she an accurate description of the conditions of the roadways within the County, as well as the Supervising Deputy's professional opinion as to the safety of operating a motor vehicle on the roadways under the current conditions.
  2. Non-Natural Emergency- The decision to close all Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related County Governmental Operations due to a Non-Natural Emergency or Disaster as defined in **Section III** of this policy, shall be made exclusively by the County Judge or his/her designee under the authority granted him/her as the County's Emergency Management Coordinator, as prescribed by state statute and any pertinent inter-local agreements.
- B. Determination- Based upon the information obtained above, the County Judge shall then utilize this and any other pertinent information and counsel available at the time the decision is required, and make a collective informed decision as to whether or not the hazards of travel or direct or potential danger placed upon the incoming employees would unreasonable for Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related County Operations; and whether or not the volume of business that is predictable for the day in question warrants such travel or operational risks under the current conditions at the time of the decision.
- C. Executive Order- If based on the information obtained through the procedures specified above, the County Judge determines that the hazards are too great to require travel to and from or occupation of Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related county offices, the County Judge shall then issue an **executive order** delaying the opening times, or the complete cancellation of the daily operations of all Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related county offices. This order shall be issued no later than **6:00 AM** each day, and shall be repeated on a day-by day basis as needed until the inclement weather or non-natural emergency has diminished to a non-threatening state. Employees will be notified via CODE RED once the County Judge has issued his executive order.
- D. Notification(s) of Delays of Closures- Once the County Judge has issued an executive order delaying or closing all Non-Public Safety or Road Maintenance related county governmental offices, the Judge shall notify the Director of the Office of Personnel

and Risk Management who shall in turn begin the notifications process of the following media contacts:

- A. CODE RED
- B. WBAP Radio News 0820 AM
- C. WFAA (ABC) Television Channel 08
- D. KXAS (NBC) Television Channel 05
- E. KDFW (FOX) Television Channel 04
- F. KPIR 1420 AM

The contact information and passwords used to verify and authenticate the delay or closure orders to the above media contacts shall be kept confidential by the Director of the Office of Personnel and Risk Management, as to prevent the reporting of fraudulent or inaccurate information on the delay or closure decisions made by the County Judge.

- E. Absence or Incapacitation of the County Judge- In the event that the County Judge is out of town, ill, incapacitated, or otherwise unavailable, the duties prescribed above to the County Judge shall then pass to the senior member of the County Commissioners Court.
- F. Absence or Incapacitation of the Director of the Office of Personnel and Risk Management. In the event that the Director of Personnel and Risk Management is out of town, ill, incapacitated, or otherwise unavailable, the duties prescribed above to the Director shall then pass to the Office Manager of said office. Further, it shall be the responsibility of the Director to ensure that the County Judge and the senior commissioner of the County Commissioners Court have the contact information necessary in the event an executive order is issued.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures  
Information Systems Policy**

**Copyrighted Materials**

Elected officials and employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.)

Unless otherwise provided in the purchase agreement, a purchased computer program shall not be used as a "master" to make copies. A computer program may be legally copied only if:

- 1) Making a copy is an essential step in using the program (such as automatic copying into memory when a program is loaded) or
- 2) The new copy is a backup; Backup cannot be used simultaneously with the original and must be erased if the original is resold.

Employees shall not use the same program on more than one computer at a time unless the purchase agreement or written permission from the vendor allows the County to network the program or allows other specified multiple use of the single copy. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

The Information Technology Department must approve software before it can be ordered and all software must be loaded by an employee of the Technology Department or with the express written approval of the Technology Department.

**Computer Use and Data Management**

The County's electronic communications system, including its network access to the Internet is to be used for administrative and training purposes only. Limited personal use of the system is permitted if the use:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the County
- Does not unduly burden the County's computer or network resources
- Has no adverse effect on job performance

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications systems are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees who are authorized to use the systems are required to abide by the provisions of the County's communications systems policy and administrative procedures. It is a privilege for employees to use the County computer resources. Hood County must have on file a signed "Acknowledgement of

understanding" of the "Hood County Computer Network and Internet Policy" from each employee before he/she can use the County's computers. The "Employee Handbook Receipt" in the front of this book serves as the "Acknowledgement of Understanding". The policy, the procedures and the "Acknowledgement of Understanding" sheet are also all available online. Your immediate supervisor will provide you a copy of all related items. Failure to abide by these provisions can result in suspension or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Director of Technology at 817-579-3205.

### **Personal Use of Electronic Media**

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), Web logs, (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing Web sites (e.g. YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and Web-based applications.

Employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as county employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, on his personal time and equipment, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for Web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic media for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the county's computers, network, equipment, or time.
- The employee shall not use the county's logo or other copyrighted material of the county without express, written consent of the Commissioners' Court.
- The employee shall not link Hood County's website or post Hood County material on a social media site.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, and administrative regulations, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment; on or off county property.
- The employee shall not mention Hood County supervisors, employees, customers, or vendors without their express consent.

These restrictions include:

- Confidentiality of county records.
- Confidentiality of health or personnel information of colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- Copyright law.
- Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the county.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***

**Hood County  
Responsible Use Technology Agreement For Employees**

**Please return the last page of this agreement, signed by you, to Personnel.**

Hood County provides an array of technology resources for employees to enhance the work environment, facilitate resource sharing, and to promote communication. This agreement outlines appropriate use and prohibited activities when using technology resources. Every employee is expected to follow all guidelines stated below, as well as those given verbally by supervisor, and to demonstrate good citizenship and ethical behavior at all times.

In accepting this agreement, employees acknowledge the following rules and conditions:

**GOVERNMENT LAWS:**

I will use computers in conformity with laws of the United States and the state of Texas. Violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

**CRIMINAL ACTS-** These include, but are not limited to, "hacking" or attempting to access computer systems without authorization, harassing email, cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking, child pornography, obscenity, vandalism, interception of electronic communications, an/or unauthorized tampering with computer systems. (Policy CQ (Legal) describes the Legal Framework for Electronic Communications and Data Management.)

**LIBEL LAWS-** Publicly defaming people through the published material on the internet, email, etc.

**COPYRIGHT VIOLATIONS-** Copying, selling or distributing copyrighted material without the express written permission of the author or publisher (users should assume that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright), engaging in plagiarism (using other's words or ideas as your own.)

**NETIQUETTE and APPROPRIATE USE GUIDELINES:**

**NETWORK RESOURCES –** The use of the network is a privilege, not a right and may be revoked if abused. Employees are personally responsible for his/her actions when utilizing the county's computer resources.

**PRIVACY –** Network storage areas are the property of the county. Hood County Technology Department staff may review any storage area of the county network or email to maintain system integrity and to ensure that employees are using the system responsibly. No one can claim a right to privacy or unrestricted speech in the use of the county's systems. Public information or open records requests can be obtained for all records on technology resources including email. Employees are NOT permitted to intrude into others' files.

**SECURITY** – Accounts are never to be shared and should never be left unattended or open. Users will be required to change passwords regularly.

**PERSONAL USE** – Limited personal use is permitted as long as this does not increase the cost to the county or interfere with the operations of the network or with the performance of the employee's duties. Use of the county's computer (i.e., laptop) at home can become a potential risk for viruses and spyware into the county network. Please use extreme caution when using county resources at home.

**COPYING/DOWNLOADING** – Employees are NOT permitted to download or install any software, shareware or freeware such as webshots, gator, yahoo messenger, kazaa, weatherbug, limewire, spybot, toolbars, etc. onto the county computers.

**INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS OR LANGUAGE** – Employees are NOT permitted to transmit, retrieve or store materials that are discriminatory, harassing, obscene, pornographic or inappropriate. Despite our best efforts and beyond the limits of filtering technology, you may run across areas of adult content and some material you might find objectionable. You should report these websites to the technology department to be included in the filtering process. Employees should not seek to access sites that are inappropriate for the county work environment. The use of county online systems for personal gain, commercial use, political lobbying or any other purpose which is illegal or against county policy or contrary to the county's best interest is NOT permitted.

**ELECTRONIC MAIL** – While electronic mail can be a valuable tool, it is impossible to guarantee that it will be private. Deleted files can be undeleted. Do not send messages that are abusive, threatening, harassing, obscene, sexually oriented, discriminatory, damaging, illegal, false or contain profanity. Do not send chain letters, virus warnings, urban legends or other unsubstantiated scares. Use the forward button with care (copy/paste is preferred.) Do not use the system for commercial purposes, financial gain, political lobbying or any illegal purposes. Do not open attachments without first checking the validity of the attachment with the sender. If the sender is unknown, don't open the attachment.

## **EMPLOYEE UNDERSTANDING**

I understand that passwords are private. I will not allow others to use my account name and password, or try to use that of others. I understand that my county network and email accounts are owned by the county and are not private. Hood County has the right to access my information at any time.

I will be polite and use appropriate language in my email messages, online postings and other digital communication with others. I will refrain from using profanity, vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.

I will use email and other means of communications (e.g., blogs, wikis, podcasting, chat, instant-messaging, discussion boards, virtual learning environments, etc.) responsibly. I will not use computers, handheld computers, digital audio players, cell phones, personal digital devices or the Internet to send or post hate or harassing mail, pornography, make discriminatory or derogatory remarks about others, or engage in bullying, harassment, or other antisocial behaviors either at work or at home.

I understand that I represent the county in all my online activities, both personal and professional. I understand that what I do on social networking websites such as MySpace and Facebook should not reflect negatively on my fellow employees or on the county. I understand that I will be held responsible for how I represent myself, department or county on the Internet and that I may be disciplined for any use that is in any way disruptive to county operations, or that adversely affects or interferes with the performance of my county related duties.

I understand that masquerading, spoofing, or pretending to be someone else is forbidden. This includes, but is not limited to, sending out email, creating accounts, or posting messages or other online content (i.e., text, images, audio or video) in someone else's name as a joke.

I will use technology resources responsibly. I will not retrieve, save, or display hate-based, offensive or sexually explicit material using any of Hood County's computer resources. I am responsible for not pursuing material that could be considered offensive. I understand that I am to notify the technology department immediately if by accident I encounter materials which violate appropriate use.

I will use technology resources productively and responsibly for county-related purposes. I will avoid using any technology resource in such a way that would disrupt the activities of other users. This includes intentionally wasting resources, downloading music during business hours, playing online games, creating or printing inappropriate materials, printing excessive quantities, tampering with computer parts, erasing programs or others' files, introducing viruses, hacking, attempting to gain unauthorized access, and modifying settings without permission.

I will refrain from attempting to bypass or circumvent security settings or Internet filters or interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software or web-based services and software not approved by the Hood County Commissioner's Court or Technology Department.

I will respect the intellectual property of other users and information providers. I will obey copyright guidelines. I will not plagiarize or use other's work without proper citation and permission.

I will refrain from the use of or access of files, software, or other resources owned by others without the owner's permission. I will use only those county network directories that are designated for my use or for the purpose designated by my supervisor.

I will follow all guidelines set forth by the county when publishing information online (e.g., to a website, blog, wiki, discussion board, podcasting or video server.)

I understand the Internet is a source for information that is both true and false; and that the county is not responsible for inaccurate information obtained from the Internet. I agree to abide by all Internet safety guidelines that are provided by the county.

I understand that county administrators will deem what conduct is inappropriate use if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.

**ALL EMPLOYEES ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE BEFORE THE USE OF ANY TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT (PERSONAL OR COUNTY OWNED) IS ALLOWED AT HOOD COUNTY**

**EMPLOYEE AGREEMENT:**

As a user of the county's technology resources, I understand and agree to comply with the network etiquette and appropriate use guidelines outlined in the Responsible Use Technology Agreement for Employees.

I have read the Computer Use and Data Management Policy and the Responsible Use Technology Agreement for Employees. I understand the conditions for use of the network and Internet resources provided by Hood County and that access to technology resources are provided for the purpose of official county business and that employee use for any other purpose is inappropriate. I recognize it is impossible for the county to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold Hood County responsible for materials acquired on the county network.

**CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION OF THIS AGREEMENT:**

I understand that I am responsible for any transactions that occur under my user ID or account. Should I commit a violation, I understand that consequences of my actions could include suspension of access to the system, loss of computer privileges or data and files, revocation of the computer system account, disciplinary action and/or referral to law enforcement.

I understand that from time to time the county may wish to publish examples of employee projects or photographs of employees on the county's website.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employees Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Insuring of New County Vehicles  
And  
Notification of Vehicles on Rotation Out of Service**

1. The Purchasing Agent will notify the Personnel Department whenever a new vehicle is secured and ready to be put into service for Hood County. The department that is receiving the new vehicle must call the Personnel Department and make sure the vehicle is insured before being put into service.

The Purchasing Agent will furnish the following information:

- A. Year, make and vehicle identification number of the new vehicle.
  - B. The value of the vehicle to be insured.
  - C. Department that is acquiring the new vehicle.
2. The department that is acquiring the new vehicle will notify the Personnel Department of any vehicle that is being replaced or being taken out of service. This will allow the removal of insurance coverage on these vehicles. Personnel should also be notified when vehicles are transferred from one department to another.

The Department will furnish the following:

- A. Year, make and vehicle identification number of the retired vehicle.
- B. The effective date the vehicle is removed from service.

This procedure will allow Hood County to properly insure vehicles as they go into service and remove any vehicles that are being retired.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Interpretation Pay Policy**

Hood County recognizes that employees with proficiency in multiple languages improve the quality of service that we provide to our customers. Full-time employees in **eligible** positions who demonstrate the **necessary** (part of their job function) verbal fluency in languages, other than English, **may, at the request of the Department Head and approval by the Commissioners' Court,** receive additional pay at the rate of \$23.08 per pay period. Department heads must submit their requests for interpretation pay for their employees in writing to the Commissioners' Court for their approval. Budgeted funds must be available to fulfill the request.

**PROCEDURES**

- 1) Department heads are responsible for identifying a need for interpretation services within their department and an employee who may be qualified to fill this need.
- 2) The Director of Personnel and Risk Management is responsible for ensuring that each employee receiving interpretation pay meet certain criteria as outlined below. Employees receiving interpretation pay who are identified as qualified for interpretation pay will be randomly evaluated by the Director of Personnel and Risk Management in conjunction with the department head, to ensure that there is a continued need for the interpretation and that the employee(s) being compensated is/are successfully meeting these needs. The Department Head will provide for the costs associated with these random evaluations in their annual budget.
- 3) In order to qualify for and receive interpretation pay, an employee must meet the following criteria:
  - A) The employees' use of Spanish language skills must be beneficial in the performance of job duties and must have a positive impact on Hood County's delivery of services.
  - B) The employee must be reasonably available when called upon to help other employees **and/or other departments** requesting assistance in translation of English to Spanish or from Spanish to English, whichever the need may be.
  - C) The employee must frequently be involved in contact with customers enough so that the department(s) benefit from the employee's language skills. An employee receiving interpretation pay is required to provide the Department Head and the Director of Personnel and Risk Management with documentation reflecting usage of the bilingual skills of at least ten percent (10%) or more of the time.
  - D) Eligibility of an employee to receive interpretation pay will be determined on the employees' ability to take and pass a certification test provided by Hood County in order to accurately measure their level of Spanish proficiency.
- 4) If an employee who is receiving interpretation pay is reassigned or transferred (voluntarily or involuntarily) to a position where there is not a need for such skills or if the budget for interpretation pay is not funded, the interpretation pay will be

discontinued on the first full pay period following the reassignment/transfer. Interpretation pay will also be discontinued if the job function(s) being performed by the employee no longer meet the qualifying criteria outlined above.

- 5) Interpretation pay is considered earnings and is subject to payroll taxes, TCDRS retirement contributions, levies, garnishments and any other mandatory payroll deductions as required by Federal or State law and/or county policy.

**Responsibility for Implementation**

The Treasurer's Office as the payroll department for Hood County employees has the specific responsibility to enforce this policy.

**APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011**

**HOOD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT**

**REQUEST FOR  
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TESTING**

**Department:**

---

**Date:**

---

**Employee's Name:**

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**Job Title:**

---

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Please complete the following information to assist the Hood County Commissioners Court - Personnel Department in ensuring that the criteria of eligibility is met by each employee and/or job position for which interpreter pay is eligible.

---

Direct Supervisor's Name:

---

Language for which proficiency skills are to be tested:

---

How frequently, and in what capacity, does the employee have contact with the public and others who primarily use this language?

---

How do the employees' language skills assist and/or benefit the department and Hood County collectively in the performance of job duties?

---

Employee's Normal Work Schedule:

---

Will the employee be reasonably available to assist other departments with language related needs? Please circle one of the following:

Yes

No

---

Department Head/Elected Official Signature and title

This application will be reviewed and the employee will receive notification of a scheduled testing date. This notice will reflect the date, time and location of the test. The employee will be required to confirm their appointment with the Hood County Personnel Department. Failure to take the test will be reason to void this request.



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Lactation/Breastfeeding Policy**

Section 7 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Act amended the Fair labor Standards Act to require reasonable breaks for nursing mother to express breast milk during the first year following the birth of a child. Hood County supports the practice of expressing breast milk.

Hood County will provide reasonable breaks for nursing mothers to express breast milk. The mother will be given a private location, other than a bathroom. The location will be shielded from view and free from intrusion and appropriate for expressing breast milk. The specific location will be determined on a case by case basis determined by the department head.

Hood County does not allow any retaliation against nursing mothers for asking for this break. Nursing mothers are entitled to this break for the duration of the time they are expressing breast milk. A reasonable accommodation will be given for the needs of employees who express breast milk. Employees of the county who need to express breast milk may not be discriminated against.

The Fair Labor Standards Act does not require any breaks other than for nursing mothers; however, if paid breaks are provided for employees, nursing mothers must be given the same amount of paid break time.

***Approved in Commissioners' Court on 5/10/2016***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Policy for 14-day/86-hour  
Law Enforcement Personnel time calculation**

**This policy is hereby approved by Hood County Commissioner's Court on October 22, 2013. Approval of calculation of time under this policy was previously approved in Commissioners Court on October 8, 2013.**

This policy is in accordance with Section 7(k) of the FLSA, is exclusive to Law Enforcement Personnel employees only as defined in Section 7(k) and is formed to establish procedure for calculation of time worked by those employees. This policy further addresses overtime for Law Enforcement Personnel.

Hood County Law Enforcement Personnel must work or have a cumulated total of 80 hours in a 14 day period. The 80 hours can be a combination of time worked and leave time taken (vacation, sick, holiday or comp time available). Section 7(k) also refers to the calculation of overtime worked in excess of 80 hours in a 14 day period. State or local Government agencies may give compensatory time in lieu of cash payment of overtime and may establish additional policies regarding hours worked.

Actual hours worked in excess of 80 hours are calculated as follows: hours worked from 80 through 86 are calculated as straight time overtime and recorded as "comp earned". Hours worked in excess of 86 are calculated at time and one half and recorded as "comp earned". Vacation, Bereavement, Sick or Holiday time will be deducted prior to the calculation of comp time earned. Only ACTUAL HOURS WORKED OVER 80 in a 14-day period are considered overtime hours.

Hood County will comply with the "480 hour maximum rule" with regards to payment of overtime as established by FLSA Section 7(k).

A supervisor must approve all overtime worked. Unauthorized overtime is grounds for disciplinary action and will be addressed by the supervisor or department head of the employee.

Hood County utilizes an electronic time-keeping system for tracking employee attendance. Time not recorded in this system within the policy of Hood County will not be paid. Terminated employees will be paid for all unused compensatory time.

Approved in Commissioners Court on October 22, 2013



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**

It is Hood County's policy to grant a leave of absence to all eligible employees on a non-discriminatory basis. All full time employees with at least one year of service may request a leave of absence. A leave of absence may be granted to run for an elective office, and for educational purposes.

A leave of absence may not exceed 12 weeks in a 12-month period unless required by federal or state law or as specified within this policy and may be with or without pay to the extent the employee has paid vacation, or sick time leave accrued.

Subject to any applicable legal restrictions, requests for leave of absence will be considered on the basis of the employee's performance, responsibility level, length of service, reason for the request, and the county's ability to obtain a satisfactory replacement during the time the employee would be away from work. If an employee accepts other employment or fails to return to work on the next regularly scheduled work day following the expiration of his/her leave, it will be considered that the employee has voluntarily terminated his/her employment.

Employees on unpaid leave scheduled to extend beyond the calendar month in which the leave begins will be eligible to continue coverage in the county's group insurance plan at their own cost through their rights under COBRA. The procedures for continuing coverage on you and/or your dependents will be fully explained at the time the leave is granted.

Unless otherwise stated in the policies, group insurance coverage will not be interrupted for a leave of absence for thirty (30) days or less and which begins and ends in the same calendar month.

Employees will not accrue benefits (i.e. vacation, sick leave, holidays, etc.) during an unpaid leave of absence. Employees who return to active employment at the end of their leave (not to exceed 12 weeks) will be reinstated without loss of seniority earned prior to the commencement of their leave.

All leaves of absence, regardless of reason, require the use of all accrued paid vacation and compensatory time to minimize the impact of a leave of absence for both the county and the employee.

It is the employee's responsibility to provide his/her immediate supervisor and department head all the following information in writing as soon as he/she becomes aware of the need for a leave of absence:

- The reason the leave of absence is being requested.
- The anticipated dates the leave of absence will begin and end.

In addition, during the leave of absence, the employee must provide:

- Periodic updates to the employees supervisor and/or department head at least every 15 days concerning the employees status, expected date of return, and continued intent to return to work upon expiration of the leave.

Each department head shall have the authority to grant an employee up to ten (10) days leave without pay for personal reasons other than in conjunction with family leave, provided that no problems will be created by leaving the employees job unfilled for the period of the requested leave.

If the employee is unable to return to work at the end of the leave of absence (not to exceed 90 days {except to run for elected office}) then the employee will be terminated with no exception.

If it is determined that the employee is performing a service for money or other remuneration while on a leave of absence, he/she will be terminated.

If the employee is found to have misrepresented the reason for the leave of absence, then he/she will be terminated.

**APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011**



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Longevity Pay Guidelines**

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish longevity pay for full time employees as defined by the Employee Status Definitions in the Employee Manual. These guidelines are effective December 13, 2004 and replace the previous longevity pay guidelines.

Longevity pay will be awarded at \$5.00 per month, per year of continuous service for Hood County employees and is calculated based on the number of years the employee serves as of December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Longevity pay is not an accrued benefit and will not be paid should employment terminate prior to December 1<sup>st</sup>. The maximum amount of longevity pay is \$1,200.00 after 20 years of employment and each year thereafter.

Schedule of Longevity Pay:

Years of Service as of December 1	Longevity Amount
5	300.00
6	360.00
7	420.00
8	480.00
9	540.00
10	600.00
11	660.00
12	720.00
13	780.00
14	840.00
15	900.00
16	960.00
17	1020.00
18	1080.00
19	1140.00
20+ years	1,200.00 maximum

**To the intent that the provisions of these guidelines may be in conflict with the provisions of the law, the law shall take precedence and prevail.**

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Maintenance Request Procedures**

**Purpose:**

Current operational procedures do not permit efficient management or operation of the maintenance department, nor the ability to track or compile data needed for budget proposals, labor projections, and facility/equipment maintenance and repair history. Currently, the majority of requests for our services come from cell phone calls or are made in person after a technician is already on the scene. This restricts productivity, hinders labor management efforts, and increases the amount of undocumented labor, parts usage, and repair history.

The majority of these deficiencies can be corrected with the implantation of a system to compile data obtained through the use of a work order. Data from these work orders can be entered on spreadsheets, giving us the ability to track each facilities maintenance costs, labor requirements, and repair history.

To aid in resolving these problems, the court is asked to approve as county policy the following maintenance request procedures:

**Procedures:**

1. All routine communications with the maintenance department shall be handled via the Facility Maintenance link on the intranet.
2. Emergency situations shall be reported via cell phone.
3. Maintenance technicians will be dispatched after a work order has been submitted and processed; situations brought to the technicians attention in the field or on the phone will require submission and processing of a work order before work is performed.
4. The maintenance department will prioritize work orders as they are received. Requests for information on, or status of pending work orders, shall be made via e-mail.
5. Please do not call maintenance technicians unless an urgent or emergency situation exists.
6. Each department shall appoint an employee as a primary contact for all interaction with the maintenance department. This employee's name and phone extension shall be provided to maintenance.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Nepotism

It is the intent of the county not to employ or transfer any person who is related within the second degree by affinity (marriage) or within the third degree by blood relation to any member of the Commissioners' Court or to the elected official or department head for whom he or she works or to anyone employed within the department.

#### DEFINITION

This chart will assist you in determining a relationship that is prohibited by the Texas Government Code. The nepotism laws prohibit the employment of a person related by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree of Affinity and by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree of blood relation.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> DEGREE

Spouse  
Mother & Spouse  
Father & Spouse  
Daughter & Spouse  
Son & Spouse  
Mother-in-law  
Father-in-law  
Stepdaughter  
Stepson

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> DEGREE

Granddaughter & Spouse  
Grandson & Spouse  
Grandmother & Spouse  
Grandfather & Spouse  
Sister & Spouse  
Sister-in-law  
Brother & Spouse  
Brother-in-law  
Grandmother-in-law  
Grandfather-in-law  
Step-granddaughter  
Step-grandson  
Half-sister & Spouse  
Half-brother & Spouse  
Stepsister & Spouse  
Stepbrother & Spouse

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> DEGREE

Great-grandmother & Spouse  
Great-grandfather & Spouse  
Great-granddaughter & Spouse  
Great-grandson & Spouse  
Niece & Spouse  
Nephew & Spouse  
Aunt & Spouse  
Uncle & Spouse  
Half-Aunt & Spouse  
Half-Uncle & Spouse  
Aunt-in-law  
Uncle-in-law  
Niece-in-law  
Nephew-in-law  
Step-Niece & Spouse  
Step-nephew & Spouse

#### GENERAL

Compliance with all policies governing Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action is mandatory.

#### POLICY

Employment or transfer of any relative will be permitted on an equal opportunity basis. Further, employment, transfer or reassignment of anyone within a department who is a relative of a current employee, as defined above, will be reviewed by the Personnel Department.

Assignment of relatives in the same line of authority is prohibited. In the interest of the County as well

as each employee, it is not beneficial for an employee to supervise a relative directly or indirectly, regardless of the management levels involved.

When employees working under the same immediate supervisor marry subsequent to their employment, per the state law, one employee must transfer to a different line of reporting or terminate. This is subject to availability of job positions. The couple may designate their preference as to which spouse transfers or terminates. The Personnel Department, in consultation with the elected/appointed official or department head, will work to facilitate compliance with this policy.

Any applicant who indicates that a relative is employed by Hood County will be subjected to the scrutiny of the Personnel Department to assure compliance under the Equal Employment Opportunity Act.

**APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011**

Approved by the Board of Commissioners of Hood County, Oregon, on 9/27/2011.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner  
Hood County, Oregon

Approved by the Board of Commissioners of Hood County, Oregon, on 9/27/2011.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner  
Hood County, Oregon

Approved by the Board of Commissioners of Hood County, Oregon, on 9/27/2011.

Approved by the Board of Commissioners of Hood County, Oregon, on 9/27/2011.



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**New Hire/Transfer Policy**

**I. Policy Statement**

To establish a procedure allowing new-hire orientation and the payroll function to flow more efficiently.

**II. Procedural Content**

- A. Scheduling
- B. Coordination

**III. Definitions**

Scheduling- The Personnel Department shall be responsible for scheduling orientation sessions for new employees. All newly hired employees will come to orientation on or before the first day of their employment, as arranged by the Personnel Department. New hires may not start on a holiday. The start-to-work date shall be the first (1<sup>st</sup>) working day following the holiday. The hire date shall be reflected as the first day a new hire is physically at work.

All current employees transferring between departments shall be effective on the Monday at the start of each pay period for efficiency of the payroll function.

Coordination- Elected/Appointed Officials and department heads shall notify the Personnel Department when an employment offer is accepted to confirm orientation time and date.

This policy affects all County personnel including full-time, part-time, and temporary.

**IV. Procedures**

Scheduling- The Personnel Department will schedule time of orientation.

Coordination- The Personnel Department shall coordinate orientation sessions with Elected/Appointed Officials or Department Heads. It is the responsibility of each department to notify the employee of the date, time and location of orientation.

**V. Rehiring of Former Employees**

Employees who resign or who are terminated from employment with Hood County may not be rehired, even in a temporary or part time capacity, for 90 days after the effective date of termination.

**APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/10/2013**



## **Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures**

### **Non-Exempt Status Employees**

#### **Introduction**

All positions at Hood County are governed by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA is a federal law that mandates when overtime pay is required. Specifically, it requires that employees who work in positions not exempt (non-exempt) from the FLSA be paid time and one-half for time worked in excess of 40 hours in one work week. FLSA has set a minimum weekly rate for exempt employees. Consequently, all employees earning less than the minimum are automatically not exempt from overtime (non-exempt). The FLSA regulations allow for governmental units to grant compensatory time in lieu of paying time and one-half/overtime.

#### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Hood County to be in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and to ensure that employees in exempt and non-exempt positions are classified and paid appropriately. The Human Resources Department is responsible for determining the classification of positions as exempt or non-exempt based on FLSA criteria. The Human Resources and Treasurer's offices are responsible for ensuring that all employees are paid in accordance with federal laws.

#### **Non-exempt employee**

An employee is considered non-exempt if he or she:

- Earns less than the FLSA statutory monetary amount
- Does not meet any of the FLSA job duties requirements

#### **Pay for Employees in Non-Exempt Positions**

Hourly employees must be paid on set dates for hours worked within the corresponding pay period. Hours may not be banked or payment for wages delayed for hourly employees.

#### **Overtime/Compensatory Pay for Employees in Non-Exempt Positions**

According to the FLSA, all non-exempt staff who work in excess of 40 hours in a work week are eligible for overtime pay/compensatory time.

Hours worked shall include all time actually spent in service of the County as defined in the FLSA and its regulations. The workday for the county shall begin at 12:01 a.m. and end 24 consecutive hours later.

Hood County's workweek for calculating overtime/compensatory time is Monday through Sunday.

## Responsibilities

- Non-Exempt employee:
  1. Responsible for submitting accurate time via the biometric time clocks.
  2. Responsible for submitting a complaint in writing to the Human Resources Department if he or she believes pay is incorrect. The complaint should include the dates and circumstances of the pay deduction.
- Supervisor:
  1. Responsible for ensuring all non-exempt employees are paid in accordance with state and federal laws.
  2. Responsible for reviewing and approving non-exempt employee's time prior to submission to the Treasurer's Office.
  3. Responsible for entering time on behalf of a non-exempt employee who is not able to submit time due to illness, vacation or if employee has been terminated.
- Treasurer's Office
  1. Responsible for administering a comprehensive FLSA Compliance Program.
  2. Responsible for ensuring that all employees are paid in accordance with federal laws.
  3. Receives requests for payroll adjustments, processes adjustments and communicates with employees and departments regarding FLSA compliance.
- Human Resources Office
  1. Responsible for administering a comprehensive FLSA Compliance Program.
  2. Responsible for ensuring that all employees are paid in accordance with federal laws.
  3. Responsible for reviewing positions to determine whether positions are exempt or non-exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA.
  4. Responsible for reviewing all employee pay complaints

Approved in Commissioners' Court October 25, 2016



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Overtime-Compensatory Time Policy

Section 7 of the FLSA requires that covered, non-exempt employees receive not less than one and one half times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of the applicable maximum hours standards. Section 7(o) of the Act provides an element of flexibility to State and Local Government employers and therefore authorizes them to provide compensatory time off for overtime worked. Compensatory time must be at the rate of not less than one and one-half hours of compensatory time for each hour of overtime worked.

Section 7 Regulations further state that employers may allow non-exempt employees to accrue only up to 240 hours of comp time with the exception of employees working in *public safety*. Those employees may accrue up to 480 hours. These are thresholds and any comp time accrued in excess of these numbers must be paid in cash value. Hood County's limits are: The maximum comp time accrual for non-law enforcement employees is 50 hours. Law Enforcement Personnel (28-day) cycle employees' maximum accrual is 240 hours. Hood County reserves the right to pay down hours exceeding 240 hours in Law Enforcement Personnel only.

#### **Work Week:**

The Commissioners Court encourages all county offices to remain open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday to better serve the public. Hood County's *employer defined* workweek for purposes of calculation of overtime is Monday through Sunday (a 7 day period). Law Enforcement Personnel in Hood County are on a 28-day cycle set schedule as established by Hood County.

#### **Overtime:**

Overtime is defined as **actual hours worked** over 40 hours in an *employer-defined* work-week. Vacation time, sick time or any other benefit leave time is not considered hours worked and may not be used to accrue comp time. Comp time/overtime is NOT calculated on a daily basis. The only exception to the over 40 actual hours worked rule is 28-day cycle Law Enforcement Personnel. Please refer to the 28-day Law Enforcement Personnel policy for calculations of that overtime.

#### **Work in excess of Normal Schedule:**

As a general rule Department Supervisors and Elected Officials are expected to manage their operations so that employees are not required to work beyond their normal work schedule (i.e. overtime). While overtime is strongly discouraged, Hood County recognizes that emergency situations may arise where overtime is unavoidable. Employees must receive prior approval from their immediate supervisor before working overtime. Non law-enforcement personnel who accrue over 50 hours of comp time are reported to the Commissioners Court and the employees' Supervisors must be available to answer questions regarding the hours accrued in excess of 50 hours on the court following the accrual.

**Compensatory time use:**

Compensatory time **shall** be used first prior to any other leave time unless the employee has exceeded the maximum amounts on their vacation accruals. In that event the vacation time will be used first to take the vacation time back to the *under maximum amount*. The difference will then be charged to comp time first. Once accrued comp time is exhausted, absences should be charged to vacation or sick leave, as appropriate. An employee may *not* object to being sent home since they are not being sent home without pay – comp time IS *paid time-off*.

**Exceptions to compensatory time:**

Dispatchers receive *payment* in cash pay of overtime earned. From time to time Road Operations *may* receive cash payment in lieu of comp time earned due to emergency situations and budget availability. Unless specifically authorized by Commissioners Court, grant policy or disaster declaration policy no other overtime will be *paid* in cash payment other than termination.

**Terminated employee compensatory time payout:**

Compensatory time accrued by employees shall be paid upon separation of employment and within the guidelines established by the FLSA. Positions must remain vacant until compensatory time payments to former employees have been absorbed in the departments' budget, unless *prior* approval is granted by the Commissioners Court to hire a replacement sooner.

**Promotions and/or Transfers:**

Upon promotion an employee will be paid off on the comp time earned at the previous position at the rate of pay the employee is earning prior to the promotion. Payment of the comp time will be made on the payroll following the date of the promotion. If budgeted funds are unavailable for this the promotion may be placed on hold until funds are available.

Upon transfer to another department within the county, an employee will be paid for their accrued comp time at the rate of pay the employee is earning prior to the transfer. Payment of the comp time will be made on the payroll following the date of the transfer. If a transfer comp time payout results in a budget shortage the transferring department will not be allowed to fill the open position until such time the budget has been restored unless **PRIOR** approval is given by the Commissioners Court.

**Holidays:**

County Holidays are set by action of the Commissioners' Court at the beginning of each fiscal year. Budgetary constraints may differ from year to year and therefore holidays are not a guaranteed benefit of any county employee. The schedule and number of days may vary from year to year. Full time employees may be entitled to holiday pay or time if the recognized holiday occurs within a regularly scheduled work time (exception: Dispatch employees are paid in monetary value for hours worked on holidays (8 hour maximum *pay* amount). Time credited for holiday accruals may not be carried over into the next fiscal year without prior approval from the Commissioners' Court.

An employee absent from work the last regular work day before or after a holiday other than for prior approved leave shall forfeit the holiday. An employee who is sick on the last regular work

day before or after a holiday may be required to present a note from his/her physician in order to qualify for holiday pay.

**It is the responsibility of the Treasurer's Office to deduct comp time in accordance with this policy. The Treasurer's Office must notify the Commissioners Court of any violation or specific problems related to this policy.**

*APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 09/10/2013*



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS POLICY**

This policy applies to all Hood County employees who receive payroll compensation. It is intended to establish procedure for authorized payroll deductions in accordance with Chapter 155 of the Local Government Code and is in compliance with all FLSA, DOL, Federal, State and local laws.

The following deductions are mandatory deductions and shall be deducted from Hood County employees' payroll:

1. FICA (Federal Social Security Program);
2. Medicare (Federal program);
3. Federal Income Taxes in accordance with W-4 information submitted by the employee and in accordance with Internal Revenue tax guidelines;
4. Retirement – Hood County participates in the Texas County and District Retirement program. Participation by the employee is mandatory for all full time or part time employees. Temporary employees are exempt from retirement participation.
5. Court ordered child support where applicable;
6. IRS garnishments where applicable;
7. Student loan garnishments as required or allowed by law where applicable;
8. Any other deductions required and or allowed by law.

The following deductions are elective deductions for Hood County employees:

1. Section 125/Cafeteria Plan deductions as approved by the Commissioners Court;
2. Credit Union participation;
3. Deferred Compensation program;
4. LEA – Law Enforcement Association of Hood County;
5. CLEAT – Combined Law Enforcement Association of Texas;
6. United Way of Hood County;
7. Any other deductions as authorized and approved by the Commissioners Court of Hood County.

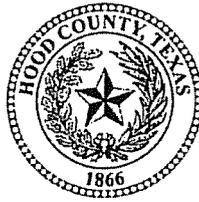
Items 2 through 6 of the elective deductions must be made in writing and submitted to the County Auditor and the County Treasurer in accordance with section 155.002 through 155.021 of the Local Government Code. Item 1 is subject to section 155.041 through 155.063.

Local Government Code section 155 .001 through 155.063 are attached as part of this policy.

**Responsibility for Implementation:**

The Treasurer's Office as the Payroll Department for Hood County employees has the specific responsibility to enforce these deductions.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Payroll Check Inserts**

This policy applies to all Hood County employees. It is intended to establish procedure for payroll check inserts. This policy is in compliance with Federal, State and Local laws.

Hood County desires to keep employees informed of any new laws, regulations or financial issues that could affect them. The Personnel Department also recognizes Hood County employees and provides important information to county employees through monthly newsletters. Therefore, the Treasurer's Office, as payroll department for Hood County, may insert notifications in employees' payroll checks addressing these issues.

Hood County does not allow sales promotions of any kind to be inserted into the employees' payroll checks.

Any requests for variations to this policy must be in writing and submitted to the Treasurer's Office. The Treasurer's Office will then place the request on the Commissioners' Court agenda for their consideration.

Hood County allows inserts from service organizations and 501-3C organizations promoting their functions with prior approval from the Commissioners' Court.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Personnel Hiring**

**I. POLICY STATEMENT**

To establish a procedure coordinating newly hired employees and transferring current employees.

**II. PROCEDURE CONTENT**

- A. Scheduling
- B. Coordination
- C. Exceptions

**III. DEFINITIONS**

Scheduling – The Personnel Department shall be responsible for the scheduling of all orientation session for new employees. All newly hired employees will start to work on the Monday at the start of each pay period, unless that is a holiday. In such instances, the starting date shall be the first working day following the holiday. The hire date shall be reflected as the first day a newly hired is physically at work.

All current employees transferring between departments shall be effective on the Monday at the start of each pay period for efficiency of the Payroll function and shall always maintain their hire date as the first day they began county employment.

Coordination- Elected officials and department heads shall notify the Personnel Department when an employment offer is accepted to confirm orientation time and date.

**IV. AFFECTS**

This policy affects all county personnel including full-time and part-time, or temporary, but does not affect volunteers or reserves.

**V. PROCEDURES**

- A. Scheduling- The Personnel Department will schedule time of orientation.
- B. Coordination- The Personnel Department shall coordinate orientation sessions with Elected Officials or Department Directors. It is the responsibility of each department to notify the employee of the date, time and location of orientation.
- C. Exceptions- The following exceptions shall apply:

There shall be a permanent exception to this policy for all non-clerical law enforcement or corrections positions, which are deemed essential and necessary for the effective operations of the county department. Under such circumstances, newly-hired employees and transfer employees may be allowed to start on any date needed, and all newly-hired employees shall be required to attend county orientation services at the first service held following the date the employee is hired. However, if no such emergency exists, then the newly hired employee shall begin employment on the Monday at the start of a pay period as would employees of any other county department or office.

This policy shall remain in effect until such time as the policy is modified or rescinded by Commissioners' Court or is modified or rescinded by any other means authorized under the laws of the State of Texas and the Constitution of the United States of America.

**APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011**



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Pre-Holiday Policy**

If any elected official chooses to close their office and send their employees home on a non-recognized county holiday, the employees must take vacation or comp time in order to be paid. Non-recognized county holiday means any day that is not a Commissioners' Court established holiday.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**PROPERTY POLICY**

Department heads have a duty to safeguard Hood County assets that are entrusted to their care. They are responsible for protecting county assets from loss, theft or misuse. Hood County in turn is accountable to the taxpayer for the management of property purchased with public funds. Consequently, the Hood County Auditor, as agent for the Hood County Purchasing Agent, maintains a record of inventory and assets delegated to each department. The department head acknowledges the inventory on this list by signing and thereby accepting responsibility for it.

Throughout the year, the Auditor's office continually updates the inventory listings for all departments, based on new purchases of assets. Department heads are responsible for submitting a Disposal or Transfer of Asset Form to the Auditor's office for any inventory items that are being sold at county auction, or transferred to another department.

The Hood County Auditor's office periodically conducts a complete inventory of assets assigned to each department. If at this time, an item is determined to be missing or unaccounted for, the purchase price of the missing item will be assessed against the department head. Hood County has many antiques housed in various offices throughout the county. In the case of lost or missing property listed as an antique, Commissioners' Court shall determine the replacement value of this property.

In the event of damaged or missing property caused by a criminal act, Commissioners' Court shall determine if the department head will be held financially responsible.

Upon conclusion of employment or transfer from department, the department head shall complete a final walk-through with a representative of the Auditor's office. At the completion of this inventory, should there be any lost or missing items; Commissioners' Court along with the Auditor shall determine the cost, if any, to be assessed against the department head.

Likewise, a newly hired department head shall complete a walk-through with a representative of the Auditor's office before signing and accepting responsibility for the inventory assigned to their department.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Radiation Safety Policy

- 1. PURPOSE:** This policy establishes responsibility for the proper receipt, use and transfer of sources by original contractors of the source of radiation for cabinet type x-ray machines at the Hood County Justice Center, in order to reduce potential exposures in excess of standards prescribed by federal and state regulations. Nothing in the policy shall be construed as limiting actions that may be necessary to protect health and safety.
- 2. POLICY:** All activity related to the sources of radiation must be within the scope of the current radioactive material license or certificate in accordance with Texas Radiation Control Act and regulations adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services (Bureau of Radiation Control). No radiation may be deliberately applied or exposed to a human being.
- 3. RADIATION:** Means emission of energy as electromagnetic wave or particles, whether ionizing or non-ionizing, including x-ray, gamma rays, alpha and beta particles, high speed electrons, neutrons, protons, other nuclear particles, and microwaves.
- 4. RADIATION SAFETY OFFICER:** Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) shall establish and oversee the operating safety and emergency procedures including the Radiation Safety Manual with policy and procedures current and conforming with the requirements of the Texas Administrative Code. The RSO oversees and approves all phases of a training program for operations and/or personnel so that appropriate and effective radiation protection practices are taught. The RSO ensures that required radiation surveys and leak tests are performed and documented in accordance with the requirements of the Texas Administrative Code, including taking any corrective measures when levels of radiation exceed established limits. The RSO investigates along with the original contractor and reports each known or suspected case of radioactive material to environment in excess of limits established by the Texas Administrative Code. The RSO ensures records are maintained as required, and serves as primary contact with Texas Department of Health Services Bureau of Radiation Control and any other external regulatory agencies.
- 5. RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL:** Means any solid, liquid, or gas that emits radiation spontaneously.
- 6. PRICIPAL INVESTIGATOR RSO:** The Radiation Safety Officer shall work closely with the Hood County Emergency Management and shall be the radiation safety officers alternate in his/her place. All incidents will also be reported to the Emergency Management Officer.

**7. APPLICABILITY**

Hood County Justice Center  
1200 West Pearl Street  
Granbury, Texas 76048  
Telephone: (817) 408-2698



**8. EMERGENCY CONTACTS: All Emergency contact numbers are posted in the Security Office in plain sight.**

RSO: Roger Deeds:	817-579-3300
Dispatch:	817-579-3307 ask for #100
Emergency Management:	817-579-3335
Dispatch:	817-579-3307 ask for #3502
Deputy Steve Siegler:	Chief of Security
Security Office	817-408-2698
Dispatch:	817-579-3307 ask for #106

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling

Hood County government has an interest in reducing waste destined for landfills and wants to help prevent pollution in Lake Granbury, its tributaries and the surrounding land. It is in the county's best interest to enact a solid waste reduction policy. Hood County government will therefore implement measures to reduce pollution as well as costs for supplies and cost of disposal of waste, and will follow certain conservation measures which will, in turn, reduce taxes for Hood County taxpayers.

#### **Responsibility**

Beginning October 1, 2011, all Hood County elected officials and department heads are given authority within their respective areas of control to implement procedures that will reduce solid waste by recycling, reducing usage, and reusing products; which will result in reduction of solid waste generation.

#### **Solid Waste Reduction**

Solid waste reduction can be defined as an activity that prevents waste from being generated. Prevention of waste is the most cost-effective waste management strategy.

Employees are encouraged to participate in the following guidelines for reducing waste; including but not limited to:

- Purchase only the quantity of supplies needed; especially letterhead, envelopes, forms, and business cards.
- Purchase durable products when applicable.
- Use email to send memos, messages, reports, and other information to reduce paper usage.
- Make double-sided copies.
- Edit and proofread on the computer screen before printing.
- Store files electronically when possible and avoid the printing of hard copies.
- Use paper already used on one side for drafts and notes.
- Keep mailing lists up to date to avoid unnecessary mailings.
- Eliminate unnecessary forms, reports, and publications.
- Remove names from unwanted or duplicate mailing lists.
- Work with vendors to ship materials in less, returnable, or recyclable packaging.

#### **Reuse**

Purchase products that can be reused rather than those designed for one-time use. Whenever practical, exercise the following guidelines:

- Use reusable cups or mugs instead of disposable.
- Reuse envelopes, file folders, dividers, and binders.
- Reuse outdated letterhead to print drafts or use it for notepaper.

#### **Recycle**

Recycling is the process of removing material from the waste stream so that it can be remanufactured to make new products. Recycling offers a way to avoid disposing of waste that cannot be prevented. Hood County owns and operates a Citizens Collection Station (CCS) and provides recycling of paper, cardboard, glass, plastics #1 - #5 & #7, all metal including aluminum, motor oil and oil filters, antifreeze, and tires.

All elected officials and department heads are encouraged to implement recycling protocols to remove these items from the waste stream and transport them to the CCS. All recyclables should be transported to the recycling receptacle by designated persons within respective departments. Sensitive or confidential items (as allowed by State and local laws) should be shredded and properly deposited for recycling.

**Buy Recycled Products**

Any successful program for recycling and waste reduction requires not only the collection of recyclable materials, but also must include the purchase of recycled and recyclable products in order to stimulate the markets and effectively close the recycling loop.

Whenever practical and economical, county departments and offices are encouraged to purchase recycled products. The Purchasing department will participate in regional and state programs to purchase products made from recycled materials and will assist departments and offices on specifications for recycled content products whenever practical and cost effective.

**Approved in Commissioners' Court on 7/26/2011**



## **Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures**

### **Relocation and Reconstruction of County Offices**

In the event of a need to relocate a county office from one location to another or a major reconstruction of an office in the same space, the Hood County Commissioners' Court has established the following criteria to accomplish these needs. The policy of the court is as follows:

1. All relocation/reconstruction projects must have been previously approved in the Building and Grounds departmental budget within the current fiscal year, otherwise budgeting for the project will be determined by the Commissioners' Court in conjunction with the County Auditor.
2. Projects in excess of \$500.00 must obtain prior approval from Commissioner's Court. No construction should begin until the Commissioners' Court gives final approval. A written request will be sent to the court at least one (1) month prior to the anticipated construction date. The issue will be considered at the first court following the receipt of the request. The contents of the request shall contain:
  - Justification for the request
  - Space requirements, i.e., square footage, number of rooms, etc.
  - Cost estimate from Hood County Building and Grounds Department including approval for assistance from Community Supervision and/or the Inmate Crew from the Law Enforcement Center, if utilized.
  - If the work to be done is beyond the scope of these groups, an outside contractor may be requested is a written explanation from the Hood County Building and Grounds Department is provided. In addition, a cost estimate from the outside contractor performing the work should be included.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Reserved Parking**

**I. POLICY STATEMENT**

To establish Hood County's policy regarding the administration, governing, and adherence to the authorized and designation of Reserved Parking locations adjacent to County buildings and located upon County owned properties.

**II. PROCEDURAL CONTENT**

- A. Authorization of reserved parking spaces/areas.
- B. Designated markings identifying authorized reserved parking spaces/areas.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

Motor Vehicle- For the purposes of this policy the definition of what constitutes an authorized Motor Vehicle shall be the same as that established and defined by the Texas Motor Vehicle Code as adopted by the Legislature of the state of Texas and signed/approved into statute by the Governor of the state of Texas.

Parking Spaces & Areas For the purpose of this policy a parking space or areas shall be that which is designated for the temporary placement of a motor vehicle as defined above.

Reserved Parking Spaces & Areas For the purpose of the policy of a reserved parking space or area shall be defined as that area(s) which have been designated to be exclusively by a particular person, office holder, or department for the temporary placement of a motor vehicle(s).

**IV. AFFECTS**

This policy affects all county personnel including full-time, part-time, reserves, interns, and volunteers; and all Hood County residents, and visitors.

**V. PROCEDURES**

1. No sign, marking or any other type of object shall be posted, painted, or etc. upon County property without prior consent of the Commissioner's Court via a formal vote with a majority approving the designation. Once an area has been approved to be designated as a "Reserved Parking Space or Area" by the Court, the appropriate County Personnel so designated by the County Judge shall be responsible for the placement of such signs or markings designating an area to be "Reserved Parking"

and shall specify to whom the space or area is reserved and for the hours the reservation is in effect (i.e. 6am until 6pm). All signs currently in place shall be modified to meet the specifications of this policy.

2. All signs designating a reserved parking apace or area shall be consistent in their shape, color, and lettering style whether identified by a posted sign, or by painted markings upon pavement.
3. Once the court has approved a designated area and proper identification markings have been implemented, no vehicles other than those belonging to or those in the care, custody, and control of the person for whom the space is reserved shall be parked within the specified area.
4. The hours of operation for the enforcement of reserved parking spaces and areas shall be as follows:

The Hood County Courthouse and all County Annex locations and buildings shall be effective Monday through Friday from 6am until 6pm, with the exception of authorized county holidays in which county buildings are closed. Outside of the restricted time frame described above, the "Reserved Parking Spaces" shall not be in effect and the areas shall be "open to parking to all persons".

The only exception to the times specified within this policy shall be those locations designated for *Law Enforcement* parking purposes, which shall be restricted to authorized personnel only, 24 hours per day 7 days per week.

**APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011**



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Sexual Harassment Policy/Zero Tolerance**

**PURPOSE**

Hood County is committed by principle and by law to assuring that sexual harassment does not occur in the workplace. Sexual harassment causes interpersonal conflict, lowers employee morale, and creates an offensive work environment. The purpose of this policy is to define sexual harassment, establish employee/county responsibilities, and provide general guidelines to ensure a professional, nondiscriminatory work environment.

**DEFINITION**

Employees engaging in sexual harassment shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which administers Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, has defined sexual harassment to include, but not be limited to, unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which includes slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, touching, pictures, emails or cartoons where:

1. the submission to such conduct is either an expressed or implied condition of employment; or.
2. the submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed person; or
3. the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an affected person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

**GENERAL**

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited by Hood County, whether committed by elected official, appointed official, department head, co-worker or non-employee the county does business with. It is the policy of Hood County to provide a work place free from sexual harassment for all employees and to take active steps to eliminate any sexual harassment of which the County becomes aware.

All employees should be made aware of the sexual harassment policy and encouraged to directly inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop, or alternatively, to report conduct which they perceive as sexual harassment as quickly as possible, either to their supervisor, including elected/appointed officials and department heads, or to the Human Resource Office. These reports will be kept as confidential as possible, and will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

## **POLICY**

Every reported complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The official or department head to which a claim has been reported shall be responsible for seeing that prompt action is taken to investigate the claim.

Once the investigation is complete, the employee making the claim shall be notified of the result of the investigation and any actions which are to be taken.

Use the following procedures so that your complaint maybe resolved quickly and fairly.

- a. When practical, confront the harasser and ask them to stop the unwanted behavior.
- b. Record the time, place and specifics of each incident, including any witnesses.
- c. Report continuing sexual harassment to the Elected Official or Appointed Official who is responsible for your department or to the Human Resource Office.
- d. If a thorough investigation reveals that unlawful sexual harassment has occurred, Hood County will take effective remedial action in accordance with the circumstances, up to and including termination.

Retaliation against an employee who reports sexual harassment or who cooperates as a witness in the investigation is prohibited by law as well as this policy.

Employees who feel they have been subjected to illegal retaliation should immediately report the situation to the elected or appointed official who is responsible for the department in which they work. If, for any reason, the employee feels that reporting the retaliation to the department head may not be the best course of action, the report should be made to the Human Resource Office.

Reporting or failing to report claims in accordance with the procedure given in this policy shall not limit other legal recourse an employee may have in regard to sexual harassment charges.

*Approved in Commissioners' Court July 26, 2016*



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Sick leave Policy**

All full-time, regular employees accrue sick leave from the date of hire, at a rate of 3.70 hours per pay period, which is equivalent to 12-days per year. Sick leave may be used for an employee's personal illness, well-care and medical and dental appointments. Sick leave may also be used for illness and well-care in an employee's immediate family (such as spouse, children, mother, father).

Sick leave may be accrued to a maximum of 480 hours. Sick leave may not be used prior to accrual. If sick leave is exhausted, holiday time, vacation leave, and compensatory time may be used in its place. An employee who has sick leave absence in excess of three consecutive working days must present medical documentation for the absence. Employees are not paid for unused sick leave upon separation of employment.

If the employee is absent unexpectedly due to personal or a family member's illness, he/she should notify his/her supervisor or the Director of Human Resources as soon as reasonably possible.

Employees must use sick leave for its intended purpose. Supervisors will monitor employee use of sick leave for indications of abuse. Supervisors have the right to request medical documentation for any absence if abuse of sick leave is suspected. Abuse of paid sick leave may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 1/26/2016***



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Hood County Step Plan

#### PURPOSE:

To establish policy and procedure governing the Hood County Employee Compensation Plan.

#### DEPARTMENTS/PERSONS AFFECTED:

This policy affects all employees of Hood County excluding elected and appointed officials.

#### POLICY:

Annually, the Commissioners' Court shall approve the county budget to include the Hood County Employees' Step Plan. Employees will be compensated by step and seniority under the Step Plan.

1. Compensation Plan for General Employees:

A. Salary Ranges

Every position or grade will have a designated salary range. Each range will consist of a minimum and a maximum.

Movements to a new range minimum are automatic, unless otherwise denied by the immediate supervisor. An employee with unacceptable performance will not move to the new range minimum until an acceptable level of performance is achieved, which is determined by the immediate supervisor.

2. Exempt/Non-Exempt Status:

A. Will be determined in accordance with the Department of Labor's Fair Labor Standards Act. (FLSA)

B. Exempt/Non-Exempt classification will have no effect on the compensation range within the Step Plan.

3. Compensation Plan:

A. The Hood County Employee Step Plan consists of 12 Grades and fifteen (15) pay steps for each grade. Each Step is for one (1) year duration and the remaining steps are for one (1) year duration in each step. After a new hire has successfully completed training and 60 days of employment, a step increase may be granted by the employee's supervisor.

B. Promotions/Transfers/New Hires will, when possible and with the recommendation of the elected official or department head, be made from within our current employed staff. When these occur, if the employee will move to a lateral position, they may be placed in the proper step and grade. If it involves a promotion or a new hire, the employee may be brought in as high as a Step 6 in the new grade, if they have relevant experience and if funds are available in the departmental budget as verified by the County Auditor. **Promotion or placement to any level above a Step 6 in the new or different grade may be approved by the Commissioners' Court, if the Court determines that the individual being promoted or hired possesses the:**

- (1) Unique, relevant experience in the field for which they are applying; or**
- (2) Provides significant cost savings and/or efficiency to the County by promoting or placing current staff into the approved position.**

Department Heads must verify with the County Auditor that funds are available prior to promotion and submission to the Commissioners' Court for approval. For purposes of continued employment after a promotion, an employee will receive a performance review after a 60 day training period. Annual step increases will be granted on October 1.

4. Advancement Tied to Performance

- A. An employee may advance to the next higher step upon the Department Heads recommendation. **An employee whose performance is below-standard will not progress to the next higher step in the pay level or market adjusted rate. Denial of a step increase requires written documentation stating the reason (s) for denial. The document denying the step increase must be signed by the supervisor and employee.** Continued below-standard performance will result in corrective action and/or termination of employment.
- B. Effect of Market Adjustment. The step plan will be reviewed and analyzed periodically by the H. R. Director for possible market adjustments. The H.R. Director will recommend any changes of the Step Plan to the Commissioners' Court for their approval. If there is a market adjustment based on market analysis, each step will be adjusted accordingly on October 1. **An employee with unacceptable performance will not be moved to the next step or receive any new market adjusted rate, until acceptable performance is achieved, and the supervisor has provided written documentation that the employee's performance is acceptable.**
- C. Effect of Achieving the Highest Step. Once an employee reaches the highest step associated with the pay level of his/her plan, salary increases for those employees will be determined by the Commissioners' Court, if funding is available.

5. Working Out of Classification:

- A. It is the policy of the Commissioners' Court that no employee shall be worked outside his/her official classification except for temporary assignments for periods of less than 30 consecutive workdays, not to exceed a total of 60 workdays in a 12-month period.
- B. This policy does not apply to temporary promotions.

6. Step Increases

**Employee step increases will occur October 1, with the Commissioners' Court approval of the Fiscal Budget.**

**THIS POLICY SUPERSEDES PRIOR POLICIES CONCERNING JOB AND SALARY CLASSIFICATIONS.**

***Approved In Commissioners' Court on 09/13/2016***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Telephone Communications  
Policy**

**Subchapter A. General Provisions**

**§.001 Purpose**

- a. This chapter is intended to provide minimum guidelines related to the proper use of telephone communications technologies. However, Officials may develop additional, more restrictive, rules for their Offices or Departments.
- b. This chapter is not intended to reduce the flexibility of any Office or Department to use various wireless communications technologies to accomplish their departmental requirements.

**§.002 Definitions**

- a. "Auditor" means the Hood County Auditor.
- b. "Commissioners Court" means Hood County Commissioners Court.
- c. "Official" means one of the following:
  1. The elected official who employs a person to whom telephone communications equipment is assigned or the authorized representative of that elected official.
  2. The Commissioners Court who employs a person to whom telephone communications equipment is assigned or the authorized representative of the Commissioners Court, or
  3. The appointed official who employs a person to whom telephone communications equipment is assigned or the authorized representative of that appointed official.
- d. "Official Use" means any communications or use, which relates to the official duties of the employee or official.
- e. "Personal Use" means any communications or use, which does not relate to the official duties of the employee or official but does not include the following:
  1. One very brief call to inform a family member for each event when the employee is required to work beyond scheduled work hours and is in an isolated location where other communications services are not available, or
  2. Calls made in isolated incidences when there are important, urgent circumstances that cannot be dealt with by other forms of communications, such as cases of clearly life-threatening or safety related situations.

**§.003 Public Information**

- a. Records related to calls made on County telephone communications technologies, including cellular telephone, are public information. Information related to telephone numbers called, the length, the time, and the date of call are ordinarily obtainable

through requests made under the Texas Public Information Act except in narrowly defined circumstances. Records related to calls made on personal wireless communications technologies, including cellular telephones, may be public information if these records are collected, maintained, or assembled for County business purposes.

- b. Employee do not have a privacy interest in the use of County telephone communications technologies, including cellular telephones, or any records related to the use of these technologies. County may, at any time, review the use of the County telephone communications technologies, logs of usage, invoices related to usage and similar materials.

#### **§.004 Confidentiality and Security of Communications**

- a. Telephone communication technologies are not secure and can be monitored.
- b. Caution should be used whenever confidential or sensitive information must be discussed.
- c. A party to the conversation can legally monitor or record the conversation.
- d. New employees will be informed that their supervisor can monitor and record all calls.
- e. Current employees will be asked to sign a certification that they have been informed of this policy.

#### **§.005 Authorized Usage**

- a. Officials should inform employees using County telephone communications services that failure to correctly report usage and reimburse County for personal use could result in criminal prosecution, and that the employee's designation of usage as County business use is subject to investigation and audit at any time.
- b. All County telephone communications technologies are provided solely for the purpose of conducting County business as determined by the Official.
- c. Employees shall not use County telephone communications technologies, either equipment or services:
  - 1. At any time when the use would impede any County function or business.
  - 2. In connection with any business venture or in any manner that contributes to personal gain for anyone from off-duty employment unless authorized by the Official.
  - 3. In any manner prohibited by County policy or
  - 4. In violation of applicable laws and regulations.
- d. Employees shall not include access numbers for County telephone communications equipment (telephone numbers, pager numbers, etc.) on any business card, letterhead, advertisement or similar material that is not provided or authorized by the County.
- e. Employees should not use any County telephone communications technologies for personal use.
- f. Employees shall use the most cost effective and appropriate communications method available.
- g. Employees shall reimburse Hood County for any use of County telephone communications equipment or services that is determined not to be County business.

#### **§.006 Purchasing and Inventory Procedures**

- a. Officials shall determine which of their employees may be issued County telephone communications equipment and what type of equipment and level of service is appropriate.

- b. The Purchasing Office shall not process a purchase order for additional equipment or lines unless it has received the written request from the Elected Official or Department Head through the Information Systems Director.
- c. Each department shall keep an ongoing assignment inventory of the County telephone equipment resources under its control. This inventory shall be available for review by the Purchasing Office, or the Auditor's office during regular County working hours.

**§.007 Two-Way Radio**

- a. All use of County owned or operated two-way radio equipment shall comply with FCC regulations that govern the use of two-way radio communication.
- b. Any use of two-way radios that is not authorized or is not in compliance with FCC regulations and any limits placed on the use of a license by the FCC could result in fines to the County or loss of the assigned license. An employee may be held liable for the fines and other damages incurred by Hood County as a result of any unauthorized use.
- c. An employee may be subject to disciplinary action for use of two-way radios in violation of regulations or license restrictions.
- d. Officials are responsible for ensuring that employees are trained in the proper use and etiquette for two-way radios.

**§.008 Messaging Services (Paging)**

- a. Wireless messaging service charges shall be accounted for with the budget line item number assigned by the Auditor.
- b. Each department shall pay for messaging services through issuance of a requisition and purchase order against the County wireless messaging contract on the County financial and purchasing system.
- c. Purchase orders may be issued at the beginning of the fiscal year for the entire year, or monthly for services to be provided in the upcoming month.
- d. Upon receipt of each invoice, the department shall receive the airtime against the purchase order in the County financial and purchasing system and forward it to the Auditor for payment.

**§.009 Mobile Data Services**

- a. All County owned and/or operated mobile data devices shall be used only in accordance with County data acquisition policies.
- b. Because mobile data devices are used by County law enforcement, fire, and EMS units, personal use of these devices is strictly prohibited except in isolated incidents when there are important, urgent circumstances that cannot be dealt with by other forms of communications, such as cases of clearly life-threatening or safety related situations.

**§.010 Reimbursement of Personal Long Distance Calls While Traveling**

- a. The cost of a personal long distance telephone call for county business is not reimbursable unless approved as part of travel expenses. (See Travel Policy)

**§.011 General Responsibilities of Officials**

- a. Officials may establish "departmental" rules that are more restrictive than this chapter. The Official shall distribute any "departmental" rules related to his or her employees before the rules become effective.
- b. The Official must periodically review the requirements of the functions of the positions authorized to place long distance calls to ensure that those positions have a continuing county business need for them at the level of service authorized.

#### **§.012 Responsibilities of Official for County Telephone Service**

- a. The Official shall review all county bills for telephone services on a regular basis to ensure appropriate use. It is the responsibility of the Official to monitor all personal use, ensure that any personal use is paid by the employee on a timely basis, and terminate telephone service when appropriate due to personal use.
- b. The Official must coordinate the approval process for changes in equipment within the office or department.

#### **§.013 Responsibilities of Employee With County Telephone Service**

- a. An employee may not be reimbursed for long distance business expenses unless the employee is outside their normal work area and in travel status.

#### **§.014 Invoices and Billing of County Telephone Services**

- a. Upon receipt of the invoice, both the department and the employee are responsible for certifying that all use of the county long distance telephone service is Official Use and there has been no personal use of the county long distance service during the invoiced period.

#### **§.015 Reimbursement by Employee with County Telephone Service**

- a. All charges for personal use of county telephone service are reimbursable to the county at the rate charged by the long distance carrier.
- b. Invoices containing personal use shall be handled in the following manner: The employee shall review the county long distance service invoice for their line, identify the calls that are not related to authorized county business, and submit payment to the county for all personal use.
- c. All reimbursements shall be submitted to the County Treasurer in compliance with procedures established by the Auditor. Reimbursements received from employees for personal use are credited to the department's county telephone service budget line item.
- d. A copy of the receipt issued by the Treasurer's office for telephone reimbursement shall be given to the Auditor's office, Accounts Payable.
- e. All telecommunications invoices are subject to review by the County Auditor. If, during the course of reviewing invoices, excessive personal use is detected, the Department Head will be notified to ensure reimbursement to Hood County.

#### **§.016 Changes to Department Telephone Systems**

- a. All changes to a department telephone system (i.e., line addition, repair or maintenance) will be requested in writing to the Information Systems Director.
- b. Changes in access codes or to request additional access codes will be requested in writing to the Auditors Office, Accounts Payable.
- c. Changes will be made on a weekly basis only.

## **Wireless Telephones**

### **I. Policy Statement**

To establish Hood County's policy regarding the administration, governing and adherence to the authorized usage of wireless telephones.

### **II. General Usage**

- A. Employees are responsible for all calls placed using their wireless telephone, including calls made by anyone using the phone.
- B. Wireless phones are to be used only for official Hood County business. Personal use of county wireless telephones should be limited. Employees should promptly reimburse Hood County for any personal use (including air time, associated taxes, and other incurred fees) by sending a check payable to "Hood County" to the County Treasurer. Employee is responsible for identifying all personal calls upon request. Audits, which reveal an inordinate amount of personal use, shall be brought to the attention of the Hood County Commissioners' Court who shall be authorized to reconsider the wireless telephone privileges to that employee.
- C. Mobile phones may not be used for personal or political gain; illegal, fraudulent or malicious activity; political activity; entertainment (including games, radio, and video); religious promotion; or activity on behalf of organizations or individuals having no affiliation with Hood County.
- D. All wireless phones must be budgeted for during the budget process. Any additional wireless phones require approval from Commissioners' Court. All requests for new wireless service or equipment must be sent to the Purchasing Department in the form of a purchase requisition.
- E. Reimbursement of official use of personal wireless telephone will be calculated based on actual usage using a formula pre-approved by the County Auditor.
- F. All requests for changes in wireless service must be sent to the Purchasing Department in writing. Unless essential, phone upgrades should be limited to the upgrade schedule as allowed by contract.
- G. All wireless phone charges will be charged to each individual department. The county reserves the right to assign the appropriate usage plan for all county-paid wireless phones.
- H. Under no circumstances will any Hood County employee be provided more than one wireless telephone.
- I. Replacement of damaged, stolen or lost equipment due to employee negligence is the responsibility of the employee.
- J. Refer to the county safety plan for important safety information.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**TEMPORARY MODIFIED DUTY**

Hood County is committed to providing work, when possible, for employees who have been restricted by an approved physician due to work-related injury or illness. Such work will be provided subject to availability. Work will be assigned due to the nature of the injury or illness and the limitations set forth by the treating physician. Every effort will be made to place employees in positions within their own department, but if necessary, employees will be placed wherever an appropriate position is available.

If an employee is also eligible for family and medical leave due to the employee's personal health condition while on Workers' Compensation, and the employee refuses temporary modified duty, the employee's refusal will be reported to the Workers' Compensation agency for potential reduction in Worker's Compensation benefits.

Employees on temporary modified duty must furnish a written update of their medical condition to the Director of Personnel and Risk Management from the treating physician (forms are available in personnel) after each visit in order to remain in the reassigned job. Temporary modified duty assignments are limited to a period of 90 days.

**BEING PLACED ON A TEMPORARY MODIFIED DUTY ASSIGNMENT DOES NOT EXCUSE AN EMPLOYEE FROM FOLLOWING ALL RULES AND REGULATIONS.**

*APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011*



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Policy For Travel and Reimbursement

The purpose of this policy is to establish and standardize authority for use of county resources to pay for travel related expenses for Hood County employees.

This policy is viewed as an "accountable plan", and therefore satisfies the reporting and documentation conditions established by the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended (i.e. 162 and 274 and Treasury Regulations 1.621 to 1.62.6). It is Hood County policy to observe IRS Regulations.

#### **A. General Definitions**

Accountable plan. A plan under which an employee is reimbursed for expenses or receives an advance to cover expenses. The following four conditions must be satisfied.

- (a) There must be a county business purpose for the expenses.
- (b) The employee must clearly state and properly support that there was a business purpose for the expense.
- (c) The employee must substantiate that the expense was incurred by providing documentation or be deemed to have documented the reimbursed expenses, and
- (d) The employee is required to return (i.e. with advances) to the county any amounts received in excess of documented expenses.

#### **B. General Policy Statement**

All reasonable and necessary travel by county employee for which a departmental budget has been established, and for which the department has funds remaining in the budget, and for which the travel is required in order for the employee to conduct county business is authorized. county officials and department heads are expected to plan out-of-county travel for themselves and their employees to achieve maximum economy and efficiency. All county reimbursed travel must be for official county business only. Travel must be approved or authorized by the elected official or department head.

Reserve Deputies may be reimbursed for travel and training if there is money in the departmental budget for such expenditures.

It is the responsibility of the Elected Official and or Department Head to see that all out-of-county travel expense forms are properly completed, documented, signed and forwarded to the County Auditor's office within five (5) working days after travel occurs.

**C. In-County Travel**

In the process of conducting county business, employees may be required to travel to locations within Hood County, but away from their normal duty station. **The county will not reimburse mileage for in-county travel.**

**D. Out-of-County Travel**

It is the elected official's or department head's responsibility to ensure that each request has adequate documentation attached to support the stated time, place, and business purpose of the travel expense (see "Accountable Plan" requirements, Page 2). **Reimbursable hotel expenses for out of county must be a minimum of 75 miles from the Hood County offices.**

The county will reimburse for county employee meals only for travel during which the employee is out of the county. If Hood County provides a meal for travel outside Hood County, and that travel doesn't require an "overnight stay away from home" (as defined by IRS regulations), then that meal reimbursement will be taxed and included on the employee's W-2 earnings statement, per IRS regulations.

Per Diem meal requirement rates are as follows:

1. Meal amounts listed include taxes and tips.

Breakfast	\$7.00
Lunch	\$8.00
Dinner	\$15.00
2. No meal receipts will be required; meal per diem serves in lieu of receipts.
3. The county will not reimburse an employee for more than \$30.00 per day for meals.

The county will reimburse county employees for mileage if a personal vehicle is used while the employee is out-of-county. With the recent changes by the IRS, mileage reimbursements will be made based on fifty cents (\$0.50) per mile, and **on using Google maps for your mileage to and from destinations at <http://maps.google.com>**, and per IRS guidelines. **When using this site, a map will be required to show the mileage from the Hood County Courthouse to the final destination. A direct route will be required to the final destination, and not a circuitous route.** In addition, the county will reimburse for any justifiable mileage while at the travel destination (Appendix B). Any additional miles driven while at the destination should be documented as "Other" expenses with an explanation of the mileage. No reimbursement for out-of-county transportation is to be paid if it is by county-owned vehicle. **See appendix "A" for the proper form to be used for travel reimbursement.**

**E. Out-of State Travel**

The County will reimburse employees for out-of-state travel on the same basis as out-of-county travel.

If the employee elects to use a personal automobile for such travel, the county reimbursement will not exceed the lesser alternative: either the mileage (round trip at the prevailing rate per mile) or the round trip airfare and expenses to the destination (a commercial airline quote is required). When the final destination is over 350 miles, air travel should be considered.

**F. Travel Advances**

Employees who anticipate being away from their duty station and out-of-county overnight may request a travel advance.

Once the employee has returned to his/her normal duty station, the employee has five (5) working days to submit documentation to the County Auditor's office to account for the use of the travel advance funds. The employee should attach a copy of his advance request to document the advance received. If the employee has received funds in excess of the actual amount needed, the balance must be remitted to the County Treasurer's office, and a copy of the receipt should be attached to the documentation and given to the Auditor's office. All disbursement of funds and collections of funds with regards to travel advances will be handled through the County Treasurer's office. The department head has oversight responsibility for all travel advances and reimbursement due to the county.

**G. Lodging**

The decision to pay the lodging fee for the night before a conference or meeting is at the discretion of the elected official or department head. This decision is based on the travel time to location of the meeting site and beginning or ending time of the program, and the preciously stated requirement of 75 miles distance. Likewise, the decision to pay the lodging fee for the last day of a conference or meeting is at the discretion of the elected official or department head. It is the employee's responsibility to make sure this issue is covered prior to the meeting taking place.

Restrictions on County reimbursable lodging expenses:

1. The County **will** reimburse for:
  - Daily room charges
  - Properly documented business telephone calls.
  - Facility parking charges
2. The County **will not** reimburse for:
  - Personal expenses (i.e. valet, dry cleaning, laundry, etc.)
  - Alcoholic beverage charges
  - Video rental (i.e. In-room movies, etc.)
  - Personal telephone calls
  - Hotel Club charges
  - Recreational facility charges

Employees who incur lodging charges defined as unacceptable for reimbursement are responsible for the payment of same. These charges are to be accounted for and payment rendered to the facility by the employee at check out. If any of these charges are incorrectly billed directly to the county by a lodging facility, the employee will remit payment to the County Treasurer.

It is the responsibility of the employee to obtain detailed lodging statement from the establishment where the employee stayed. This statement should be attached to the Travel Reimbursement Request. No exceptions will be allowed.

#### **H. Conferences, Seminars and Continuing Education**

The county requires that requests for registration fees be accompanied by a conference program, seminar program, or continuing education program that indicates the cost, location and payee's address. The county requires that the employee's supervisor approve the request. The supervisor must indicate that the employee's attendance will enhance the ability to perform in their assigned job function.

Each elected official or department head is required to budget for registration at conferences, seminars and continuing education annually as needed. If there is not budget appropriation for this expenditure, the expenditure will not be approved until an official budget amendment has been approved in Commissioners' Court.

All elected officials and department heads are required to budget for state-required annual continuing education for all members of their staff where required. When properly budgeted, the county will pay for all required continuing education mandated by state statutes for elected officials and appointed department heads.

#### **Miscellaneous**

The employee needs to be aware that a credit card receipt is not documentation for expenditure. Unless otherwise stated in this policy, all requests for reimbursements and/or requests for the county to pay for a travel-related expenditure must be supported by documentation. It is the employee's responsibility to secure the documentation at the time of expenditure. In the event no documentation is secured, certification as to the expenditure is not sufficient to support reimbursement. Some form of contemporaneous record must be received from the vendor, per IRS Regulations.

When an employee elects to travel with spouse and/or family, this must be accurately documented and separation of costs will be required. Lodging expenses must be documented by the hotel/motel as to what a single occupancy rate would have been. This should be done on the face of the receipt.

All elected officials and department heads are to insure that all employees have read this policy and comply with it. Failure to follow this policy will result in a delay in the reimbursement process, and could possibly cause legitimate reimbursements to be denied. If in doubt provide an explanation or other documentation. The county does not intend for employees to finance county operations.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/10/2013***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Uniform Purchase Policy**

It is the policy of Hood County to comply with all IRS regulations regarding the purchase of uniforms for employees of the county.

Uniforms can only be excluded from an employee's wages if they are:

- Specifically required as a condition of employment, and
- Are not worn or adaptable to general usage as ordinary clothing.

Any clothing provided to the employee that does not meet the above criteria will either be charged to that employee or listed as taxable income. This includes items such as polo shirts, jeans, and hats.

Any questions on whether or not a uniform purchase can be excluded from an employee's wages should be directed to the Hood County Auditor.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Unlawful Act Policy**

No Hood County employee will ever be expected to perform any unlawful action. If any Hood County employee is asked to perform an action that the employee either knows or believes to be unlawful, by any person who is in a position of authority, the employee must decline and immediately report the request to the Director of Personnel and Risk Management.

The Director of Personnel and Risk Management will take all necessary actions to ensure that the employee is protected from retaliation for making such a report.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**USE OF COUNTY FACILITIES**

The use of Hood County facilities for public meetings and other functions is allowed with prior approval and on an availability basis. Each group wanting to use county facilities will provide the name and phone number of a contact person.

All rooms or facilities used must be returned to their original condition at the conclusion of the event or meeting, and all lights must be turned off. Failure to respect and care for county facilities will result in the loss of the ability to use them.

Hood County prohibits the use of its facilities for sales of any kind; fundraising; or individual candidate political events.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Use of Recording Devices Policy**

The use of camera phones, PDAs or other audio or video recording capable devices within the county may constitute not only an invasion of employees' personal privacy, but may breach the confidentiality of Hood County or compromise other protected information. Therefore, the use of camera or other video-capable recording devices within Hood County property is prohibited without the express prior permission of senior management and of the person(s) present at the time. This prohibition is specifically applicable to restrooms and locker rooms, and includes the interior of all county-owned property.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Operation and Use of County Vehicles**

County vehicles shall not be driven to and from work with the exception of departments subject to emergency call outs and/ or multiple reporting locations. The Commissioners' Court approves such use for Animal Control, Law Enforcement Center (LEC), Fire Marshal, and Road Operations. Unless the department personnel are on an emergency call for the county, these vehicles should not be driven outside of regularly scheduled working hours.

All Hood County Fleet Operators shall possess a valid Texas Driver's License in good standing. Any county fleet operator who receives a citation for a driving incident which would affect his/her licensing or insurability shall notify his/her supervisor immediately. That employee may then be reassigned to a non-driving position, if available, until the disposition of the citation is finalized. All county fleet operators are subject to random driving record checks.

Only county employees authorized to operate county vehicles may drive such vehicles. **Only county employees may be a passenger in a county owned vehicle, with the exception of:**

1. Sheriff department prisoners.
2. Fire Marshal Deputies and/or volunteer firefighters.
3. Juveniles being transported by Juvenile Probation Officers.
4. Patients for commitments to a state, county or VA hospital.
5. Medical or other emergency situations of a non-personal nature.
6. Special situations involving official county business

The employee in charge should exercise good judgment and care while operating equipment owned by the county as a public entity. **No employee shall use any county vehicle for any private use for profit or personal purpose, not expressly county business (to include the transport of family members) unless it has been authorized by action of the Commissioners' Court.**

**At no time shall any Hood County driver use a cell phone for text messaging or emailing while driving a county vehicle. If a county driver needs to use his/her cell phone for those purposes, the driver will pull his/her vehicle to a safe place before doing so.**

**Hood County vehicles are not to be taken out of the county when employees are off duty.**

**Employees found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination or loss of driving privileges.**

*Approved in Commissioners' Court on 5/28/2013*



## Hood County Commissioners' Court Policies and Procedures

### Vacation Policy

#### Eligibility:

You will receive vacation with pay if you are an active, full-time employee at the county. Full-time shall be defined as employees regularly scheduled to work 32 or more hours per week.

Part-time employees are not eligible for the vacation benefit. Part-time employees shall be defined as employees working less than 32 hours per week.

Accrual of vacation shall begin at the time an employee begins work in a position eligible to accrue vacation, but an employee must work for a minimum of 60 days in such a position before being eligible to take any vacation. Any request to use vacation in the first 60 days of employment will require the approval of the immediate supervisor and the Director of Human Resources. Employees shall only be able to use vacation which has already been accrued and shall not be allowed to borrow vacation against possible future accruals.

New employees and all other employees in a position eligible to receive vacation shall accrue vacation from the start date to 4 years of service at the rate of 3.08 hours per pay period, which is equivalent to 10 days/80 hours per year.

Employees entering year 5 of service in a position eligible to receive vacation shall accrue vacation at the rate of 4.62 hours per pay period, which is equivalent to 15 days/120 hours per year.

Employees entering year 10 of service in a position eligible to receive vacation shall accrue vacation at the rate of 6.15 hours per pay period, which is equivalent to 20 days/160 hours per year.

Employees entering year 20 of service in a position eligible to receive vacation shall accrue vacation at the rate of 7.69 hours per pay period, which is equivalent to 25 days/200 hours per year.

Upon the recommendation and verification of directly related experience and the approval of the Commissioners' Court, new employees may be given credit for their previous experience and placed on the vacation accrual schedule commensurate with their experience, but not to exceed the 5-9 years level.

#### VACATION ACCRUAL PER YEARS OF SERVICE/PAY PERIOD

Service	Days	Hours	Accrual
0-4 Years	10	80	3.08
5-9 Years	15	120	4.62
10-19 Years	20	160	6.15
20+ Years	25	200	7.69

All vacation should be taken in the year it is earned but can be carried over into a new fiscal year. When a maximum accumulation rate is reached, no more vacation time can be earned or accumulated until the employee uses some of the accumulated vacation. Vacation can be accumulated at a rate of one and half times the amount an employee would be eligible to take in a given year.

#### General:

Vacation shall not be accrued while an employee is on leave without pay.

Scheduling of vacations shall be at the discretion of the individual department head. One week of vacation will be equivalent to a forty-hour workweek. One day of vacation will be equivalent to an eight-hour workday.

The maximum amount of unused vacation an employee shall be allowed to have at one time is 30 days/240 hours. When an employee reaches the maximum accrual, he/she shall not be allowed to accrue additional vacation time until the employee takes vacation hours to reduce the balance below the maximum allowed under this policy. Employees shall not be allowed to receive pay for vacation in lieu of taking time off.

If a holiday falls during an employee's vacation then the employee will not be charged for the vacation.

**The maximum payout at separation from employment for any reason will be 10 days/80 hours.** If an employee has worked in a position which accrues vacation at the time the employee resigns, is discharged, or is terminated for any other reason, the employee shall receive pay for all unused vacation up to the maximum allowed under this policy.

Any employee eligible for retirement with TCDRS in 2016, 2017, or 2018, will be subject to the following payout schedule.

Retirement by 12/31/2016.....160 hours  
Retirement by 12/31/2017.....120 hours  
Retirement by 12/31/2018..... 80 hours

All employees not eligible for TCDRS retirement will be subject to the 10 days/80 hours limit upon the effective date of this policy.

Additionally, employees retiring under this policy will be required to wait two (2) complete calendar years prior to being eligible for rehire by Hood County.

In the event of an employee's death, the employee's beneficiary or estate will be paid the accrued vacation according to the above schedule.

Each department head or their approved designee shall be responsible for accurately recording all vacation time used on their employees' time sheets.

From time to time, the Commissioners' Court has the option to offer a vacation buyback program to allow employees the option to sell back vacation days that they have been unable to use. Details of these buyback offers will be communicated to all employees at the appropriate time.

Approved in Commissioners' Court on 09/13/2016



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Willful Destruction of County Property**

**Any willful destruction of Hood County Property will result in immediate termination and prosecution.**

*APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011*



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**WORKERS COMPENSATION POLICY**

Injuries occurring in the course of employment are paid for by workers' compensation insurance. Workers' compensation insurance pays all medical costs, without a deductible provision, and is paid for exclusively by Hood County's Workers' Compensation carrier. There are well-defined provisions that must be met to ensure that employees qualify for workers' compensation benefits.

Any work-related injury or illness must be immediately reported both verbally and in writing to the employee's supervisor. The supervisor will then immediately refer the employee to the emergency room at Lake Granbury Medical Center. The workers' compensation insurer will investigate all late reported claims. When facts cannot be verified, the claim will be denied. Any claim for an injury or illness caused by an employee's willful misconduct, alcohol or drug usage or that occur during the employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by Hood County will not be compensable. Workers' compensation fraud is a felony, punishable by fines and/or jail time. The organization will prosecute any individual found to be claiming a work-related illness or injury fraudulently.

An approved physician must treat the injured employee. The workers' compensation insurance carrier in certain cases will assign specialists. Any treatment other than that approved by the workers' compensation insurance carrier will not be compensable in certain cases.

There are two types of workers' compensation benefits paid to an employee with a work-related injury or illness: medical and wage replacement benefits:

**Medical benefits**

Physician's fees--The approved physician who provides treatment is paid through the workers' compensation insurer;

Hospital fees--Paid in full

Pharmacy costs--Paid in full if prescribed by an approved physician; and

Special costs--Any other medical costs including but not limited to braces, crutches, physical therapy, and rehabilitation therapy if deemed necessary by an approved physician will be paid in full according to state law.

**Wage replacement benefits**

There is currently an eight day waiting period, and then wage replacement benefits are paid during the time employees are temporarily disabled from work-related injury or illness. Employees receive a percentage of their salary as set by the Texas state law, which is currently two-thirds of

your wage rate. In order to offset the remainder of the one-third difference in pay, employees may use any available sick leave, vacation or comp time. If the injured worker elects to use accrued leave it is considered post injury earnings and any temporary income benefits will be adjusted accordingly.

Employees will be covered for the period of disability to the limit allowed under state workers' compensation law. The workers' compensation insurer will pay the employee. The check will be mailed to the employee's home address.

Every effort by Hood County employees should be made to work safely and avoid injury to themselves and others while working in the county.

FMLA benefits shall run concurrently with all Workers' Compensation leave.

**Temporary Modified Duty:** See policy for explanation.

**APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011**



**Hood County Commissioners' Court  
Policies and Procedures**

**Workplace Violence Prevention Policy**

**Objective:**

Hood County is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general, Hood County has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

**Scope of Policy:**

All full-time and part-time, active employees are covered under this policy. It is the policy of Hood County to maintain a zero tolerance for workplace violence, or the threat of violence, by any of its employees, customers, the general public, and/or anyone who conducts business with the county. It is the intent of this policy to ensure that the county provides a workplace that is free from intimidation, threats, or violent acts.

**Procedures:**

All employees, including supervisors and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay", or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from the premises of Hood County without proper authorization.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee or a member of the public will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment; including harassment that is based on an individual's sex, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

All threats of (or actual) violence both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor or any other member of management. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Do not place yourself in peril. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance near your workstation, do not try to intercede or see what is happening.

Hood County will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the Hood County individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and integrity of its investigation, Hood County may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation. It is a violation of this policy to engage in any act of violence in this workplace. Examples of violence include:

- Teasing and practical jokes that cause anger or humiliation;
- Intimidation or bullying;
- Angry outbursts;
- Verbal abuse, name-calling, or obscene language;
- Threats (verbal, written or motioned);
- Harassment (general, racial, or sexual);
- Theft, vandalism, or sabotage;
- Throwing or breaking objects;
- Romantic obsessions and stalking;
- Sexual assault or rape;
- Unauthorized possession and use of weapons.

Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Hood County encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors or the Personnel Department before the situation escalates into potential violence. Hood County is eager to assist in the resolution of employee's disputes, and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

***APPROVED IN COMMISSIONERS' COURT ON 9/27/2011***