

Douglas County



Personnel Policies

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SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Douglas County is to provide cost-effective services, with equal access to all citizens; to continue and enhance partnerships; to responsibly manage our resources and plan for the future.

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Douglas County to establish a system of human resources administration for all employees of Douglas County that is consistent with the mission of Douglas County and in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and county rules and regulations. Positive action is required from all employees to ensure that Douglas County complies with its obligations under state and federal law, and county ordinances. This manual is not a contract of employment, can be modified at any time with or without notice, and supersedes and replaces all prior personnel policies, handbooks and procedure, whether written or established by past practice.

This manual applies to non-represented employees as well as general municipal employees previously covered under a collective bargaining agreement. For employees who remain covered under a collective bargaining agreement or Douglas County's Civil Service Ordinance, the terms of the bargaining agreement or ordinance may supersede the terms of this manual.

Departments may find it necessary to develop departmental procedures and practices based on their specific line of work. Those procedures and practices may supersede any outlined in this manual as they relate to that department, subject to the review and approval of the Human Resources Department prior to implementation.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT

Douglas County is an equal opportunity employer, committed to promoting equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees, regardless of age (over 40), national origin or ancestry, arrest record, conviction record, color, creed or religion, disability or association with a person with a disability, genetic testing, honesty testing, marital status, pregnancy or childbirth, military service, race, sex, sexual orientation, use or nonuse of lawful products off the employer's premises during non-working hours, and any other status protected under applicable federal or state law. Employees will not be harassed in the workplace based on their protected status nor retaliated against for filing a complaint, for assisting with a complaint, or for opposing discrimination in the workplace.

Douglas County's commitment to equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination applies in all matters of employment including, without limitation: recruiting, testing, and certifying of candidates; interviewing; training of employees; assigning work; career advancement opportunities; layoffs and terminations; compensation and benefits; work environment; discipline; retention; committee appointments; transfer opportunities; hiring and promoting.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

POLICY: Certain rights and responsibilities are imposed by state and federal laws and regulations. Many of these rights and responsibilities have implications for policies and procedures governing employment. For this reason, Douglas County reserves any and all management rights regarding employees' employment status.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following management rights are not to be interpreted as being all-inclusive, but merely indicate the types of rights which are reserved to management.

The role of management includes, but is not limited to, the right to:

- A. Manage and direct employees;
- B. Hire, promote, schedule, transfer and assign employees;
- C. Schedule overtime as required;
- D. Suspend, demote, discharge and take disciplinary action;
- E. Lay off and recall employees;
- F. Assign work duties;
- G. Relieve employees from their duties;
- H. Develop job descriptions;
- I. Determine the kind and amount of services to be performed and number and kind of classifications to perform such services;
- J. Discontinue certain operations or services;
- K. Introduce new or improved methods or facilities or to change existing methods or facilities;
- L. Take whatever action is necessary to comply with State or Federal laws;
- M. Contract out for goods and services;
- N. Direct all operations of the county; and
- O. Take whatever action is necessary to carry out the functions of the County.

SEVERABILITY

The Personnel Policies of Douglas County are subject to the laws of the United States, the State of Wisconsin, and Douglas County. If any provision of these policies shall be declared by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of other provisions. All other provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

SECTION II – EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

POLICY: To review and provide total base wages in accordance with State law which authorizes collective bargaining for total base wages only; to allow for consideration of other forms of compensation outside of collective bargaining.

Procedure

Douglas County is prohibited from engaging in collective bargaining with general municipal employees on any form of compensation except for total base wages. Premium pay, merit pay, automatic pay progressions and any other form of supplemental compensation may be considered, but not collectively bargained, by Douglas County.

Douglas County may bargain with units comprised exclusively of public safety employees on most terms and conditions of employment, including any form of compensation. Public safety employees may not bargain on the design and selection of health care coverage plans or the Wisconsin Retirement System required contributions for new hires.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

EMPLOYEE STATUS CATEGORIES

POLICY: To define employee status categories based on the number of hours worked and type of position held.

A. Regular Full-Time

Employees who work 37.5 – 40.00 hours per week on a continuous basis.

B. Regular Part-Time

Employees who regularly work 20.00 but less than 37.5 – 40.00 hours per week on a continuous basis.

C. Temporary

Employees holding jobs of limited or specified duration arising out of special projects, position vacancy pending appointment, the absence of a position incumbent, abnormal workloads, emergencies, or other reasons established by the Employer. Temporary employees may work either full- or part-time work schedules and may be eligible to receive benefits.

D. Seasonal

Employees employed during the season in which services are required.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

HOURS OF WORK

POLICY: To provide employees with regular work hours and work schedules while ensuring staffing coverage necessary for effective operations. Hours of work may vary as deemed necessary for the effective and efficient operation of each department.

A. Workday/Workweek

1. Full-Time Employees: The normal workday will consist of 7.5 or 8.0 consecutive hours of work. The normal workweek is Sunday through Saturday, beginning and ending at midnight on Sunday, consisting of 37.5 or 40 hours.
2. Part-Time Employees: The normal workday/workweek for any part-time employee shall be designated by the respective department manager.
3. Departments providing 24-hour services may have different work schedules, and other work schedules, shifts, days, hours and periods can be established and modified by department managers based on operating conditions and requirements of the department, subject to the approval of the Human Resources Department.

B. Hours of Operation

General hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with the exception of those departments providing 24 hour services, and departments which have established different hours of operation.

C. Compensable Hours

Douglas County will compensate employees for hours worked as defined under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Paid time may include waiting time, on-call time, rest periods, training attendance, and travel time, subject to the requirements of the FLSA. Any questions as to whether hours are to be compensated should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

D. Non-Compensable Hours

The following is excluded from actual hours worked:

1. Paid benefit time (non-job related training, paid holidays, vacation, sick leave, personal leave, etc.).
2. Compensatory time off with pay.
3. Meal periods when completely relieved of all duties, whether or not the employee is free to leave premises.
4. Normal travel to and from residence to the assigned job location.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

LAYOFF AND RECALL

POLICY: Length of service and the qualifications to perform the available work will be the determining factors in the event of a layoff.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

LENGTH OF SERVICE

POLICY: To define length of service as it relates to employment with Douglas County and to be used for benefit determination.

Procedure

1. Length of service will be computed from the first day of hire into regular status.
2. If a temporary employee changes to regular status, the employee's length of service will be computed from the first day of hire into regular status and will not include any prior temporary service.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

MERIT / REWARD SYSTEM i

POLICY: To recognize and reward employee performance above the meet expectations level. In so doing, we hope to encourage all employees to perform at the highest level possible. The Merit/Reward System is essential to realizing the County’s vision to be an organization that expects, recognizes, rewards and nurtures exceptional performance.

Eligibility

Non-represented employees who receive a Total Weighted Average Score above a 3.0 on their annual performance evaluation are eligible for merit/reward the following calendar year. (The Total Weighted Average Score is calculated from the scores given to the employee by his/her supervisor using performance evaluation forms hosted on the performance evaluation software).

The actual amount of the merit/reward received by the employee will be based on the employee’s Total Weighted Average Score (TWAS). Employees who score at or above a TWAS of 3.5 will be eligible for the maximum merit/reward. Employees who score above a 3.0 and below or equal to a 3.49 will receive a prorated reward.

The Merit/Reward System does not apply to elected officials or employees who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

Employee Choice

Employees can choose from one of the following merit/reward options depending on TWAS received:

Total Weighted Average Score	Reward
0 - 3.00	Not eligible
>3 – 3.49	Lump sum up to .96% or ½ of one week base wage/salary; or Merit days equal to ½ of one week base wage/salary (2.5 days; 20 hours; 18.75 hours); or HSA contribution equal to ½ of one week base wage/salary
3.5 - 5	Lump sum up to 1.92% or one week base wage/salary; or Merit days equal to one week base wage/salary; or HSA contribution equal to one week base wage/salary; or Vacation Incentive (offered to employees not at maximum vacation accrual – Addendum A attached)

Timing of Merit/Reward

The funding and timing of the Merit/Reward System will be at the discretion of the Douglas County Board of Supervisors.

ⁱ County reserves the right to modify the merit/reward system based on financial and operational considerations and federal regulations.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #48-15; May 21, 2015
Amended by County Board, Resolution #69-17; November 16, 2017*

**ADDENDUM A
VACATION INCENTIVE SCHEDULE**

Years of Service	Months of Service	Monthly Accrual
A	A	A
1-6	1-71	6.67
7-11	72-131	10
12-16	132-191	13.34
17+	192+	16.67
B	B	B
1-3	1-35	6.67
4-9	36-107	10
10-14	108-167	13.34
15+	168+	16.67
C	C	C
1-2	1-23	6.67
3-7	24-83	10
8-12	84-143	13.34
13+	144+	16.67
D	D	D
1-2	1-23	6.67
3-5	24-59	10
6-10	60-119	13.34
11+	120+	16.67

- A = regular vacation accrual with no merit adjustment
- B = vacation accrual from A
- C = vacation accrual from B
- D = vacation accrual from C

Employees who receive 3.5 or greater may move on the vacation incentive table up one letter (A to B; B to C; C to D).

OVERTIME/COMPENSATORY TIME

POLICY: To define overtime pay and compensatory time in relation to non-exempt and exempt employees as designated under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

A. Non-Exempt Employees

Employees in non-exempt positions are paid on an hourly basis. Non-exempt employees who work in excess of 40 hours per week (paid benefit time does not count toward the accumulation of 40 hours; hours between 37.5 and 40 are paid at straight time) may receive either:

1. Overtime pay of one and one-half times the hours worked; or
2. Compensatory time off, if agreed to by the employee, at the rate of one and one-half times the hours worked, provided that the overtime is authorized by the department manager and taken during the same payroll period or the payroll period immediately following the overtime hours, or at a mutually agreeable time between the employee and department manager. Only compensatory time earned in December may be carried over into the new year with the approval of the Human Resources Department; provided it is used before January 31 of the following year. The payment for this compensatory time (if not used and, therefore, must be paid) shall be at the wage rate at which it was earned in December.

B. Exempt Employees

Employees in exempt positions are generally paid on a salary basis and are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws and are not eligible for overtime pay. Exempt employees are expected to work the hours necessary to perform the duties and responsibilities of their positions. However, Douglas County recognizes that exempt employees work beyond their normal workday/workweek and will be given flexibility in regard to absences during normal work hours.

C. Documentation of Administrative Hours

1. Exempt employees who work in excess of their normal weekly work hours should record those hours on a straight hour for hour basis. These hours may be used for absences from work, not to exceed 96 hours per year, and hours used cannot exceed hours recorded.
2. Administrative hours can only be accumulated within a calendar year and are zeroed out on December 31 of each year. Exempt employees will not be paid for any unused hours.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

PAYROLL PRACTICES

POLICY: To standardize payroll and payroll procedures in accordance with applicable State and Federal guidelines.

A. Pay Periods

Paychecks are deposited, by direct deposit, bi-weekly. If payroll falls on a holiday, payroll checks are deposited the business day prior to the holiday.

B. Status Changes

Employee shall notify the Human Resources Department or the Finance Department Payroll Coordinator of any status changes (such as name, home address, telephone number(s), marital status, name or number of dependents, number of tax exemptions, health/dental insurance classification, or beneficiary changes). This information is necessary as it may affect compensation, dependents' eligibility for insurance, and other important matters.

Douglas County is only required to accept changes to a Form W4, Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate, if there has been a life change for an employee (i.e. marriage, birth, death, spouse begins working, child turns 18, etc.)

C. Deductions

Douglas County will comply with applicable wage and hour laws and regulations. If employees have any questions or concerns about their salaried status or believe that any deduction has been made from their pay that is inconsistent with an employee's salaried status, the employee should immediately raise the matter with the Human Resources Department or the Finance Department Payroll Coordinator for assistance in understanding the information that is required in order to investigate the matter.

Douglas County is committed to investigating and resolving all complaints as promptly, but also as accurately, as possible. Consistent with the U.S. Department of Labor's policy, any complaint will be resolved within a reasonable time given all the facts and circumstances. If an investigation reveals that an employee was subjected to an improper deduction from pay, the employee will be reimbursed and Douglas County will take whatever action it deems necessary to ensure compliance with the salary basis test in the future.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

POSITION CLASSIFICATION/RECLASSIFICATION REVIEW

POLICY: Douglas County, as an employer who values its employees and strives to compensate them fairly and equitably, has developed the following position reclassification procedure.

Procedure

The Review Procedure provided here is the method for determining (1) classification of new positions or (2) reclassification actions involving substantial changes in the duties and responsibilities of an existing position.

A. Classification or Reclassification Consideration

Request for reclassification of a current position or the classification of a new position may be submitted to Administration/Human Resources during the month of April for incorporation into the following year's budget. Classification of a new position may also be submitted at any time during the year due to a department reorganization resulting from a vacated position.

Reclassification for existing positions requires documentation of substantial changes in existing duties since the most recent review. To be considered for reclassification, changes should be permanent, and typically have been in effect for at least six-months preceding the request. Reclassifications will not be considered for temporary changes in duties or increases in workload of existing duties.

B. Procedure

A request for classification or reclassification consideration should be accompanied by:

1. Position Classification Review Form
2. A new or revised Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) which highlights duty changes. The Questionnaire must be signed by the employee and the supervisor/department head. The Questionnaire must also be submitted to the Human Resource Manager for verification and accuracy. New PDQ's are traditionally sent to the County's Compensation Study Consultant for review and recommendations of placement on the Grade Order grid.
3. All requests should also include the fiscal impact of the proposed change. The Finance Department will provide a Form B-5 that indicates the fiscal impact.
4. The Administrator will review the requests, related documentation and provide a recommendation for approval or denial. Employees and their Supervisor/Department Manager will be informed of the recommendation and be provided an opportunity to meet and discuss the recommendation with Administration/Human Resources.
5. All requests will be submitted to the Administration Committee with all supporting documentation. If approved, the request will either be incorporated into the following year's

budget or, if the request resulted from a re-organization, it will be forwarded to the County Board for approval at the next scheduled meeting. Implementation of requests will begin on either the first day of the fiscal year or, in the case of a re-organization, within 30 days of the County Board action.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #19-15; March 19, 2015
Amended by County Board, Resolution #21-19; April 18, 2019*

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

POLICY: To abide by all laws pertaining to fair employment practices. The recruitment and selection policy is designed to promote, recruit and select individuals on the basis of their relative knowledge, skill and ability.

A. Procedure

The Human Resources Department is responsible for, and must be involved in, all steps of the recruitment and hiring process.

1. New Positions – Approval to Hire

New or additional county positions must be authorized by county board resolution and, under most circumstances, will only be considered at budget time.

2. Vacant Positions – Approval to Hire

All job openings are to be reported to the Human Resources Department.

The County Administrator must approve the replacement hiring for all positions. That process will include justification for the position and discussion of any potential for structural reorganization and/or reassignment of duties and responsibilities. The County Administrator may authorize early hire in extraordinary situations as long as there is no budget impact.

3. Temporary Workers – Approval to Hire

If a department manager determines a need to utilize temporary workers during the process to fill vacant positions or to meet workload needs, a request should be submitted to the Human Resources Department for County Administrator approval. The Human Resources Department will make arrangements and contract for temporary workers.

B. Recruitment/Posting Process

If County Administrator approval is given to fill a position, the following occurs:

- 1.** Job descriptions will be reviewed and updated, if needed.
- 2.** In most instances, the position will be posted internally for five (5) days in the Government Center, courthouse and off-site facilities.
- 3.** Recruitment may simultaneously be conducted internally and externally, or may only be conducted externally, depending on the circumstances.

C. Selection Process

- 1.** The Human Resources Department will conduct all phases of the selection/hiring process, including:
 - a. Receiving and reviewing of applications for qualifications.
 - b. Conducting or coordinating all reference checks and qualification verifications involving the final candidates.
 - c. Extending of job offer.
 - d. Arranging for all post-job offer testing, including physical examinations and psychological examinations as applicable.
- 2.** If the minimum qualifications require meeting standards that can be only measured through written tests, performance tests or structured interviews, Human Resources staff will administer the tests prior to referral of candidates to the hiring manager. The county reserves the right to determine what testing requirements will be administered to determine if an applicant is qualified to fill any vacant position.
- 3.** Per Wisconsin Statutes, the Administrator shall appoint department managers of the county except for those elected by the people. Any appointment made by the Administrator shall require the confirmation of the County Board unless the board, by ordinance, elects to waive confirmation or unless the appointment is made under a civil service system competitive examination procedure.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Amended by County Board, Resolution #64-13; August 15, 2013
Amended by County Board, Resolution #31-21; August 19, 2021*

SECTION III – TIME AWAY FROM WORK

HOLIDAYS

POLICY: To identify employee holidays and to establish a consistent procedure for scheduling and payment.

A. Procedure

Douglas County offices are closed on the following designated holidays (with the exception of those specific services which operate on a 24 hour basis):

New Year's Day	Labor Day
President's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Spring Holiday	Day after Thanksgiving*
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve Day
Independence Day	Christmas Day

*Highway Department employees observe Veteran's Day in place of Day after Thanksgiving

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, it shall be observed the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be observed. If a holiday falls within an employee's vacation period, that day is paid as a holiday and not counted as a vacation day.

B. Eligibility:

1. Regular full-time employees are eligible to receive holiday pay.
2. Regular part-time employees are eligible to receive prorated holiday pay.
3. Regular full-time or part-time employees are not eligible to receive pay for designated holidays which occur during an unpaid leave of absence.

C. Work on Designated Holiday

1. Employees who are required to work on a designated holiday when their department is officially closed, will have an option of:
 - a. Being paid for actual hours worked at their normal rate of pay; in addition to full holiday pay. Holiday hours, as well as hours worked on the designated holiday, will be credited toward hours worked for overtime purposes; or
 - b. Requesting compensatory time off for hours worked on a holiday. The time off must be taken under the provisions of Section II, Employment Policies, Overtime/Compensatory Time.

2. Certain employees who work in the Jail one half times the hours worked. (Holiday pay is included in the base wage for these employees.)
3. Temporary employees who work in the Jail and Communication Center on a designated holiday will receive overtime pay of one and one half times the hours worked.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012
Passed by County Board, Resolution #59-21; November 18, 2021*

LEAVES – BEREAVEMENT

POLICY: To allow paid leave for purposes of making funeral arrangements and/or attendance at a funeral.

A. Procedure

In the event of the death of a member of an employee’s immediate family, full-time employees will be granted up to three days of paid leave, if scheduled to work, to make necessary funeral arrangements and/or attend the funeral. Immediate family shall include the spouse, children, parents, grandparents, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, and grandchildren. The following is also allowed:

1. Douglas County recognizes that “immediate family” may not include people whom are cared about deeply. Leaves for funerals of individuals that are not listed may likewise be granted at the discretion of the department manager or designee.
2. Bereavement leave requested in excess of three days, may be allowed by the department manager; however, pay for additional leave shall not be allowed.
3. Should an employee be requested to serve as a pallbearer in a funeral, they may be granted one (1) day off with pay.
4. Department manager may require verification of the need for the leave.

B. Eligibility

1. Regular full-time employees are eligible to receive bereavement pay.
2. Regular part-time employees are eligible to receive prorated bereavement pay.
3. Regular full-time or part-time employees are not eligible to receive bereavement pay during an unpaid leave of absence.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Resolution #58-14, August 21, 2014*

LEAVES – FAMILY AND MEDICAL

POLICY: To grant family and medical leaves to qualified employees in accordance with the Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Law (WFML) and the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

A. Procedure

Family/medical leave is available to all employees who meet the legal eligibility requirements and will be administered accordingly. Employees are required to complete and submit a Leave of Absence Request Form to their immediate supervisor as far in advance of the anticipated leave as possible. The supervisor will submit the form to the Human Resources Department. Extension of a leave of absence must be approved by the County Administrator.

The statements contained in this policy are guidelines and the actual implementation of leave provisions are subject to the current laws.

B. Eligibility/Definitions

1. Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Law

The WFML is available for employees who have worked for Douglas County for 52 consecutive weeks, and at least 1,000 hours in the 12 months prior to leave, and allows:

- a. Up to six weeks of leave per 12-month period on the birth or adoption of a child.
- b. Up to two (2) weeks per 12-month period to care for a parent, child, spouse, parent-in-law, domestic partner (as defined in Wisconsin Statutes § 40.02(1) and § 770.01(1)), or domestic partner's parent with a serious health condition.
- c. Up to two (2) weeks per 12-month period for the serious health condition of the employee.

2. Federal Family and Medical Leave Act

The FMLA is available for employees who have worked for Douglas County for 12 months, and at least 1,250 hours in the 12 month period prior to leave, and allows up to 12 weeks of leave for the following:

- a. Birth or placement for adoption or foster care of a son or daughter.
- b. Serious health condition of the employee's parent, son, daughter or spouse.
- c. Serious health condition of the employee.

- d. A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, child, or parent is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty as a member of the Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves. The federal law also provides for 26 weeks of unpaid leave during a single 12-month period in the case of covered service member caregiver leave because the employee is the spouse, child, parent or next of kin of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness. This 12-month period begins on the first day the eligible employee takes leave for this purpose.

3. Compensation During Leave

Under the FMLA, an employee may elect, or employer may require, accrued paid leave to be substituted. Under the WFML, an employee may elect to substitute accrued paid or unpaid leave of any other type provided by the employer.

Once an employee has exhausted their WFML as applicable, Douglas County requires that an employee on FMLA exhaust their leave balances before any additional unpaid time may be taken. Accrued and earned time (sick, vacation, personal time, compensation time, etc.) will be assigned. Once all time is exhausted, the employee will be on unpaid leave.

C. Return to Work

Employees returning from a leave of absence will be reinstated to their same job or one of similar status and pay provided Douglas County's circumstances have not changed to the extent that it would be impossible or unreasonable to provide reinstatement. An employee has no greater right to restoration or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed.

D. Termination of Leave of Absence

A leave of absence will be terminated:

1. If the employee is employed outside of Douglas County, while on a leave of absence from Douglas County.
2. In most instances, if the employee fails to report to work on the agreed upon date.

E. Impact of Leave of Absence on Benefits

An approved leave of absence does not affect the employee's date of employment for benefit calculations. Following an approved leave of absence, employees will receive full credit for that period.

Vacation and sick leave benefits continue to accrue for employees who are on paid leave of absence. Unpaid authorized leave of absence results in a temporary suspension of vacation and accrual of unused sick leave, until active employment resumes.

It is the responsibility of the employee to pay any portion of their benefit premiums, as previously required.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

LEAVES – JURY DUTY

POLICY: To allow jury duty leave to employees who receive a summons to serve on jury duty.

A. Procedure

Employees must give reasonable advance notice of their intended absence for jury duty. If an employee is dismissed from jury duty on any given day prior to the end of his/her regularly scheduled working hours, he/she shall report to work for the balance of the working day.

If an employee is on jury duty, Douglas County will pay the employee's regular wage, not to exceed a normal workday, for a period not to exceed two weeks in a calendar year, and any jury duty pay received by the employee, excluding expenses, must be turned into the department manager.

B. Eligibility

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible to receive jury duty pay, except during an unpaid leave of absence.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

LEAVES – MILITARY

POLICY: To allow unpaid leave for purposes of fulfilling military obligations.

A. Procedure

1. Employees who are called to active military duty or to Reserve or National Guard training should submit copies of their military orders to the Human Resources Department as soon as received. Employees will be granted a military leave of absence without pay (except as stated below) for the period of military service outlined in the orders, in accordance with applicable laws. Eligibility for reinstatement after military duty is completed is also determined in accordance with applicable laws.
2. Douglas County will grant a military leave of absence of up to two weeks for full-time employees for the purpose of attending an annual encampment or cruise in a recognized reserve branch or component of the armed forces of the United States. Douglas County will supplement the employee's military pay with their wages to equal, but not exceed, their regular salary. Regular part-time and temporary employees will be granted an unpaid leave to fulfill this obligation. Employees returning from training must report to work on the first scheduled working day following the completion of training.

B. Return to Work

Upon successful completion of military service and timely notice of intent to return to work, an employee will be reinstated to a job comparable to the one the employee left, provided the employee is qualified and circumstances have not changed to the extent that it would be impossible or unreasonable to provide re-employment. An employee has no greater right to restoration or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed.

If an employee, on return from military service, is unable to perform the duties of the employee's previous job, Douglas County will engage in an interactive process with the employee and undertake a review of what reasonable accommodations may be available.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

LEAVES – OTHER

POLICY: To grant unpaid leave for personal and educational purposes.

A. Procedure

1. Personal

A personal leave of absence is defined as an authorized absence from work by a regular full-time or regular part-time employee, which is not covered by paid sick leave, vacation, holidays or any other reasons provided for in the attendance policy.

A personal leave of absence is normally without pay. Requests for personal leave are considered individually; the reasons for the request, demands of the individual job, needs of the department, as well as the employee's work record and length of service are all considered in granting a leave.

Personal leaves of absence should not exceed sixty (60) calendar days in any one (1) year.

Requests must be made in advance, and all arrangements must be approved by the employee's manager and the County Administrator.

2. Educational

Employees who desire to continue their education in preparation for added responsibilities with the County may be granted an unpaid educational leave of absence.

Educational leave may be granted by the department, and will require County Administrator approval. Requests will be considered on an individual and department circumstance.

B. Return to Work

Employees returning from a leave of absence will be reinstated to their same job or one of similar status and pay provided Douglas County's circumstances have not changed to the extent that it would be impossible or unreasonable to provide reinstatement. An employee has no greater right to restoration or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed.

C. Termination of Leave of Absence

A leave of absence will be terminated:

1. If the employee is employed outside of Douglas County, while on a leave of absence from Douglas County.
2. In most instances, if the employee fails to report to work on the agreed upon date.

D. Impact of Leave of Absence on Benefits

An approved leave of absence does not affect the employee's date of employment for benefit calculations. Following an approved leave of absence, employees will receive full credit for that period.

Vacation and sick leave benefits continue to accrue for employees who are on paid leave of absence. Unpaid authorized leave of absence results in a temporary suspension of vacation and accrual of unused sick leave, until active employment resumes.

It is the responsibility of the employee to pay any portion of their benefit premiums, as previously required.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

LEAVES – PERSONAL TIME

POLICY: To provide eligible employees with personal time, which is supplemental paid time off in which the employee may elect the date of use, while meeting the operational needs of Douglas County.

A. Procedure

1. Personal time shall according to the following schedule:

<u>Work Week Hours</u>	<u>Annual Time</u>
37.5	3.5 days (26.25 hours)
40	3.5 days (28 hours)
24/7 services (Dispatchers)	3.5 days (28 hours)
24/7 services (Jailers)	3 days (36 hours when working 12 hour shifts) 3.5 days (28 hours when working 8 hour shifts)
Highway	3.5 days *(30 hours)

*(1) ten hour day may be used when working the ten hour schedule

2. Personal time earned, but unused on or before December 31 of the same calendar year, will be forfeited.

3. Payment in lieu of personal time will not be granted.
4. If employment terminates, before personal time is earned, but has been taken, the unearned time used will be deducted from the employee's last paycheck.

B. Eligibility

1. Regular full-time employees are eligible for personal time benefits.
2. Regular part-time employees are eligible for prorated personal time benefits.
3. Newly-hired employees must meet a four month employment requirement during a calendar year before personal time can be used.
4. Personal time will not be earned if an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence for more than one month.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Amended by County Board, Resolution #57-13, June 20, 2013
Amended by County Board, Resolution #21-19; April 18 2019*

LEAVES – SICK

POLICY: To provide eligible employees with paid time to address their own personal health care needs or the health care needs of an immediate family member.

A. Procedure

All eligible employees may accumulate sick leave up to a maximum of one hundred twenty (120) days.

1. Regular full-time employees are credited with one (1) day of sick leave for each completed month of employment up to one hundred twenty (120) days.
2. Regular part-time employees are credited with prorated sick leave accruals based on hours worked, up to one hundred twenty (120) days.
3. Accumulated sick leave accruals are transferable within the county.
4. Accumulated sick leave accruals are not payable at termination of employment, except as specified under Section IV, C., Retirement Health Savings Plan.
5. A negative accrual balance of sick leave is not allowed, for any reason.

B. Eligibility

1. Regular full-time and regular part-time employees will receive sick leave accruals.
2. Newly-hired employees will earn sick leave beginning with date of hire and may use sick leave accruals after working thirty (30) calendar days, provided an accrual is recorded.

C. Allowable Use of Sick Leave

Sick leave may be used for absences from work for an employee's illness or injury, the necessary medical care of an immediate family member, and required medical and dental treatments. For purposes of this policy, family members are defined as children, spouse, parent, grandparent, or other family members residing in the employee's household. Illness occurring on days normally off by the employee, cannot be claimed as sick leave pay.

Verification of illness may be requested by an employee's immediate supervisor.

D. Excessive Use of Sick Leave

All non-FMLA approved sick leave usage in excess of seven (7) days in a calendar year may be considered excessive and employees should be informed and counseled by their manager of this problem (see Section VI, Attendance and Punctuality).

E. Retirement Health Savings Plan

Employees who have reached the 120 day sick leave cap, shall be allowed to deposit into a Retirement Health Savings Plan, the value of any additional earned sick days while they remain at the 120 day cap. The value is calculated monthly at 50% of an employee's current base rate, excluding longevity, times the number of hours accrued above the cap (see Section IV, C., Retirement Health Savings Plan).

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

LEAVES – VACATION

POLICY: To provide eligible employees with paid vacation time while meeting the operational needs of Douglas County. The established vacation year is the calendar year, January 1 through December 31 each year; vacation credits are accrued or earned based on the employee’s length of service and are transferable within Douglas County.

A. Procedure

Eligible employees will earn vacation credit for each month of service in which the employee is actively employed and in paid status, according to the following guidelines. The County Administrator may approve advanced movement within the earning guideline.

Vacation Earning Guideline

<u>Service Length</u>	<u>Monthly Credit (37.50/40.0)</u>	<u>Annual Days</u>
1-6 years (1-72 months)	6.25 or 6.67 hrs.	10 days
Start of 7 th year (73-132 months)	9.38 or 10.0 hrs.	15 days
Start of 12 th year (133-192 months)	12.5 or 13.33 hrs.	20 days
Start of 17 th year (193+ months)	15.63 or 16.67 hrs.	25 days

B. Eligibility

1. Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for vacation benefits.
2. Newly-hired employees will accrue vacation from their date of hire, but are not eligible to take vacation until successful completion of four months of their employment.
3. Vacation accruals will not be earned if an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence for more than one month.
4. Active employees are not eligible for salary in lieu of vacation.

C. Vacation Scheduling Guidelines

Preference in the selection of vacation shall be given to employees on the basis of their length of service and the needs of the department. Vacations may be determined in the following manner:

1. Employees may be allowed to make their first round of vacation preference for up to two weeks by March 31 of each year; scheduling of the first five days of vacation consecutively is encouraged.
2. Employees may be allowed to make their second round of vacation preference for up to five days by April 30 of each year.
3. After May 1, employee vacation preferences shall be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

D. Vacation Use/Carry Over

An employee may carry over up to five days of vacation with the approval of the department manager. The vacation days carried over must be taken on or before March 31 of the following calendar year or the vacation may be forfeited.

Under extreme circumstances, the County Administrator has the authority to approve an extension of the time beyond March 31 of the following year but no longer than June 30 of that year. The employee must submit a request in writing, with the department manager's approval, to the County Administrator outlining the circumstances of the request.

E. Termination of Employment

Upon termination of employment, employees with more than one year of service will be paid at their prevailing rate for accrued but unused vacation time. Vacation time used, but not yet accrued, will be deducted from the employee's final pay.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Amended by County Board, Resolution #64-13; August 15, 2013
Amended by County Board, Resolution #31-21; August 19, 2021*

SECTION IV – INSURANCE AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS

HEALTH/DENTAL INSURANCE

POLICY: To provide health and dental insurance to those employees who qualify for coverage.

A. Procedure

Douglas County's health and dental insurance programs are administered through the Human Resources Department. All employees who work 30 hours or more per week are eligible for health and dental insurance, if they elect to participate. Levels of benefits provided, employee participation, and employee contribution rates are determined by Douglas County and applicable state and federal regulations. For details regarding coverage and premium contributions, please contact the Human Resources Department.

B. Insurance Continuation

1. COBRA

Health/dental insurance coverage shall end upon termination on the last day of the calendar month in which the individual is employed. Under state law and the Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) and subsequent amendments to the Act, employees covered under an employer's group health care plan are eligible for continuation of health care coverage under the group plan upon the employee's termination (except for gross misconduct) or reduction in hours. COBRA regulations also allow the employee's spouse and covered dependents to elect continuation of coverage upon the employee's death, divorce or legal separation, entitlement to Medicare, or a dependent's loss of dependent status under family coverage.

2. Retirement

Retiring employees who receive benefits under the Wisconsin Retirement System, and have retired prior to January 1, 2013, have the option of continuing health insurance coverage until age 65 or Medicare eligible, whichever comes first, by paying 100% of the premium costs. The retired employee must pay Douglas County on or before the 15th of the month for the succeeding month's health insurance to retain eligibility to participate in the county's health insurance plan. Health insurance coverage shall end on the last day of the calendar month in which the retiree becomes age 65 or Medicare eligible.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Resolution #21-12, March 12, 2012*

OTHER INSURANCE/BENEFIT PLANS

POLICY: To provide other insurance and benefit plans to employees.

Description

The following insurance/benefit plans are currently available to eligible county employees and are subject to change or cancellation at any time.

1. Life insurance plans.
2. Supplemental insurance plan.
3. Deferred compensation plans.
4. Pre-tax (flexible benefit) plan.
5. Short-term disability plan.
6. Long-term disability plan.
7. Employee Assistance Program.

For details regarding the above plans and enrollment information, contact the Human Resources Department.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

RETIREMENT

POLICY: To provide retirement contributions to eligible employees in accordance with state laws and to identify benefits available to eligible employees after retirement.

A. Eligibility

Regular full-time employees: Are considered immediately eligible for participation in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS).

Part-time employees: Initially employed by a WRS employer on or after July 1, 2011, who are expected to be employed at least one year from date of hire, defined as 365 consecutive days or 366 in leap year, and who are expected to work at least two-thirds of full-time, defined as 1200 hours, are eligible for participation in WRS.

Employees who previously worked for a WRS-participating employer, must be evaluated under the old eligibility requirements of expected to work at least one-third of full time, defined as 600 hours, for a period of at least 12 months, to qualify for participation in WRS.

B. Contribution

Douglas County shall pay in full the required employer contribution to the Wisconsin Retirement Fund for all employees.

C. Retirement Health Savings Plan

Douglas County sponsors a health benefits savings plan that allows employees to accumulate assets, on a tax-free basis, to pay for medical expenses upon retirement.

Upon retirement under the WRS, as determined by WRS eligibility, or forced retirement due to disability or death of an employee, the employee or his estate shall have deposited on their behalf in the Retirement Health Savings Plan, the value (value to be determined by the number of hours times employee hourly rate) of the employee's unused sick leave, not to exceed 120 days, with distribution to be according to IRS regulations.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

SECTION V – WORKPLACE POLICIES

ACUTE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS (INFECTIOUS DISEASE) EMERGENCY POLICY

POLICY: To take appropriate measures to protect the workplace in the event of an acute respiratory illness/infectious disease outbreak. Douglas County will strive to operate effectively and ensure all essential services are continuously provided and employees are safe within the workplace.

A. Prevention

Employees are asked to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of infectious disease in the workplace. Employees who exhibit symptoms of acute respiratory illness (fever plus at least a cough or sore throat and possibly other symptoms like runny nose, body aches, chills, fatigue, vomiting and diarrhea) are recommended to stay home.

Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness should not come to work until they are free from fever (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater using an oral thermometer), and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).

Douglas County may limit all nonessential travel during an infectious disease outbreak. Employees should consult with their supervisor or department manager for clarification.

Telecommuting/telework requests will be handled on a case by case basis. Not all positions will be eligible. Temporary requests shall be submitted to an employee's supervisor or department manager for consideration. **The Human Resource Department must be notified of all requests that are granted.**

B. Notification by Employee

Employees who exhibit, or are aware of, any acute respiratory illness symptoms themselves, or employees who must care for family or other household members with symptoms, must report the situation to their immediate supervisor or department manager immediately. **Department managers must report the illness to the Human Resource Department.**

C. Exclusion from Employment

Douglas County will take appropriate action to prevent, suppress, and control any acute respiratory illness or other communicable disease. In order to maintain a safe, work environment, Douglas County may exclude employees from employment that are exhibiting symptoms of acute respiratory illness.

Department managers or supervisors must consult with the Human Resource Department before excluding an employee from employment. Employees excluded from employment will not be allowed to return to their worksite until either:

1. Employee is free from fever and other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever or symptom altering medicines, or
2. A public health approved test for the illness demonstrates a negative result.

D. Leave Benefits

Employees who are excluded from employment due to the provisions in the Infectious Disease Policy, will be eligible for applicable paid sick leave benefits.

Employees with insufficient accrued time off balances, who are experiencing acute respiratory systems and stay home, or are excluded from employment, shall be allowed to take time-off without pay. This provision is temporary and non-precedence setting.

Employees may request additional time-off to care for family or other household members. Regular departmental, time-off request procedures must be followed.

Douglas County may advance additional paid leave or grant unpaid leave to employees in the event of a designated emergency. In all cases the Human Resource Department shall be informed of leave requests due to acute respiratory illness.

E. Continuity of Government

Management will take the prudent, necessary, and lawful measures needed to minimize the disruptions to the workplace, preserve the public health, and continue needed public services. All provisions set forth in this Policy shall be in effect only upon declaration of an Acute Respiratory Illness/Infectious Disease Emergency by the County Administrator or the County Board Chair. This declaration may be in addition to a Public Health Emergency as designated by the Douglas County Health Officer.

Every County Department, elected or appointed, shall refer to their Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), if needed, regarding issues such as: plans and procedures, essential functions, minimum staffing levels, and order of succession.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #15-20, March 19, 2020

AUTOMOBILE USAGE

POLICY: To establish requirements for employees who drive a personal vehicle or county-owned vehicle during the course of their employment.

Procedure

Employees who are required to operate an automobile in the course of their employment must possess a valid driver license at all times.

A. Personal Vehicle Usage

Any employee who uses their personal vehicle is required to have on file with the Finance Department proof of liability insurance coverage of at least \$100,000 for bodily injury to each person; \$300,000 for all bodily injury; and \$50,000 for property damage (100/300/50). Supervisors shall determine which employees meet this requirement and inform the Finance Department of any change in employee status as it relates to this policy.

B. County Vehicle Usage

Douglas County provides the use of county-owned vehicles to certain employees to conduct county business or report directly to their work from home. Use of county-owned vehicles for personal reasons is prohibited.

C. Employee Responsibility

Employees are not permitted, under any circumstances, to operate a vehicle for county business, when any physical or mental impairment causes the employee to be unable to drive safely. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, circumstances in which the employee is temporarily unable to operate a vehicle safely or legally because of illness, medication or intoxication. Employees who are unable to operate their vehicle for health reasons must notify their supervisor as soon as possible.

It is the expectation that employees who drive a vehicle on county business will exercise due diligence to drive safely and to maintain the security of the vehicle and its contents. Employees are responsible for any driving infractions or fines incurred as a result of their driving.

D. County Vehicle Identification

All vehicles owned by Douglas County must be identified as a county vehicle by decal with the exception of investigative vehicles.

E. Accident Reporting

1. A police report must be completed whenever a vehicle collision occurs.
2. If damage occurs to a county-owned vehicle, a Notice of Occurrence/Claim must be filed with the County Clerk's Office.
3. If bodily injury occurs, regardless of whether employee seeks medical care, an injury report must be completed by the employee and department manager and filed with the Human Resources Department.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

BULLETIN BOARDS

POLICY: To designate a bulletin board allowed for use by employees for posting of communications.

Procedure

Employees are allowed to post communications on designated employee bulletin boards located in the Courthouse, Government Center and Forestry Department and Highway Department facilities. Postings should be dated and will be removed after four weeks. Douglas County retains ownership of the bulletin board and its contents, and no notices shall be posted which contain material which is libelous, offensive, profane or in any way detrimental to Douglas County. Douglas County may remove any material at any time. All other bulletin boards located in county buildings are for official business only.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

CODE OF ETHICS

POLICY: To establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all county employees in accordance with law.

Procedure

Ordinance #1.25, Douglas County Ethics Ordinance, was enacted on September 18, 2003, under the authority of Section 19.59 of the Wisconsin Statutes, and is incorporated herein by reference to apply to all employees. This ordinance establishes a code of ethics for all county officials, setting out acts or actions which are incompatible with the best interests of the county and requiring certain disclosure of personal and financial interests, in matters affecting the county.

Employees may not use their county position to realize private gain, in any form, for the employee, the employee's immediate family, or an outside organization. Employees may not participate in decisions about hiring, retaining, or promoting, individuals if they have a personal relationship with the applicant/employee that may present a conflict of interest, or be perceived as presenting a conflict of interest. Employees are required to disclose any conflicts of interest/potential conflicts of interest with their supervisor or the Human Resources Department. The county retains the rights to determine whether or not an employee's actions are in conflict with county interests and Douglas County Ethics Ordinance.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

CREDIT CARD POLICY

POLICY: To establish guidelines for issuance of credit cards in the name of Douglas County.

Procedure

The use of credit cards in the name of Douglas County will be minimized to the extent possible; with credit cards only obtained upon the justification of need. It is not intended that every employee will have a credit card, or that credit cards be used on a widespread basis.

A. Authorization

Credit cards will be issued to individuals, in the individual's name, (no departmental credit cards are allowed). Credit cards are to be obtained with no annual fee.

Individuals must obtain approval from department head or County Administrator if the employee is a department head.

B. Limits

Limits on a department manager's credit card shall be determined based on need, but not to exceed \$5,000. Sheriff's deputies will have a limit of \$500, with the exception of the Recreational Officer, who will follow the department manager's guidelines.

C. Purchases

Credit cards may only be used for legitimate County business purposes. Care must be taken to ensure that all purchases are made within Wisconsin State Statutes and other applicable County policies. Credit cards may not be used to purchase items that are available through Douglas County's office supply contract. Personal use of credit cards is prohibited.

D. Documentation

All credit card bills are to be paid in full monthly to avoid late fees/finance charges. Receipts are required for all purchases. A credit card statement is NOT considered proper documentation. Supporting receipts must be turned into the department as soon as possible after charges have occurred.

If late fees/finance charges are incurred because of failure to turn in receipts in a timely manner, the credit card holder shall be held personally responsible for the payment of those fees/finance charges. Credit card holders shall also be held personally responsible for failure to turn in a receipt for a purchase. The County reserves the right to deduct the amount of fees/finance charges or purchase(s) from the employee's paycheck.

E. Responsibilities of Card Holders

Credit cards are the responsibility of the holder. All lost or stolen cards must be immediately reported to the department manager and corresponding bank.

Upon termination of employment with Douglas County, credit cards must be turned into the department manager. In the case of a department manager terminating employment the credit card shall be turned into the Administrator.

F. Responsibilities of Department

Policies and procedures must be reviewed with employees obtaining credit cards and a signature and statement obtained from the employee stating that the policies and procedures have been reviewed and understood.

Departments are to keep an up-to-date list of current credit card holders.

Any credit cards that are turned into the department due to termination or misuse must be immediately destroyed.

G. Misuse

Failure to follow the established policies and procedures for credit card use may result in card revocation and/or other disciplinary action in accordance with Douglas County's policies.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROHIBITIONS

POLICY: No employee shall report to work or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours. This policy includes any paid or unpaid lunch periods, as well as training sessions and working hours of conferences. The illegal sale, possession, transfer or purchase of drugs while in the course and scope of employment is also prohibited.

Procedure

Reference is made to Douglas County's separate Substance Abuse Policy which is incorporated herein by reference.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

EDUCATIONAL TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

POLICY: To reimburse tuition costs of employees who attend approved educational classes at a technical or university facility.

A. Procedure

Employees who attend courses, or enroll in degree or certification programs that directly affect the employee's knowledge, skills and abilities needed to keep pace with the performance and requirements of the employee's current position, or a position employee aspires to within the county, may be eligible for tuition reimbursement.

B. Participation Requirements

Tuition reimbursement is subject to the following:

1. Departmental budget must have sufficient funding.
2. Employee participation is voluntary.
3. Approval of department manager is required prior to attendance and submission of course schedule is required. Classes must be attended on employee's own time, with the exception of classes only offered during employee's work schedule. If necessary a flex work schedule may be approved.

C. Course Criteria

1. Approved classes or courses of study are limited to those providing knowledge and skills that cannot be acquired through available in-service training and should be pursued locally when possible.
2. Courses must be taken for college credit or meet other criteria approved by the department manager.

D. Reimbursement

Upon approved enrollment in the program, proof of payment of tuition, and approval of the County Administrator, employees may be reimbursed a percentage of tuition paid for completed courses, as follows:

1. 75% if the course content has a direct affect and will enhance employee's effectiveness in his/her current position, as well as benefit the department in which the employee is assigned; or
2. 66% if the course content would enable the employee to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the duties required of a position employee aspires to within the county.

3. Books and other expenses are not reimbursable.
4. Reimbursement is capped at 50% of the prevailing IRS cap in any calendar year, per employee.
5. Reimbursements will only be paid following evidence of attaining a grade of “C” or higher, status as a student in good standing with the respective institution.
6. Employees requesting reimbursement will be required to sign a promissory note authorizing the county to deduct reimbursements received from their final paycheck if they voluntarily separate from service (for non-medical reasons) within three years following receipt of reimbursement.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

POLICY: To establish guidelines for use of electronic communication systems and/or equipment (including, but not limited to telephones/voicemail, fax machines, computer applications, e-mail, electronic calendars, internal network, Internet, social media, or any other device used to access or monitor any of these services).

A. General Guidelines

All communication created, sent, received, or stored in Douglas County systems and/or equipment are the property of Douglas County and are subject to Wisconsin Open Records Law and open to disclosure under the provisions of that law. Douglas County reserves the right to monitor systems and/or equipment with or without notice and will have the right to access all information to which an employee has gained access.

All communication via the network and Internet should be consistent with the public service mission or image of Douglas County. Each user is responsible for the appropriateness and content of material he/she transmits or publishes on the network or Internet.

Any personal use of county communication systems and/or equipment should be limited, should never interrupt county business, and should occur during non-work time, unless extenuating circumstances arise. Use of county communication systems and/or equipment for union business is prohibited, with the exception of transmitting union meeting notices.

County communication systems and/or equipment should not be used by employees to engage in any illegal activities or any other inappropriate use, or for any use which is in violation of any federal, state, or local laws, or other county policies. County communication systems/equipment may not be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages or documents.

All employees have a duty to report any discovered or suspected unauthorized or improper use of county communication systems/equipment.

B. Security/Data Storage

Employee user accounts and passwords will be required for employees to access certain communication systems. Employees are responsible for protecting their user accounts from unauthorized use and passwords are to be kept private, except when requested by a department manager. Computer and telephone systems are administered through Information Services and assistance with security issues should be directed to that department.

Information Services is responsible for disaster recovery and back-up of all primary county systems. Individual departments are responsible for protection of all data and information maintained at individual workstations or local servers. Periodic back-ups are strongly encouraged. Employees may not modify, delete or destroy any county document unless specifically authorized to do so.

C. Specific Guidelines

1. Cell Phones

Employees are assigned county-owned cell phones and accessories at the discretion of the department manager. Incidental personal use is allowed, subject to reimbursement to the county for any personal charges incurred. County-owned cell phones and accessories must be returned to the Finance Department upon an employee's separation from employment.

All cell phone purchases and plans must be coordinated with the Information Systems and Finance Departments, in order to achieve optimum discounts from providers.

Use of cell phones when driving is strongly discouraged and may be subject to stricter department policy. Texting while driving is prohibited.

Use of personal cell phones during county-paid time should be limited. Departments may restrict the carrying or use of personal cell phones by staff as deemed appropriate for the department working conditions in the judgment of the department manager.

2. Social Media

Social media platforms shall be limited to business use during working hours. Employees who utilize social media as part of their job should abide by departmental policies regarding such use.

Employees who have personal social media sites should ensure these sites are personal in nature and used to share personal opinions or non-work related information, and do no harm to Douglas County.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION CARDS

POLICY: To issue identification cards to Douglas County employees and establish procedure for obtaining, wearing and replacing identification cards.

Procedure

Identification cards may be issued on a departmental basis to all regular county employees.

Identification cards are specifically used to identify employees, with some cards also utilized for building access.

Issuance of new or replacement cards should be coordinated through the Human Resources Department. Cards will be replaced at no cost to the employee after usual wear and tear, or if there is a change of information on the card (name or department). A fee of \$25.00 will be charged to the employee for lost or damaged cards that need to be replaced. Lost or stolen identification cards should be reported immediately to the Human Resources Department.

Identification cards must be turned in to the department manager upon an employee's separation from employment.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Amended by County Board, Resolution #57-13, June 20, 2013*

EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

POLICY: To notify employees of emergency conditions that may require the closing of a work site, reassignment of staff to alternative work sites or other emergency measures.

A. INCLEMENT WEATHER

Weather conditions affecting the ability to commute will generally not be considered a reason for closing a county facility. Employees who do not report to work, or decide to leave work before the end of their work day due to weather, shall be given the choice to use unpaid leave or accrued paid leave time, with the exception of sick leave, to cover the absence.

B. OTHER EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

In consultation with local emergency management, health and/or public safety authorities, the County Administrator, County Board Chair, or designee may decide to close a county facility or work site, or take other measures in order to safeguard the health and welfare of employees and the public and/or because a situation exists affecting the ability of employees to perform their job. Examples of emergency conditions might include a power outage, a natural disaster, or a quarantine imposed by health officials.

C. EMERGENCY CONDITIONS DECLARED

If an emergency condition exists which requires the closing of a county facility or work site, or impacts county infrastructure, and/or has a broader impact to the public, the County Administrator or his/her designee, shall attempt to notify employees and the public as soon as possible thereafter via local media, social media and the Douglas County website.

D. DUTIES OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES DURING EMERGENCY CONDITION

During an emergency condition, all Douglas County employees are expected to report to their normal work site. When an emergency condition requires the closing of a work site, employees will be notified of the location of an alternative work site to which they must report.

Douglas County employees may be required to assist in emergency operations. Employees may be assigned non-traditional duties within their skill level. The county may have to provide emergency transportation to and from a work site. Failure to comply without good cause may result in disciplinary action.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Amended by County Board, Resolution #21-19; April 18, 2019*

GRATUITIES

POLICY: To provide guidance for employees who may receive unsolicited gifts or gratuities in relation to their County responsibilities.

Procedure

Employees shall not solicit, accept or agree to accept any gift, service or gratuity from any person, business entity or representative of a business entity doing business with, or requesting service from, Douglas County. Notwithstanding the foregoing, gifts of food may be accepted on behalf of the County if such gifts are shared with all employees and visitors in the work area and consumed in the work area. Gifts of food or any portion thereof shall not be removed from County premises for consumption.

Any gift or gratuity beyond the foregoing (excepting unsolicited tokens of insignificant value consistent with provision of the Wisconsin Ethics Board), received through or related to County service, shall be declined and reported immediately to the employee's supervisor, who shall decline and/or return the gift to the person or entity who provided the gift.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #57-13, June 20, 2013

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

POLICY: To allow employees to hold secondary jobs, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below.

A. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employee activities away from the job must not compromise Douglas County's interests or adversely affect an employee's job performance and/or ability to fulfill all responsibilities to Douglas County.

Employees are prohibited from engaging in any activity that competes with Douglas County or compromises its interests. This prohibition includes performing any services for customers on nonworking time that are normally performed by county personnel, the unauthorized use of any county tools or equipment, and the unauthorized use or application of any confidential trade information or techniques. In addition, employees are not to conduct any outside business during paid working time.

B. JOB PERFORMANCE

Employees are cautioned to consider carefully the demands that additional work activity will create before seeking or accepting outside employment. Outside employment will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel, or refusal to work overtime or different hours. If outside work activity does cause or contribute to job related problems, normal disciplinary procedures will be followed to deal with the specific problems.

C. BENEFITS

Employees who have accepted outside employment are not eligible for paid sick leave or allowed to request unpaid personal time off when the absence is used to work on the outside job. Employees will not be paid sick leave if the result of an injury or illness is sustained on the second job.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

POLICY: To provide for periodic review of work performance.

Procedure

Review of employee work performance is normally conducted on an annual and as-needed basis. If an employee believes that a performance review is desired and/or past due, the employee should discuss the matter with his/her immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

PERSONNEL FILES

POLICY: To allow reasonable access to personnel records, as authorized by law and regulations, with strict adherence to confidentiality requirements.

Procedure

Personnel files are maintained under a secure system, with limited access to authorized employees. Employees, and other authorized viewers of records, shall have the authority to review and copy, but not remove or alter, personnel records. If an employee disagrees with any information in his/her personnel file, the employee may submit a written statement explaining his/her position which shall be included in the file.

A. File Information

The following files are established for each employee:

1. Official Employee Personnel File is maintained in the Human Resources Department. This file can be accessed by employee and appropriate county staff.
2. Employee Medical/Occupational Health File is maintained in the Human Resources Department. This file is not a public record for release under Wisconsin law and is protected under the U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Access to these files is restricted to Administration/Human Resources Department staff.
3. Employee Payroll/Benefit File is maintained in the Finance Department. This file can be accessed by employee and appropriate county staff.

The Human Resources Department may allow other individuals/agencies to review or request copies of an employee's personnel records upon receipt of a signed authorization from the employee.

B. Review of Personnel Files

Upon request, Douglas County shall allow an employee to review his/her personnel records, in the presence of a Human Resources Department representative, no more than two times in a calendar year. Reasonable notice must be given by employee and a photo copy fee may be assessed if employee requests copies of records.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

POLICY: To ensure that employees only engage in political activities outside of work hours and do not use county resources for these activities, pursuant to state law.

Procedure

Employees may not participate in political activities in any government building during work hours, or use county resources for political activities. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, soliciting of volunteers, signatures for nomination papers, and campaign contributions. County resources include, but are not limited to, offices, telephones or e-mails, facsimile and photocopying machines, bulletin boards and other public spaces.

Employees should notify the County Administrator of any violation of this policy.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

PRIVACY IN LOCKER ROOMS

POLICY: To protect the privacy interests of all employees and visitors utilizing any Douglas County locker room, with employee responsibility for ensuring that visitors are aware of this policy.

General Rules:

1. No person may use any recording device in a county locker room. "Recording device" means a camera, video recorder, or any other devices that may be used to record or transfer images.
2. No person may use a cell phone or other recording device to capture, record, or transfer a representation of a nude or partially nude person in a locker room.
3. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES

POLICY: To establish guidelines for employees to receive payment for work-related expenses they have incurred.

Procedure

Douglas County will reimburse employees for expenses incurred while traveling on county business, or for work-related expenses incurred during their course of employment. Employees are to use discretion in incurring expenses and are to utilize the county's tax-exempt status when incurring expenses in the State of Wisconsin. Tax-exempt cards can be obtained at the County Clerk's Office.

Detailed receipts must be submitted for any expense over \$5.00. A credit card statement or blanket charges from a hotel statement are not considered proper documentation. Failure to submit detailed receipts or provide proper documentation may result in a delay of reimbursement to the employee.

Any expenses deemed unreasonable relative to the circumstances will not be paid or reimbursed and are the responsibility of the employee.

A. Travel

All work-related travel must have prior approval by the department manager and, if the travel is outside the States of Wisconsin, Minnesota, or Illinois, by the County Administrator.

1. Mileage

- a. Employees shall receive mileage reimbursement at the rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. In addition, employees may claim reimbursement for parking fees and tolls incurred.
- b. Employees are encouraged to car pool or use rental vehicles whenever possible.
- c. Commuting expenses between an employee's home and normal place of employment are not reimbursable.

2. Lodging

Actual expenses for lodging will be reimbursed provided the charge is reasonable.

3. Meals

a. Maximum reimbursable rate for meals is:

Breakfast	\$10.00
Lunch	13.00
Dinner	22.00

Allowable expenses for meals includes gratuity. Gratuity shall not exceed 20%. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

- b. If overnight stay is required and employee has expenses for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the employee may exceed the maximum set for any one meal; however, the total reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$45.00
- c. Per IRS Code 62 (c), reimbursement for meals not in conjunction with an overnight stay is fully taxable to the employee; meals included in registration fees are exempt.
- d. No meal reimbursement can be made through a petty cash account.

4. Reimbursement

To receive reimbursement, employees must complete appropriate reimbursement form provided by the Finance Department, attaching required supporting documentation.

B. Other

Other work-related expenses incurred by employees may be submitted for reimbursement upon submission of proper documentation.

*Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012
Amended by County Board, Resolution #57-13, June 20, 2013
Amended by County Board, Resolution #21-19; April 18, 2019
Amended by County Board, Resolution #13-23; March 16, 2023*

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

POLICY: To establish a smoke-free working environment for the health and safety of county employees.

Procedure

Reference is made to Douglas County Ordinance #1.16, Smoking Policy, which is incorporated herein by reference.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

SOCIAL MEDIA

POLICY: To provide guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, apps, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

Procedure

The following principles apply to professional use of social media on behalf of Douglas County:

1. Employees need to be familiar with and adhere to the Douglas County Personnel Policies manual when using social media in reference to Douglas County.
2. All social media accounts must first be approved by department manager and requested through the County Clerk's Office, prior to creation.
3. The County Clerk's Office must be an administrator on all Douglas County accounts.
4. Only designated employees may administer Douglas County departmental accounts.
5. Employees should be aware that Douglas County may observe content and information posted to Douglas County departmental pages by employees through social media. Employees should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to Douglas County, its employees, or the citizens of Douglas County. Any post or comment may be deleted by Douglas County, at any time, for any reason.
6. Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include posting commentary, content or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment.
7. Employees are not to publish, post, or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, employees should check with the Human Resources Department and/or supervisor.
8. Social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Employees should refer these inquiries to authorized Douglas County spokespersons.
9. If employees encounter a situation while using social media, that threatens to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.
10. Employees should get appropriate permission before referring to or posting images of current or former employees, vendors or suppliers. Additionally, employees should get appropriate permission to use a third party's copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks, or other intellectual property.

11. It is highly recommended that employees keep Douglas County related social media accounts separate from personal accounts.

12. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disciplinary action in accordance with Douglas County's policies.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #45-19; August 15, 2019

TOBACCO-FREE WORKPLACE

POLICY: To provide a tobacco-free environment for all employees. This policy covers the use of any tobacco product including the use of smokeless tobacco.

Procedure

Tobacco products may not be used by employees within County owned or leased buildings. Tobacco products may not be used by employees in any County owned or leased vehicles. Tobacco products may be used within personal vehicles parked on County property, before or after work or during regularly scheduled work breaks. Violations of this policy will be handled through the standard disciplinary procedure.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #44-12; May 17, 2012

TRAINING, CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

POLICY: To encourage employees to seek educational opportunities to improve and enhance their current skills and abilities that apply directly to their area of work in order to better perform their job duties and prepare the individual employee for job promotions within the County structure.

Procedure

Employees must receive approval from their immediate supervisor or department manager, in order to attend any training, conference or seminar. Any training, conference or seminar requiring travel beyond Wisconsin, Minnesota or Illinois also requires approval by the County Administrator.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

WEAPON POLICY

POLICY: To prohibit employees from carrying or possessing a concealed weapon (or a weapon that is not concealed) in the course (or during any part) of their employment.

Procedure

Reference is made to Ordinance #4.14, Prohibition of Weapons in County Buildings, which is incorporated herein by reference.

Employees are prohibited from carrying or possessing a weapon while operating or being a passenger in any county-owned or leased motor vehicle.

An employee, who is licensed to carry a concealed weapon, is not prohibited from properly storing a weapon or ammunition in a secure area of his or her vehicle, during hours of employment.

This policy does not apply to law enforcement officers and others acting in their official capacity and with lawful authority, as identified in Ordinance #4.14.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

WORKPLACE SAFETY/ON-THE-JOB INJURY

POLICY: To establish process for reporting of safety issues and injuries, and process for employees receiving worker's compensation benefits.

A. Safety Issues

Employee must report all safety incidents or issues to his/her immediate supervisor, including events that are witnessed. See Section VI, Grievance Procedure.

B. Injuries

Employee must immediately report all injuries, including witnessed injuries, and illnesses due to work-related exposure, to his/her supervisor or department manager. Employee should seek medical attention if necessary.

Regardless of whether employee requires medical treatment or suffers lost time away from work, the appropriate forms need to be completed by employee and immediate supervisor or department manager and submitted to the Human Resources Department. Non-submission, or delays in submitting the forms, could jeopardize compensation benefits, if applicable.

C. Worker's Compensation

Employees are covered by worker's compensation insurance in accordance with state law. Worker's compensation provides payment to employees injured at work to replace lost income. It also provides payment of medical bills and related expenses.

Douglas County's Worker's Compensation Third-Party Administrator determines worker's compensation eligibility. Calculation of wages is determined by state guidelines.

If the employee is eligible for wage continuation they may supplement their worker's compensation benefit check to equal to 100% of their regular gross salary. This supplemental payment shall be charged against the employee's accumulated sick leave and shall be paid only to the extent of eligible sick leave. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify the Worker's Compensation Administrator (Human Resources Department) if the employee elects this supplement. The Worker's Compensation Administrator will contact the Third-Party Administrator to coordinate the actual payment amounts to the injured employee for each payroll.

Time cards need to be submitted to the Finance Department during the period an employee is receiving worker's compensation benefits.

D. Continuation of Benefits/Insurance

Benefits continue to accrue while an employee is away from work receiving worker's compensation benefits. Worker's compensation payments are reported as wages for purposes of retirement.

Employee is responsible for:

- a. Payment of his/her contribution to health/dental insurance premiums.
- b. Payment of his/her portion of Wisconsin Retirement.

E. Early Return to Work Program

Douglas County supports an Early Return to Work Program (ERTW). This program allows employees to return to work with temporary restrictions during the healing process for work-related injuries or illnesses. The Human Resources Department and Risk Manager will administer the program.

Employees may be assigned light or modified duties within the employee's normal job, or duties within another department that are within a physician's recommended restrictions.

Departments should identify duties or assignments that would qualify for employees participating in this program. Employee's regular wages during participation in this program are paid by the department at injury.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

POLICY: To provide a work environment that is free from violence. Any acts or threatened acts of violence will not be tolerated.

A. Definition

Workplace violence is any act or threat (either verbal or implied) of physical violence which involves or affects Douglas County employees or which occurs on Douglas County property.

B. Reporting

An employee who believes that he/she has been the subject, or has been a witness of workplace violence, should immediately report the matter to his/her immediate supervisor or to the Human Resources Department.

Nothing in this policy alters any other reporting obligation established by Douglas County policies, or in federal, state, or applicable law.

C. Investigation

All reports of workplace violence will be investigated and employees are expected to cooperate with any investigation. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. To maintain workplace safety, Douglas County may suspend employees pending the investigation. Employees who fail to cooperate with an investigation or who give false information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

SECTION VI – PERSONAL CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

POLICY: It is the expectation of Douglas County that employees will be punctual and in regular attendance. Poor attendance and excessive tardiness may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A. Responsibilities

1. Employee

Employee shall make a time off request to his/her supervisor as far in advance as possible and indicate type of leave requested.

If employee is unable to report to work on a scheduled work day, employee must notify his/her immediate supervisor within one (1) hour of starting time. If supervisor is unavailable, employee should contact the next person designated by the department manager.

Employee shall contact his/her supervisor each day of absence due to occasional illness.

2. Department Manager/Supervisor

Supervisors shall give prompt responses to leave requests and determine whether approved leave is with or without pay.

Supervisors shall review employee attendance records periodically for problems, consulting with the Human Resources Department regarding any absence situation which may warrant disciplinary action.

B. Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are generally without pay and may result in termination. An absence may be considered to be unexcused if:

1. An employee is absent for any reason, including illness, and does not contact his/her manager or supervisor.
2. An employee's request for time off has been denied and the absence occurs anyway.
3. An employee who, for two consecutive days, remains absent from work and fails to report the absence to his/her manager or supervisor, may be terminated for "job abandonment". Termination will officially occur at the end of the second day of absence.

C. Excessive and Problem Absenteeism

Excessive absenteeism or problem attendance may be cause for disciplinary action, unsatisfactory performance ratings, and/or termination. Absences may be considered excessive when they exceed seven working days in a calendar year for full time employees or a questionable pattern of absenteeism is established by the employee. It should be noted that even if reasons offered for each individual absence seem legitimate, employees might be disciplined for excessive absenteeism.

In managing excessive absenteeism and determining if absences should be paid, managers must ensure that employees with similar attendance records be treated consistently. To ensure consistency, managers should consult the Human Resources Department as to when an absence situation warrants disciplinary action such as withholding pay for an absence, attendance warnings and/or termination.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

DISCIPLINE

POLICY: Disciplinary action against employees may be taken for violations of standards of conduct, violations of policies and procedures, unlawful conduct, or for unsatisfactory work performance.

Level of Discipline

The level of discipline imposed will take into consideration the seriousness of the infraction, the employee's past performance or disciplinary record, and any other relevant circumstances. When appropriate, discipline should be corrective in nature. At the discretion of Douglas County, various types of employee discipline may be imposed which include, but are not limited to, the following: verbal warning, written warning, demotion, or suspension. None of these disciplinary measures are required to be used before discharge from employment occurs, nor are the listed disciplinary actions required to be used in any specific order and they may be repeated. Serious violations may result in suspension of employment or immediate termination without taking prior measures of discipline. All discipline shall be documented, with a copy provided to the employee and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file.

Employees are expected to work in a competent and conscientious manner which reflects favorably upon the employee and Douglas County. The following is a list of examples of behavior which would normally justify disciplinary action (this list is not exhaustive and employees may be disciplined or terminated for other reasons not listed):

- Fraud in securing employment
- Incompetency
- Inefficiency
- Unauthorized absences
- Repeated absence or tardiness or improper use of leave
- Neglect of duty
- Insubordination or willful misconduct
- Dishonesty
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information
- Theft or misappropriation of funds
- Unauthorized use of county equipment/property
- Assuming duties while under the influence of controlled substances or intoxicants; or possession or use of intoxicants or controlled substances during working hours
- Conviction of a felony or misdemeanor, the circumstances of which are substantially related to the duties performed
- Negligence or willful damage to county property
- Discourteous treatment of the public or fellow employees
- Failure to obtain and maintain a current license or certification as required by law or Douglas County
- Failure to maintain effective relationship with other employees or the public
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment
- Workplace violence
- Violation of any lawful order, directive, policy, or work rule

Suspension

Suspension is the temporary removal of an employee from his/her duties without pay. Suspensions are normally imposed in cases involving serious misconduct or chronic behavioral or performance problems that have not been corrected. Department managers are required to consult with the Human Resources Department prior to the suspension of any employee.

Employee Pay Status During Incident Investigation

When an investigation of an incident occurs which may result in disciplinary action and continuation of work for the employee involved would be a disruption to county business, the County Administrator may place the employee on paid “administrative leave” during the investigation.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION-FREE WORKPLACE

POLICY: To maintain a safe workplace environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and retaliation. Workplace harassment and/or discrimination whether engaged in by employees, supervisors or members of the public, will not be tolerated and will subject offenders to disciplinary action or discharge from employment. Retaliatory acts taken against employees for reporting workplace safety issues, harassment or discrimination, will also not be tolerated and will subject the offender to disciplinary action or discharge from employment.

A. Definitions

1. Harassment

Illegal harassment or discrimination may exist when there is persistent, unwelcome, unwanted conduct or actions which are directed toward or offensive to an individual because of the individual's age (over 40), national origin or ancestry, arrest record, conviction record, color, creed or religion, disability or association with a person with a disability, genetic testing, honesty testing, marital status, pregnancy or childbirth, military service, race, sex, sexual orientation, use or nonuse of lawful products off the employer's premises during non-working hours, and any other status protected under applicable federal or state law.

a. Sexual

Includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition of employment; when submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a factor affecting employment decisions; or when the conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment does not need to be sexual in nature if it is directed specifically at someone because of his or her sex.

Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature includes, but is not limited to:

1. Repeated, unsolicited sexual or gender-based gestures, comments jokes, insults, innuendoes, whistles, catcalls;
2. Remarks or questions about a person's body or sexual activities;
3. Subtle pressure for sexual activity;
4. Patting, pinching, hugging, unnecessary touching of, or inappropriate closeness to, a person's body;
5. The distribution or display of printed materials with a sexual content to employees who may find such materials offensive;

6. Any threat or insinuation that a person's employment at the county, wages, work assignments, promotion, or other condition of employment may be adversely affected by a refusal to submit to or tolerate sexual advances;
7. Sexually-oriented language used in the presence of employees who may find it offensive;
8. Rudeness or refusal to cooperate with an employee because of his or her gender;
9. Retaliation against a person for making a complaint about sexual harassment.

b. Other

Harassment on the basis of a person's age (over 40), national origin or ancestry, arrest record, conviction record, color, creed or religion, disability or association with a person with a disability, genetic testing, honesty testing, marital status, pregnancy or childbirth, military service, race, sex, sexual orientation, use or nonuse of lawful products off the employer's premises during non-working hours, and any other status protected under applicable federal or state law.

This harassment is verbal or physical conduct that disparages or shows hostility toward a person because of one of these factors, and that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment or unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance, or otherwise adversely affects a person's employment. Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of this nature includes, but is not limited to:

1. Epithets or slurs;
2. Negative stereotyping;
3. Intimidating or hostile acts;
4. Written or graphic material that disparages or shows hostility or dislike toward an individual or group.

B. Responsibility to Report

It is the responsibility of each and every employee to immediately report to management any and all health and safety issues, discriminatory, harassing or retaliatory conduct which may relate to the work environment whether it occurs on or off the job. Such conduct includes conduct by employees toward other employees and by members of the public toward employees which relates to their work.

C. Procedure for Dealing with Harassment and Discrimination

1. Complaining About Harassment

Employees who believe they have witnessed or been the victim of behavior which is in violation of this policy are strongly encouraged to use the following procedure to bring the situation to the attention of the appropriate person at the County who can take appropriate steps to resolve the problem.

- a. Sometimes unwelcome and offensive conduct can be dealt with by simply letting the offender know that his or her conduct is offensive, and requesting that it be stopped. When this approach is feasible, it usually results in the least disruption to ongoing working relationships.
- b. If the action suggested in step (a) is not effective in ending perceived harassing behavior, or if an employee feels uncomfortable speaking directly to the offender about the problem, then the employee should report the situation to his or her supervisor.
- c. If the supervisor does not take action to deal with the offending behavior, or if the employee has reason to believe it is not appropriate or would not be effective to take a complaint to the supervisor, then the problem should be addressed to the employee's department head.
- d. If none of the steps outlined above is effective in ending the harassment, then the employee should report the situation to the County Administrator.

2. Response to a Complaint

When a complaint or report of harassment is made as outlined above, the responsible person receiving the complaint will take steps to see that the situation is investigated promptly, by seeking guidance from the Human Resources Department to ensure that the investigation is conducted as thoroughly and as confidentially as possible consistent with the need to gather accurate information and take appropriate corrective action. If an employee believes that he or she is being retaliated against for having made a report or complaint pursuant to this procedure, he or she should report the suspected retaliation just as outlined above. Retaliation against an employee for reporting suspected illegally harassing behavior is a violation of this policy, and will not be tolerated. Once an investigation is completed, appropriate action will be taken to correct any problem found to exist and the complaining employee will be given information about the conclusion of the process.

D. Other Conflicts

Although Douglas County is strongly committed to maintaining a workplace that is respectful of all its employees, it is important to realize that this policy only deals with behavior which is illegal based on an individual's protected status under the law. Inevitably other conflicts and misunderstandings may arise between co-workers or between employees and their supervisors, and the Human Resources Department representatives are available to answer questions and assist in resolving those situations.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

POLICY: Douglas County is committed to foster, cultivate and preserve a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and company's achievement as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, color, access and functional needs, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

Douglas County diversity initiatives are applicable—but not limited—to our practices and policies on recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social and recreational programs; layoffs; terminations; and the ongoing development of a work environment built on the premise of gender and diversity equity that encourages and enforces:

- Respectful communication and cooperation between all employees.
- Teamwork and employee participation, permitting the representation of all groups and employee perspectives.
- Work/life balance through flexible work schedules to accommodate employees' varying needs per department procedures.
- Employer and employee contributions to the communities we serve to promote a greater understanding and respect for the diversity.

All employees of Douglas County have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other county-sponsored and participative events. All employees are also required to attend and complete annual diversity awareness training to enhance their knowledge to fulfill this responsibility.

Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees who believe they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with the county's diversity policy and initiatives should seek assistance from a supervisor or a Human Resource representative.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #28-22; May 19, 2022

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

POLICY: To provide a timely and orderly review of decisions, as required by Wisconsin Statutes § 66.0509, concerning: a) employee terminations; b) employee discipline; and c) workplace safety.

A. Purpose and Applicability

This procedure provides an employee with the individual opportunity to address concerns regarding discipline, termination or workplace safety matters, to have those matters reviewed by an Impartial Hearing Officer and to appeal to the County Board, where appropriate. The County expects employees and management to exercise reasonable efforts to resolve any questions, problems, or misunderstandings prior to utilizing the Grievance Procedure.

If an employee is subject to a contractual grievance procedure, the contractual grievance procedure must be followed as applicable. If an employee is subject to Douglas County's civil service system, the civil service system shall supersede this procedure where applicable.

Further, this procedure does not replace or supersede any statutory provision which may be applicable to an employee's employment with the County.

This Grievance Procedure does not create a legally binding contract or a contract of employment.

B. Definitions

Definition of "Discipline": For purposes of this procedure, "discipline" means an employment action that results in disciplinary suspension and/or disciplinary demotion/reduction in rank. "Discipline" does not include any written or verbal notices, warnings, or reminders; verbal discipline will be documented, but not subject to the grievance procedure. The purpose of written and verbal notices, warnings, or reminders is to alert the employee that failure to correct the behavior may result in disciplinary suspension, termination, or disciplinary demotion/reduction in rank.

Definition of "Employee" for Purposes of Discipline and Termination Grievances: For purposes of the Procedure for Grievances Concerning Employees Terminations and Employee Discipline, "employee" includes all regular full-time and part-time employees who have been employed for (1) one year or more. The term "employee" excludes elected officials; individuals hired on a limited term, temporary, casual or seasonal basis; independent contractors; and any individual, official or officer that serves at the pleasure of the appointing authority as provided by Wisconsin Statutes.

Definition of "Employee" for Purposes of Workplace Safety Grievances: For purposes of the Procedure for Grievances Concerning Workplace Safety, "employee" shall include all regular full-time and part-time employees, elected officials; and, individuals hired on a limited term, casual, or seasonal basis. The term "employee" excludes independent contractors.

Definition of “Termination”: For purposes of this procedure, “termination” means a separation from employment by the employer for disciplinary and/or performance reasons. “Termination” does not include layoff, furlough or reduction in workforce, reduction in hours, job transfer or reassignment, or retirement.

Definition of “Workplace Safety”: For purposes of this procedure, “workplace safety” includes any conditions of employment related to the physical health and safety of employees, including the safety of the physical work environment, the safe operation of workplace equipment and tools, provision of personal protective equipment, and accident risks. “Workplace Safety” does not include conditions of employment unrelated to physical health and safety matters, including, but not limited to, hours, overtime, sick, family, or medical leave, work schedules, breaks, termination, vacation, performance reviews and compensation.

C. General Provisions

Role and Appointment of “Impartial Hearing Officer”: For purposes of this policy, the role of the “Impartial Hearing Officer” will be to define the issues, identifying areas of agreement between the parties and identifying the issues in dispute, and to hear the parties’ respective arguments.

The Impartial Hearing Officer may require the parties to submit documents and witness lists in advance of the hearing in order to expedite the hearing. The Impartial Hearing Officer will have the authority to administer oaths, issue subpoenas at the request of either party, and decide if a transcript is necessary. The Impartial Hearing Officer shall apply relaxed standards for the admission of evidence and may allow or request oral or written arguments and replies.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall be selected by the County Administrator based on the nature of the matter in dispute.

Costs: Each party shall bear its own costs for witnesses and all other out-of-pocket expenses, including possible attorney fees, in investigating, preparing, presenting, or defending a grievance. The fees of the Impartial Hearing Officer will be paid by the County.

Time Limits: The term “days” as used in this provision means calendar days, excluding holidays. The employer and grievant may mutually agree to extend time limits, in writing. If the last day on which a grievance is to be filed or a decision is to be appealed is a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the time limit is the next day which is not a Saturday, Sunday or holiday. A grievance or decision or appeal is considered timely if received by the employer during normal business hours or if postmarked by 12:00 midnight on the due date.

The employer and grievant may mutually agree, in writing, to waive any step to facilitate or expedite resolution of the grievance.

If the grievance is not answered within the time limits, the grievant may proceed to the next available step within (10) ten days.

Any issues involving the timeliness of a grievance shall be resolved by the County Administrator.

Scheduling: Grievance meetings and hearings will typically be held during the Grievant's off-duty hours. Time spent in grievance meetings and hearing outside of normal business hours shall not be considered as compensable work time.

Representation: The grievant shall have the right to representation during the Grievance Procedure at the Grievant's expense.

D. Procedure for Grievances Concerning Employee Terminations and Employee Discipline

Step 1: An earnest effort shall be made to settle the matter informally between the aggrieved employee and the employee's immediate supervisor. If the grievance is not resolved informally, it shall be reduced to writing by the employee who shall submit it to the employee's Department Manager, with a copy to the Human Resources Representative.

The written grievance shall give a detailed statement concerning the subject of the grievance, the facts upon which the grievance is based, and indicate the specific relief being sought.

Time Limit: If the employee does not submit a written grievance within 10 ten days after the facts upon which the grievance is based first became known, or should have been known to the employee, the grievance will be deemed waived. The Department Manager will reply in writing to the employee within (10) ten days after receipt of the written grievance.

Step 2: If the grievance is not settled in Step 1, and the employee wishes to appeal the decision, the employee shall submit the written grievance to the County Administrator to request a hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer.

Time Limit: If the employee does not submit a written grievance to the County Administrator requesting a hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer within (10) ten days after receipt of the Department Manager's decision, the grievance will be deemed waived. If timely requested, the hearing will normally be scheduled within 30 days of receipt of the request for hearing.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall determine whether the Department Manager's decision was arbitrary, capricious or not supported by the facts. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Impartial Hearing Officer shall render a written decision indicating the reasons for one of four decisions:

- 1) Sustaining the discipline/termination;
- 2) Modifying the discipline/termination;
- 3) Denying the discipline/ termination; or
- 4) Recommending additional investigation prior to final determination.

In cases where the Impartial Hearing Officer recommends additional investigation, at the conclusion of the additional investigation, a second, follow-up hearing shall be scheduled.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall render a written decision to the employer and employee within (30) thirty calendar days from the date of the hearing.

Step 3: The employer or employee may appeal the decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer to the County Board. The decision of the governing body shall be final and binding upon the parties.

Time Limit: The employee or employer may request a review by the County Board by filing a request with the County Administrator within (10) ten days of receipt of the written decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer. The request must set forth in detail the reasons for the appeal. The non-appealing party shall have (10) ten days to submit a reply to the detailed request. Once the written request and reply are received by the County Clerk, the review will be scheduled on the agenda for the first County Board meeting that is held at least 10 days after said request and reply are received or at a special meeting if such is deemed necessary by the County Board. If not timely submitted by the grievant, the grievance can no longer be addressed in the grievance procedure.

Level of Review: The County Board shall review the record and determine whether a rational basis exists for the Impartial Hearing Officer's decision. The findings of fact of the Impartial Hearing Officer shall not be overturned unless clearly erroneous. In the event the County Board does not sustain the Impartial Hearing Officer's decision, then the County Board may render a new decision and remedy, request the Impartial Hearing Officer to take further evidence, assign an Impartial Hearing Officer to create a recommendation for the County Board's review, or hold a new hearing and make an independent decision.

E. Procedure for Grievances Concerning Employee Workplace Safety

Step 1: Any employee who personally identifies, or is given information about, a workplace safety issue or incident must notify his/her supervisor of the issue or incident as soon as reasonably practicable. All safety issues, no matter how insignificant the situation may appear to be, must be reported. If the matter is not resolved in this manner, the employee shall report the incident or issue to the employee's Department Manager and file a written report of the incident or issue.

Time Limit: In order to be addressed as part of the grievance procedure, any workplace safety incident or issue must be reported by an employee within 24 hours after the incident or issue was raised. The 24 hour time limit for reporting may be waived by mutual agreement of the employer and employee.

A written report of the incident or issue, outlining the events that transpired and proposed resolution, if any, shall be signed by the employee and submitted to the employee's Department Manager within 10 days of the incident or issue for review and consideration.

Step 2: After receipt of the written report, the Department Manager will conduct an investigation, if required, and will normally reply to the employee in writing within 10 days of receipt of the written report. Copies of the Department Manager's final report will be given to the County Administrator.

Step 3: The employee may appeal the decision of the Department Manager and request a hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer.

Time Limit: If the employee does not submit a written grievance to the County Administrator requesting a hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer within 10 days after receipt of the Department Manager's written decision, the grievance can no longer be addressed in the grievance procedure. If timely requested, the hearing will normally be scheduled within 10 days of receipt of the request for hearing.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall render a decision as to one of three outcomes:

- 1) Sustaining the conclusions of the Department Manager;
- 2) Denying the conclusions of the Department Manager and ordering additional or alternative remedial measures; or
- 3) Recommending additional investigation prior to final determination. In cases where the Impartial Hearing Officer recommends additional investigation, at the conclusion of the additional investigation, a second, follow-up hearing shall be scheduled.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall render a written decision setting forth the reasons for his/her decision within 30 calendar days from the date of the hearing.

Step 4: Any order for additional or alternative remedial measures must be submitted to the Administration Committee for approval prior to implementation. The employer or employee may appeal the decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer, or the Administration Committee, if applicable, to the County Board. The decision of the governing body shall be final and binding upon the parties.

Time Limit: If additional or alternative remedial measures are ordered, the Administration Committee shall meet within 30 days to consider the order and render a written opinion.

The employee or employer may request a review by the County Board by filing a request with Human Resources within 10 days of receipt of the written decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer, or the Administration Committee, as applicable. The request must set forth in detail the reasons for the appeal. The non-appealing party shall have 10 days to submit a reply to the detailed request. Once the written request and reply are received by the County Clerk, the review will be scheduled on the agenda for the first County Board meeting that is held at least 10 days after said request and reply are received or at a special meeting if such is deemed necessary by the County Board. If not timely submitted by the grievant, the grievance can no longer be addressed in the grievance procedure.

Level of Review: The County Board shall review the record and determine whether a rational basis exists for the Impartial Hearing Officer's decision. The findings of fact of the Impartial Hearing Officer shall not be overturned unless clearly erroneous. In the event the County Board does not sustain the Impartial Hearing Officer's decision, then the County Board may render a new decision and remedy, request the Impartial Hearing Officer to take further evidence, assign an Impartial Hearing Officer to create a recommendation for the County Board's review, or hold a new hearing and make an independent decision.

Passed by County Board, Resolution #4-12; January 19, 2012

REPORTING SUSPECTED UNLAWFUL CONDUCT

POLICY: To provide guidelines and procedures for employees to report unlawful conduct by the county. Douglas County has an obligation to protect the general public and its employees from unlawful conduct committed by the county, its managers, employees or agents, and to take appropriate action as advisable or warranted.

A. PROCEDURES

Douglas County reserves the right to investigate alleged unlawful conduct, determine the verity of the information reported, notify enforcement authorities when appropriate, and take corrective actions as appropriate.

Prior to taking formal action, an employee is encouraged to discuss information regarding unlawful conduct with their department manager. However, if this is not possible or appropriate due to the circumstances, employees are encouraged and expected to immediately disclose, to appropriate county officials, all information within their knowledge or possession which they reasonably believe demonstrates unlawful conduct has been committed by the county, its officers, employees or agents.

The disclosure shall be made in writing and signed by the employee and submitted to the County Administrator. If the County Administrator is the source of the alleged unlawful activity, then a written disclosure shall be made directly to the County Board Chairperson. In all cases of alleged unlawful activity, written disclosure shall be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. The County Administrator shall inform the Administration Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting after completion of any investigation.

An internal investigation may be jeopardized by any comment made to the public or media before the process is completed. Comments to the public and media shall be limited to what would be consistent with the requirements and duties of the employee's position and to what the employee knows of his/her own personal knowledge to be true and actual facts.

Statements to the public or media after an investigation is completed under this policy shall be limited to what is reasonably necessary for an employee to meet his/her obligation to the duties of his/her position and shall be based upon actual knowledge of the situation and not upon speculation, rumor or hearsay.

B. EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Any Douglas County employee who files a report under this policy shall be expected to fully and promptly cooperate fully with any and all investigative efforts undertaken by the county. This includes communicating with other employees, agents or officials who are assigned to the investigation.

Retaliatory acts taken against an employee for making a report, in good faith, of a suspected unlawful activity will not be tolerated and will subject the offender to

disciplinary action or discharge from employment. Employees are required to abide by the terms and provisions of this policy in order to avoid disciplinary action or termination.

This policy shall not be construed or implemented in any manner which would impermissibly restrict any public employee's protected constitutional right to speak freely as a private citizen on his or her own time about matters of public concern. Douglas County reserves all rights inherent in its authority to apply this policy as it deems necessary to efficiently and effectively conduct the lawful business of county government.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012

SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

POLICY: To define the types of separation from employment, ending an individual's employment relationship with Douglas County, whether it is voluntary or involuntary.

Procedure

Employment may be terminated with or without notice, at the will and discretion of the county, at any time during employment, should such termination be regarded as necessary and appropriate by the county.

A. Voluntary Separation

1. Resignations

As a general rule, employees are expected to provide a written notice of resignation at least two weeks prior to the planned termination date. Department managers are encouraged to provide at least four to six weeks' notice. The period agreed upon by management and the employee may be longer or shorter based upon circumstance.

2. Job Abandonment

An employee who fails to report to work for two consecutive days without reporting the absence to his/her supervisor is usually considered to have voluntarily terminated.

3. Failure to Return from Leave of Absence

In most cases, employees who do not return from an approved leave of absence on the date established by the county, and who do not receive approval to extend the leave, will be considered to have voluntarily terminated.

4. Retirement

When employees retire from the county they are expected to discuss their plan with their manager well in advance of the intended retirement date.

B. Termination/Involuntary Separation

The decision to terminate employment is left to the discretion of management, requiring discussion with the Human Resources Department prior to taking any action. Terminations shall be conducted in a manner which minimizes disruption of normal operations, recognizes the employee's rights and dignity, and protects the county from legal challenges.

Managers are expected to resolve employment problems before termination is considered except for unusual situations.

Passed by County Board, Resolution#4-12; January 19, 2012