

**RESOLUTION**

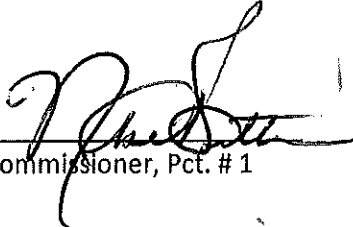
WHEREAS, Carson County Officials desire to have a clear and understandable personnel policy manual for their employees and;

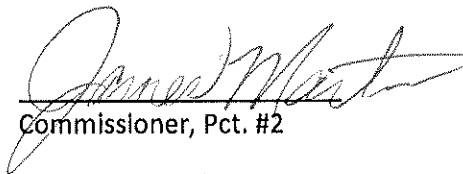
WHEREAS, the new policy manual will help Carson County comply with current employment laws and standards, and;


WHEREAS, the personnel manual will allow for the implementation of a more effective county government which will benefit the citizens of Carson County through more efficient standards, and;

WHEREAS, any and all previous personnel policy manuals, implied policies, verbal policies, and written employment contracts whether known or unknown, are hereby rescinded and declared null and void.


NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021, the Carson County Commissioners Court does hereby adopt, accept, and place into effect this manual called the Carson County Policy Manual and its revisions, and it shall be in effect from January 11, 2021, until rescinded by official order of resolution of the Carson County Commissioners Court.

  
Commissioner, Pct. # 1

  
Commissioner, Pct. #2

  
Commissioner, Pct. #3

  
Commissioner, Pct. #4

  
County Judge

**CARSON COUNTY  
PERSONNEL POLICY  
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## PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome!

It is with pleasure that we welcome you as a new employee of Carson County. We hope you have a long rewarding career with us. As a County employee, you have a unique opportunity to serve the public-County residents, businesses and visitors to our County. We value employees who work hard, show initiative and responsibility and take pride in their work and in the County as a whole.

You can get information or answers to your questions from your supervisor or by contacting the County Treasurer/ Personnel Office at 806-537-3753 or by stopping by the Treasurer's Office, County Courthouse, Panhandle Tx, which is open Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Employees of Carson County may be subject to additional or substitute policies of those stated here. The employee will follow the department guidelines and policies unless they conflict with state or federal laws.

The County includes the following departments (elected officials are in **bold**). All of these are defined in this document as department heads.

<b>County Judge</b>	County Auditor
<b>Commissioners</b>	Library
<b>Precinct #1</b>	Extension Service
<b>Precinct #2</b>	
<b>Precinct #3</b>	
<b>Precinct #4</b>	
<b>County &amp; District Clerk</b>	
<b>Justice of the Peace Precinct #1</b>	
<b>Justice of the Peace Precinct #2</b>	
<b>Sheriff</b>	
<b>Tax Assessor Collector</b>	
<b>Treasurer</b>	
<b>County Attorney</b>	

The Commissioners Court reserves the right to change this document at any time.

**CARSON COUNTY  
EMPLOYMENT AT WILL STATEMENT**

1. All employees of Carson County are considered to be "at-will" employees.
2. No contract of employment shall exist between any individual and Carson County for any duration, either specified or unspecified.
3. This means the employment relationship may be ended at the will of the employer, Carson County, or the employee at any time, with or without notice.
4. Employment may be terminated for any legal reason or no reason, with or without cause and with or without notice at any time by the employee or employer.
5. Nothing in this manual or in any document or statement shall limit the right to terminate employment at-will.
6. No Elected Official or Department head has the authority to enter into an agreement for employment other than at-will employment
7. Carson County shall also have the right to change any condition, benefit, policy, or privilege of employment at any time, with or with notice.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON EMPLOYEE STATUS**

Each county position has an employee status that identifies how the position is paid and how benefits are granted by Commissioners Court. This policy defines both insurance benefits and retirement benefits. The status of an employee cannot be changed without the approval of the Commissioners Court. Full time employees will be eligible for insurance benefits. All other classifications must be included in the county initial and/or standard measurement periods for the Affordable Care Act.

**REGULAR FULL  
TIME**

1. A full-time employee shall be any employee in a position who has a normal work schedule of at least thirty (30) hours per week. Full time employees are eligible for county insurance benefits and retirement benefits. Other county policies will dictate eligibility for other benefits. Non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime compensation. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime compensation. Carson County makes exempt status determination based on the Fair Labor Standards Act.

**REGULAR  
PART TIME**

2. A regular part-time employee shall be any employee in a position who has a normal work schedule of less than thirty (30) hours per week. All regular part time employees must be placed on TCDRS retirement regardless of the number of hours worked per week. Other county policies will dictate eligibility for other benefits.

**TEMPORARY  
SEASONAL**

3. A seasonal employee shall be any employee who is hired into a position that lasts six (6) or less months and begins at approximately the same time each year. Examples may include, but are not limited to, summer mowers, and election workers. The county must define and document the season that the employee is being hired for. Seasonal employees can be either part-time or full-time, and they do not qualify for insurance benefits through the county under the Affordable Care Act. Temporary seasonal employees are not eligible for retirement benefits under TCDRS. Other county policies will dictate eligibility for other benefits.

**REGULAR  
VARIABLE  
HOUR**

4. A regular variable hour employee shall be any employee for whom the county cannot determine the average amount of hours that the employee will work each week – hours are variable or indeterminate at the time of the employee's start date. If the employee works an average of thirty (30) or more hours a week in the measurement period, the employee will be eligible for health insurance through the county under the Affordable Care Act. If an employee's schedule becomes regular, then the employee shall be reclassified as full or part time depending on the hours worked. Regular variable hour employees are eligible for retirement benefits under TCDRS. Other county policies will dictate eligibility for other benefits.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON EMPLOYEE STATUS  
(CONT)**

**TEMPORARY  
PART TIME**

5. A temporary short-term, part-time employee shall be any employee who is expected to work less than twenty- nine (29) hours each week in a position that is expected to last for a specific period of time or until a specific project is completed, but no longer than 12 months. If this project goes beyond 12 months, the employee will move into a regular part time status. Temporary short-term, part-time employees are not entitled to any benefits under the Affordable Care Act and are also not eligible for retirement benefits under TCDRS. Other county policies will dictate eligibility for other benefits.

**AGE  
REQUIREMENTS**

6. Persons under eighteen years of age will not be employed in full-time positions. Other age limitations will be only as required to comply with applicable state or federal law.

**PERSONNEL  
FILES**

7. The Carson County Treasurers office will retain basic employee information in an individual personnel file. This file will include all pertinent employment Documents, such as resume, application, W-4, I-9, as well as other employment documents.

It is important that the personnel records of Carson County be accurate at all times. In order to avoid issues, compromising your benefit eligibility or having W2's returned. Carson County request employees to promptly notify the appropriate personnel representative of any change in name, home address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, or any other pertinent information.

The Public Information Act allows county employees to keep their home addresses, home telephone numbers, social security numbers, emergency contact information, and information that reveals whether you have family members confidential. You may keep this information private by requesting in writing not to allow this information to be released to the public no later than (14) days after your first day of employment.



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**EQUAL  
OPPORTUNITY  
EMPLOYER**

1. Carson County is an equal opportunity employer. The county will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation including lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender status, age, genetic information, pregnancy, veteran status, disability, or any other condition or status protected by law in hiring, promotion, demotion, raises, termination, training, discipline, use of employee facilities or programs, or any other benefit, condition, or privilege of employment except where required by state or federal law or where a bona fide occupational qualification exists. If an employee needs an accommodation as a result of a condition or status protected by law, please advise your elected official, appointed official, department head or the County Attorney.

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AMENDMENTS ACT**

**REASONABLE  
ACCOMODATION**

1. It is the policy of Carson County to prohibit any harassment of, or discriminatory treatment of employees on the basis of a disability or because an employee has requested a reasonable accommodation. If an employee feels they have been subject to such treatment, or has witnessed such treatment, the situation should be reported to your elected official, appointed official, department head or the county attorney. All elected officials, appointed officials, department heads and employees with responsibilities requiring knowledge are instructed to treat the employee's disability with confidentiality.

2. It is Carson County's policy to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the county. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (ADAAA), reasonable accommodations may be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities when such accommodations are necessary to enable them to perform the essential functions of their jobs, or to enjoy the equal benefits and privileges of employment. This policy applies to all applicants for employment, and all employees. If you require accommodation, please contact your elected official, appointed official, department head or the county attorney. Reasonable accommodation shall be determined through an interactive process of consultation.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT**

- ANNOUNCEMENT**      1. Announcements for job openings with Carson County may include; but are not limited to: advertisements in local newspapers, registration with the Texas Workforce Commission, or postings on County website [www.co.carson.tx.us](http://www.co.carson.tx.us) .
- APPLICATION PROCEDURE**      2. Before an individual can be considered to be an applicant for employment with Carson County, they shall be required to complete the Carson County Application. Carson County Applications are available from the County Judge Office, and may be picked up at any time during the normal working hours for that office. Job applications will be given only when a job opening exists.
- SELECTION**      3. Each elected or appointed official, or their designee, shall be responsible for selecting the applicant who they feel best meets the qualifications for an open position in their department.
- DISQUALIFICATION**      4. An applicant shall be disqualified from consideration for employment if they:
- a. Do not meet the minimum qualifications necessary to perform the duties of the position for which the applicant is applying.
  - b. Has made a false statement on the application form or any other document related to or which has a bearing on the selection process.
  - c. Has committed or attempted to commit a fraudulent act at any stage of the application process.
  - d. Or is not legally permitted to hold the position.

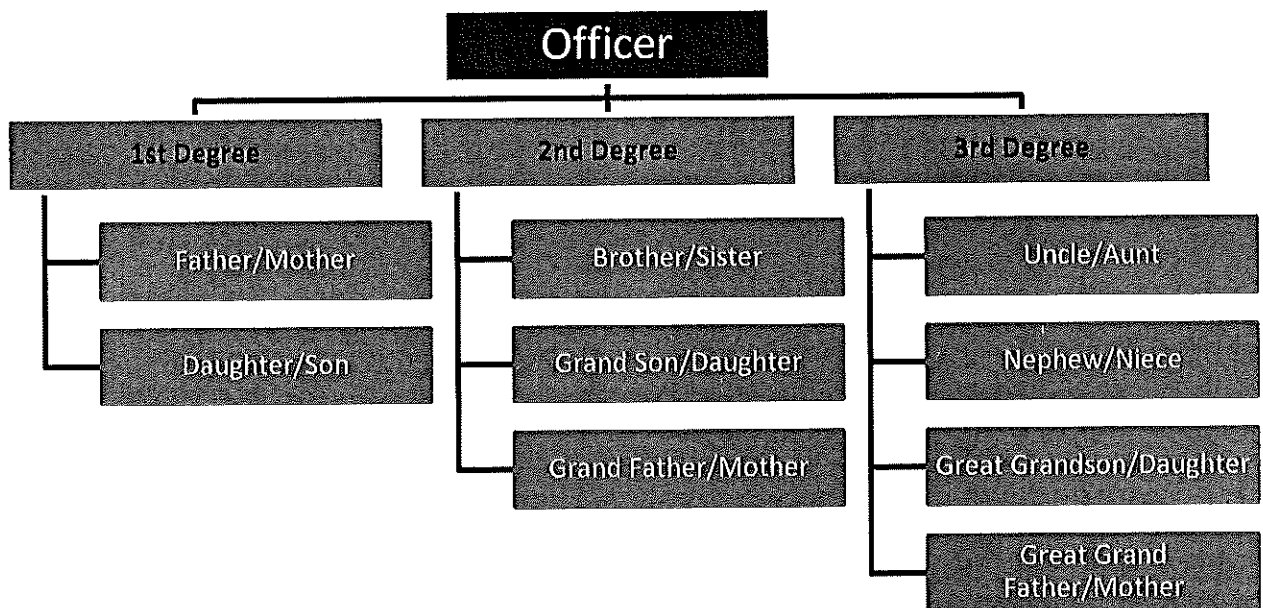
**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON HIRING OF RELATIVES**

**HIRING OF  
RELATIVES**

1. Texas Government Code Chapter 573, states that a Public Official of Carson County is prohibited from hiring a relative related within the third degree of consanguinity (blood) or within the second degree of affinity (marriage) to work in a department that they supervise or exercise control over.
  
2. A degree of relationship is determined under Texas Government Code Chapter 573. See the charts that follow.
  
3. Officer or Employee is the starting point from which all degrees of relationship are calculated.
  
4. Under the Degrees of Consanguinity, where Spouse is indicated, the relationship of the spouse is in the same degree as that of the person related by consanguinity, but the spouse is related only by affinity.

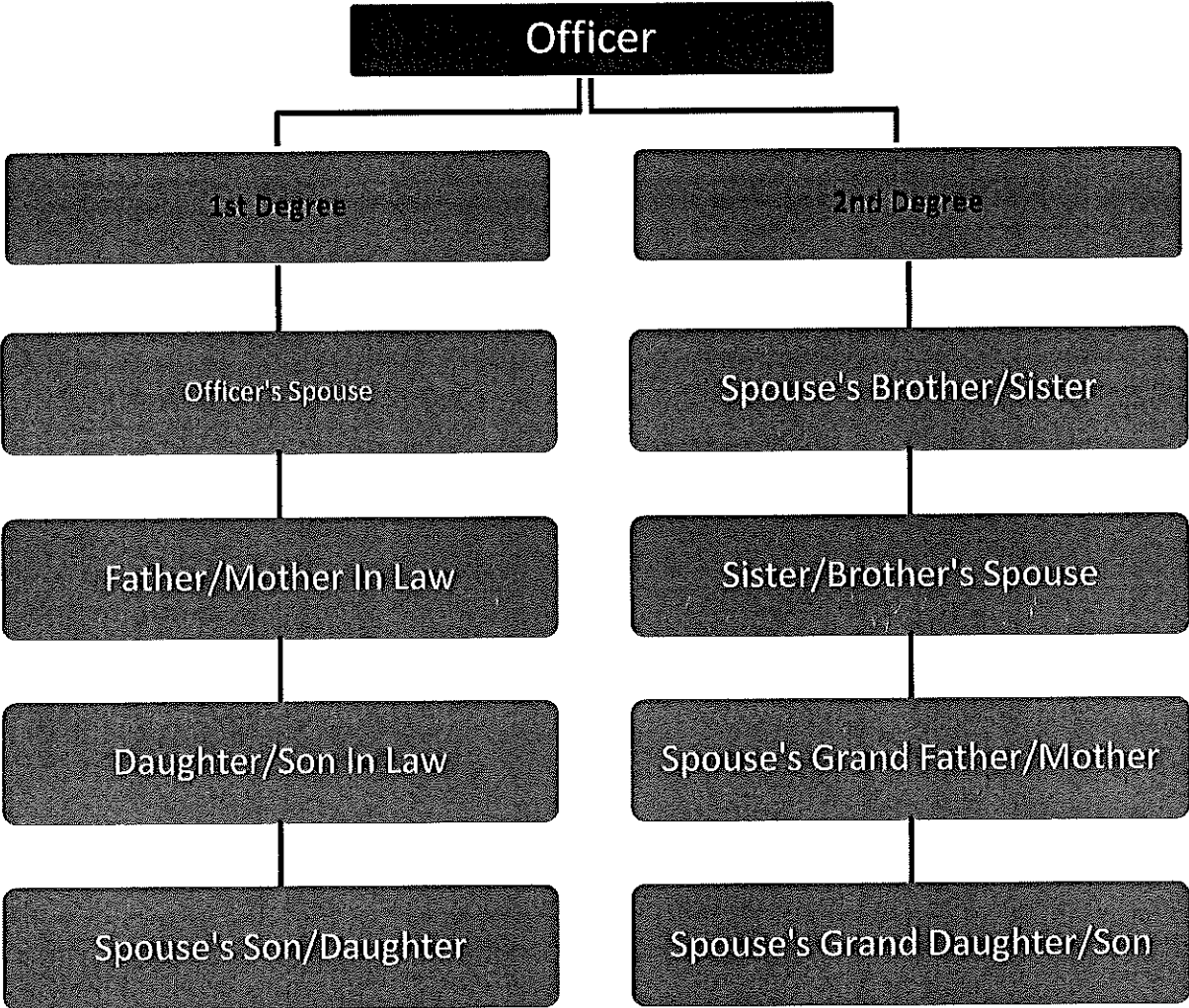
# CONSANGUINITY KINSHIP CHART

(Relationship by Blood)



# AFFINITY KINSHIP CHART

(Relationship by Marriage)



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON VACATION**

**ELIGIBILITY**

1. All full-time and regular part-time employees shall be eligible for vacation benefits. Each employee shall be responsible for accurately recording all vacation time used on employee's time sheet.
2. Temporary part-time and temporary employees shall not be eligible for vacation benefits.

**ACCRUAL RATE**

1. Vacation shall be accrued in accordance with the attached Vacation Accrual Schedule. An employee hired on or prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month or whose employment terminates on or after the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the month shall earn a full months' vacation accrual for the month. An employee hired on or after the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month or whose employment terminates on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month shall earn one-half (1/2) of the months' vacation accrual for the month.
2. An employee shall be required to work for a minimum of six months in a position eligible to accrue vacation before they may take any vacation.
3. The maximum amount of unused vacation that an employee shall be allowed to have at any one time shall be the amount of time the employee would normally accrue in eighteen (18) months. When an employee reaches the maximum accrual, they shall not be allowed to accrue additional vacation time until the employee takes vacation hours to reduce the balance below the maximum allowed under this policy.
4. An employee shall not be allowed to receive pay in lieu of taking time off for vacation.
5. All requests for vacation leave shall be subject to approval by the supervisor based on the timeliness of the request and the needs of the department.
6. Employees shall not be allowed to borrow vacation against possible future vacation earnings.
7. Vacation shall not be accrued while an employee is on leave without pay.

**PAY AT  
TERMINATION**

1. Employees who are separated before completing six (6) months of consecutive service shall not be entitled to payment.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON VACATION (CONT.)**

**EMPLOYED**

**MAXIMUM PAY  
AT TERMINATION**

Less than (5) years	80 Hours
5 to 10 years	96 Hours
Over 10 years	120 Hours

**DEFINITION OF  
WORKDAY**

1. For purpose of this policy, a workday is defined as the normal number of hours an employee would be expected to work, on a day they are scheduled to work.

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



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON  
SICK LEAVE PAY**

Eligible full-time regular employees shall accrue sick leave at a rate of (8) hours per month. Accrual of sick leave shall start at the time an individual begins work for the Carson County in a position eligible for the sick leave benefit. There shall be no waiting period before an employee can use accrued sick leave.

1. Regular full- time employees working (35) hours per week shall accrue (7) hours sick leave per month.
2. Regular part- time employees working (27) hours per week shall accrue (5.40) hours sick leave per month.
3. Regular part-time employees working (20) hours per week shall accrue (4) hours sick leave per month.
4. The maximum accrual that can be carried over into a new calendar year is (720) for full-time regular employees working (40) hours per week, (630) hours for regular full-time employees working (35) hours per week, (486) hours for regular part-time employees working (27) hours per week, (360) hours for regular part-time employees working (20) hours per week.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SICK LEAVE**

**USE OF  
SICK  
LEAVE**

5. Sick leave may be used for the following purposes:

- a. Illness or injury of the employee
- b. Appointments with physicians, optometrists, dentists and other qualified medical professionals; and,
- c. To attend to the illness or injury of a member of the employee's immediate family.
- d. BEREAVEMENT- Up to (5) days paid sick leave may be authorized by a department head. The department head may determine the number of days by how far the employee has to travel. If leave is needed beyond the limits set in this policy, it may be charged to available vacation or compensatory time or to leave without pay, as approved or allowed by the department head. Immediate family shall be defined as spouse, child, foster child, parent, brother/sister, grandparent, grandchild, of the employee or the employee's spouse.

Employees may be allowed time off with pay, up to maximum of 8 hours, to attend the funeral of a relative who is not a member of the immediate family or the funeral of a friend (1) time a budget year. If leave is needed beyond the limits set in this policy, it may be charged to available vacation or compensatory time or to leave without pay.

6. For purposes of this policy, sick leave, immediate family shall be defined as spouse, child, foster child, parent or other relative living in the employees' home who is dependent on the employee for care.

**Sick leave shall not be used as vacation or any other reason not addressed in this policy.**

**NOTIFICATION**

7. Where sick leave is to be used for medical appointments, an employee shall be required to notify their supervisor of the intent to use sick leave as soon as the employee knows of the appointment.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SICK LEAVE (CONT.)**

**NOTIFICATION  
(CONT.)**

8. Where use of sick leave is not known in advance, an employee shall notify their supervisor of the intent to use sick leave within 15 minutes of the employee's normal time to begin work, when possible.
9. Where it is not practicable to notify the supervisor within 15 minutes of the normal starting time, the employee shall notify their supervisor as soon as is reasonably possible.
10. If the employee feels that the situation will cause the employee to miss more than one day of work, the employee should notify their supervisor of the anticipated length of absence. The employee will be placed on FMLA, if event and employee is eligible.

**DOCUMENTATION**

11. If an employee uses three (3) or more consecutive days of sick leave, the supervisor shall have the right to require a physician's statement at any time.
12. Documentation requirements of this policy shall also apply in situations where the absence is for the care of a member of the immediate family.
13. If an employee uses sick leave during the two (2) weeks prior to resignation of employment with the county, the supervisor shall have the right to require a physician's statement or some other acceptable documentation of injury or illness.
14. Sick leave must be taken in one (1) hour increments.
15. Employees shall not be allowed to borrow sick leave against future accruals.
16. Employees deemed by their supervisor to be abusing the sick leave benefit can be required to bring a doctor's note for all absences.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SICK LEAVE (CONT.)**

**USE OF  
SICK LEAVE**

1. For purpose of this policy, a workday is defined as the normal number of hours an employee would be expected to work on a day they are scheduled to work.

2. The maximum amount of sick leave that an employee will have available at any given time is the unused balance at the end of the preceding month.

An employee shall receive no pay for any unused sick leave balance at the time termination of employment.

**NEW EMPLOYEE**

3. An employee eligible to earn sick leave, who begins employment on or prior the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month shall earn a full monthly accrual of sick leave.

4. An employee eligible to earn sick leave, who begins employment on or after the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the month shall earn one half (1/2) of a monthly accrual of sick leave.

**CARSON COUNTY  
OFFICIAL PAID HOLIDAYS**

New Year's Day	January 1
Good Friday	Friday before Easter
Memorial Day Last	Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in September
Columbus Day	Monday the week of, or if on the weekend the following Monday
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday in November & Friday which follows
Christmas Eve	December 24 <sup>th</sup>
Christmas Day	December 25 <sup>th</sup>

**(1 ) Floating Holiday Determined by County Commissioners  
at the beginning of the year.**

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON HOLIDAYS**

- ELIGIBILITY HOLIDAYS** 1. All full- time employees shall be eligible for the paid holiday benefit. Regular part-time employees shall be paid for each holiday for the normal hours scheduled to work.
2. The County holidays shall be determined by the Carson County Commissioners' Court at its first meeting of each October.
- HOLIDAY & VACATION** 3. If a paid holiday occurs during the vacation of an eligible employee, that day shall be paid as a holiday and not be charged against the employee's vacation balance.
- HOLIDAY ON DAY OFF** 4. If a designated holiday falls on an eligible employee's day off, the employee shall be allowed to take another day off with pay during the following (60) days, or the Holiday will be forfeited.
5. An employee shall not be allowed to take a day off with pay prior to a holiday in anticipation of working on the holiday.
- EMERGENCIES** 6. An eligible employee called in to work on a holiday because of an emergency, or other special need of the County, shall be given paid time off during the next 60 day's equivalent to the amount of time worked on the holiday.
- SPECIAL OBSERVANCES** 7. Special consideration shall be given to employee requesting time off for religious or other special observances which are not designated as paid holidays for the Carson County.
8. Determination of granted leave under Section 7 of this policy shall be made by the Supervisor of the department in which the employee works, based on the needs of the department.
9. Vacation, compensatory time, or leave without pay may be used for leave granted under Section 7 of this policy.
10. Holidays do not accrue and if they are not taken, they will not be paid at termination.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON HOLIDAY  
(LAW ENFORCEMENT)**

All regular full-time employees of the Carson County Sheriff's Department shall receive compensatory time at the rate of time and one half for each official County holiday worked, with a maximum of (8) hours overtime. This compensatory time will be given regardless of the number of hours worked. This provision is made due to the 24-hour duty required of the Sheriffs' Department and officers.

When law enforcement employees comply with the schedule for holidays, they earn a day off. This earned time off is to be taken within 60 days. After that time period it expires. Taking personal time off on the holiday (e.g. vacation or sick) does not earn the holiday day off.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON JURY DUTY LEAVE**

**JURY DUTY**

1. Employees of Carson County who are called for jury duty shall receive their regular pay for the period they are called for jury duty which includes both the jury selection process and, if selected, the time they actually serve on the jury.
2. Pay for serving on a jury shall only include the time the employee would have normally been scheduled to work and will not include extra pay if jury service involves time outside the employee's normal work schedule.
3. Any fees paid for jury service may be kept by the employee.

**OFFICIAL COURT**

4. If an employee is released by 11:30 a.m. or before, the employee will be required to report to work for the remainder of the day.
5. Employees who are subpoenaed or ordered to attend court to appear as a witness or to testify in some official capacity on behalf of the County shall be entitled to leave with pay for such period as their court attendance may require.

**PRIVATE LITIGATION**

6. If an employee is absent from work to appear in private litigation in which the employee is a principal party, this time shall be charged to vacation, other eligible paid leave, or leave without pay.



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON MILITARY LEAVE**

**GUARD AND  
RESERVE**

1. County employees who are members of the National Guard or active reserve components of the United States Armed Forces shall be allowed up to (15) days off per federal fiscal year with pay to attend authorized training sessions and exercises.
2. The (15) days paid military leave shall apply to the federal fiscal year (October 1 thru September 30) and any unused balance at the end of the year shall not be carried forward into the next fiscal year.
3. Pay for attendance at Reserve or National Guard training sessions or exercises shall be authorized only for periods which fall within the employee's normal work schedule.
4. An employee may use annual leave, earned compensatory time, or leave without pay if they must attend Reserve or National Guard Training sessions or exercises in excess of the fifteen-day maximum.

**ORDERS**

5. An employee going on military leave shall provide their supervisor with a set of orders within three (3) days after receiving them.

**ACTIVE MILITARY**

6. County employees who leave their positions as a result of being called to active military service or who voluntarily enter the Armed Forces of the United States shall be eligible for re-employment in accordance with the state and federal regulations in effect at the time of their release from duty.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON MEDICAL BENEFITS**

**ELIGIBILITY**

1. All regular full-time and regular part-time employees of Carson County shall be eligible for medical plan benefits. Temporary seasonal, temporary short term part-time, and variable hour employees who work an average of less than thirty (30) hours a week in the measurement period will not be eligible for health insurance.

2. Premium for the coverage for eligible employees shall be paid by the County.

**DEPENDENT  
COVERAGE**

3. Eligible employees may cover their qualified dependents by paying the full premium for the dependents. This can be established during "open enrollment" or when a "life event" occurs (e.g. marriage, divorce, birth, death).

4. Deductions for the dependent coverage shall be made through payroll deduction from the employee's paycheck each pay period.

**INFORMATION**

5. Details of coverage under the group medical plan benefits are available in the County Treasurer's Office.

6. All retirees of Carson County are eligible to continue on the County insurance. Retirees will pay the required monthly premiums. Such payment is to be made by the retiree by the (25) twenty-fifth day of each month. Payments delinquent more than (30) thirty days may result in the cancellation of the retiree's insurance benefit.

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON MEDICAL INSURANCE**

**COBRA  
CONTINUANCE OF COVERAGE**

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue benefit coverage under the county's (medical plans, dental plans, and vision plans) when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Common qualifying COBRA events include the employees termination of (except for gross misconduct), the employees death, a reduction in hours below 30 for the employee, divorce of the employee, retirement (if not eligible for retiree medical insurance) and loss of eligibility by a dependent child. The Coverage may continue for differing lengths of time depending upon the reason for eligibility. The time limitations are: 1) Up to 18 months if loss of coverage is due to termination of employment or reduction in work hours; 2) Up to 36 months for dependents if loss of coverage is due to death, divorce, or a dependent child's loss of eligibility; or 3) Up to 29 months if the individual is disabled at the time of eligibility for continued coverage or is disabled within 60 days of eligibility for continued coverage. Under extended coverage, the eligible individual pays full cost of coverage at the county's group rate plus an administrative fee. The Continued coverage may terminate if the individual becomes covered by another group plan (including Medicare), the individual fails to pay the required premium within the established grace period, or the county no longer offers the plan(s) to its active employees. Upon loss of coverage the employee will be notified of their COBRA rights. The employee or their dependents must request continuation of coverage and must pay the full cost of the coverage plus a two percent administrative fee when electing COBRA continuation.

Carson County makes every effort to comply with the guidelines regarding an employee's and qualified dependent's rights under COBRA. Under certain circumstances such as divorce and dependent eligibility, It is the employee's responsibility to advise the Carson County Treasurers Office so the extended coverage may be offered to the employee's dependents.

This provision is based on current COBRA regulations and is subject to change as applicable Federal or State laws change. Eligible employees and their eligible dependents right of insurance coverage shall be governed by reference to current federal and state law and the county's current insurance policies.

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON WORKER'S COMPENSATION**

- ELIGIBILITY** 1. All Carson County employees are covered by worker's compensation insurance while on duty for the County. All workers compensation is handled by the Treasurer's office.
- BENEFITS** 2. Workers' compensation coverage pays for medical bills resulting from a covered injury or illness an employee incurs while carrying out the duties of their job.
3. Workers' compensation also pays Temporary Income Benefit (TIBS) for time lost from work in excess of seven calendar days as a result of eligible work related injuries or illnesses. TIBS are payable beginning on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of lost time. Deputies/Jailers if injured on the job will be paid as required by the Texas Constitution.
4. Employees may use eligible paid leave for all workers' compensation time off less than 8 days.
- ACCIDENT REPORTING** 5. Any employee who suffers a job related illness or injury shall be required to notify their supervisor and the County Treasurer's office immediately.
6. Failure to promptly report job related injuries or illnesses may affect an employee's eligibility for benefits or delay benefit payments.
- PHYSICIAN'S RELEASE** 7. An employee who has lost time because of a work-related accident or illness shall be required to provide a release from the attending physician before they are allowed to return to work.
- CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS** 8. An employee's workers' compensation benefits may be adversely affected if the employee is injured while under the influence of alcohol or drugs or while the employee is engaging in horseplay.
9. Carson County counts an employee's leave due to a work related injury or illness toward the 12 weeks leave entitlement under the Family Medical Leave Act. Vacation, sick leave or other leave shall not be charged, except for the first 7 days.
10. An employee cannot collect worker's compensation payments and County Pay for the same period of time. However, they may collect Supplemental income such as MMI payment and still collect their paycheck.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON RETIREMENT**

- ELIGIBILITY** 1. All regular employees (full time, part time and regular variable hour) shall be eligible for the retirement benefit offered through the Texas County and District Retirement System. Temporary seasonal and temporary short term part-time employees will not be eligible for retirement benefits.
- CONTRIBUTIONS** 2. Eligible employees shall make contributions to the retirement system through a payroll deduction each pay period.
3. Carson County shall make a contribution to each eligible employee's retirement account in an amount to be determined annually by the Commissioner's Court.
- INFORMATION** 4. Information on the retirement program may be obtained in the Treasurer's office.
5. Refer to your Texas County and District Retirement System information website ([www.TCDRS.org](http://www.TCDRS.org)) for more information.

Retired employees shall be eligible to apply for open positions with Carson County as long as the following provisions are met: 1) The retiree has been retired for at least 60 days, 2) No prior arrangement or agreement was made between Carson County and the retiree for re-employment, and 3) strict adherence to normal leaving employment procedures were followed at the time of the employee's retirement.

The retiree must have a bona fide separation of employment and have been retired for a minimum of 60 days. A bona fide separation means there is no prior agreement or understanding between Carson County and the retiree, that the retiree would be rehired after retirement. According to Rule 107.4 adopted by the TCDRS Board of Trustees, restrictions apply to elected officials, people employed for the same or different position in the same or different department, employee status changes, and independent contractors.

Newly elected officials who have recently retired from the county cannot draw their retirement because they have an arrangement to return to work for the county. Employees also cannot retire with an agreement to go work in a different department or different position. Changing employee status does not matter when determining if someone is still working for the county. Also, an employee cannot retire from the county with an arrangement to begin work as an independent contractor either.

Rehired retirees who did not have a bona fide separation of employment may owe a 10 percent excise tax and be required to repay all of their monthly retirement payments. Abusing the retirement provisions in such a manner would violate a qualification requirement for retirement plans under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, potentially resulting in significant tax consequences for the employer, its participating members and those retired employees.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SOCIAL SECURITY/MEDICARE**

**SOCIAL  
SECURITY**

1. All County employees shall participate in the Federal Withholding, Social Security/Medicare program which provides certain retirement, disability, and other financial benefits.

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

2. Contributions to this program shall be made by deductions from each employee's pay check in accordance with the requirements of this program.

3. The County shall contribute in accordance with the requirements of this program.

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**

**ELIGIBILITY**

1. To be eligible for benefits under this policy, an employee must:
  - a. Have worked for Carson County at least 12 months (it is not required that these 12 months be consecutive; however a continuous break in service of 7 years or more will not be counted toward the 12 months); and
  - b. Have worked at least 1250 hours during the previous 12 months.

**QUALIFYING EVENTS**

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

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**  
**(CONT.)**

**SERIOUS HEALTH  
CONDITION**

3. Serious health condition of the employee is defined as a health condition that requires overnight inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential care medical facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider.
4. Serious health condition of a spouse, child, or parent is defined as a condition that requires overnight inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential care medical facility, or a condition that requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider.
5. A serious health condition involving continuing treatment by a health care provider includes any one or more of the following:
  - a. A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves:
    - i. Treatment two or more times within 30 days of incapacity; or
    - ii. Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion within the first seven days of incapacity that results in a regimen of continuing treatment by a health care provider.
  - b. Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or pre-natal care.
  - c. Any period of incapacity or treatment due to a chronic serious health condition that requires periodic visits to a health care provider and continues over an extended period of time.
  - d. Any period of incapacity that is permanent or long term due to a condition for which treatment is not effective.
  - e. Any period of incapacity or absence to receive multiple treatments by a health care provider.

**QUALIFYING EXIGENCY  
LEAVE**

6. Eligible employees may take FMLA/MFL exigency leave when an employee's covered military member (spouse, child of any age or parent) is on active duty or called to active duty status in a foreign country. Leave may be taken to:
  - a. Address any issue that arises because the covered military member was given seven or fewer days' notice for active duty deployment in support of a contingency operation.
  - b. Eligible employee may take up to seven days beginning on the date the covered military member receives the call or order to active duty.
  - c. Attend any official ceremony, program or event sponsored by the military that is related to the active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country of a covered military member.



**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**  
**(CONT.)**

- d. Attend family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military, military service organizations or the American Red Cross that are related to active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country of a covered military member.
- e. Arrange for alternative childcare, provide childcare on an urgent basis (not as routine), to attend school or daycare meetings, to enroll or transfer covered children under age 19 when it is necessitated by the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member.
- f. Make or update financial or legal arrangements to address the covered member's absence while on active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country.
- g. Act as the covered military member's representative before a governmental agency to obtain, arrange or appeal military service benefits while the covered military member is on active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country, for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered member's active duty status.
- h. Attend counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider for oneself, for the covered military member or covered child if the need for counseling arises from the active duty status or call to active duty status in a foreign country of a covered military member.
- i. For a maximum of 15 days each occurrence, to spend time with a covered military member who is on a short-term, temporary, rest and recuperation leave during leave during the period of deployment.
- j. Attend post-deployment activities for the covered military member for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered member's active duty status.
- k. Address issues that arise from the death of a covered military member while on active duty status in a foreign country;
- l. Conduct certain activities related to the care of the military member's parent who is incapable of self-care where those activities arise from the military member's covered active duty.
- m. Address any other additional events that may arise out of the covered military member's active duty or call to active duty status in a foreign country provided the County agrees the leave shall qualify as an exigency and to both the timing and the duration of the leave.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE  
(CONT.)**

**LENGTH  
OF LEAVE**

7. An employee may use up to 12 weeks leave per 12-month period under this policy. Carson County sets the 12-month period used under this policy as a "rolling" 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses FMLA leave.

8. A married couple who both work for the county is entitled to a maximum combined leave of 12 weeks in any 12-month period for the birth or placement of child, or care for a parent with a serious health condition. The combined limit for a married couple employed by the county is 26 weeks in a single 12-month period if leave is to care for a covered service member or veteran with a serious injury or illness.

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

a. The single 12-month period begins on the first day the eligible employee takes FMLA to care for covered service member or covered veteran and ends 12 months after that date.

b. An employee forfeits unused leave under this section if the eligible employee does not take all of their 26 weeks during this 12-month period to care for the covered service member or covered veteran is forfeited;

c. Leave entitlement under this section is applied on a per-injury basis. An eligible employee may be entitled to take more than one period of 26 weeks of leave if the leave is to care for different covered service member or veteran or to care for the same covered service member or veteran with a subsequent serious illness or injury. An employee may not take more than 26 weeks in any single 12-month period.

**WORK RELATED**

10. Carson County will always designate work related injuries with lost time as FMLA qualifying.

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**  
**(CONT.)**

**PAID  
AND UNPAID**

11. If an employee has accrued leave, the employee is required to use their accrued leave as detailed below.

*Sick leave, Compensatory and Vacation*, the remainder of the leave shall be unpaid.

a. An employee taking leave because of a serious health condition, or the serious health condition of an eligible family member, is required to first use *Sick leave, Compensatory and Vacation* with the remainder of the 12-week leave period being unpaid leave.

b. An employee taking leave for the birth of a child is required to use *Sick leave, Compensatory and Vacation* for the recovery period after the birth of the child and before being placed on unpaid leave.

c. After the recovery period from the birth of a child, an employee is required to first use *Sick leave, Compensatory and Vacation* with the remainder of the 12-week leave period being unpaid leave.

d. An employee taking leave for the placement of a child in the employee's home for adoption or foster care is required to use *Vacation, and Compensatory and other paid leave, except for sick leave* with the remainder of the 12-week leave period being unpaid leave.

e. An employee taking leave for a qualifying exigency for a covered military member is required to use *Sick leave, Compensatory and Vacation* with the remainder of the 12-week leave period being unpaid leave.

f. An employee taking leave for the care of a covered service member or veteran is required to first use *Sick leave, Compensatory and Vacation* with the remainder of the 26-week leave period being unpaid leave.

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

**CARSON COUNTY**

**POLICY ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE  
(CONT.)**

**CONTINUED  
EMPLOYEE  
BENEFITS**

13. While an employee is on leave under this policy, the county will continue to pay the employee's medical plan premium at the same rate as if the employees had been actively at work. The employee is required to pay for dependent coverage and for any other coverage for which the employee would normally pay, or the coverage will be discontinued. An employee's obligation to pay for coverage will be made through regular payroll deduction while the employee is on paid leave status. While on unpaid leave, the employee is required to pay for premiums due to the county no later than the 25<sup>th</sup> day of each month. The county may cancel unpaid coverage by providing the employee advance written notice, not less than 15 days before the coverage will be cancelled for non-payment.

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

**INTERMITTENT  
LEAVE  
AND REDUCED  
SCHEDULE**

15. An employee may only take intermittent leave under this policy if it is necessary for the care and treatment of a serious health condition of the employee, the employee's eligible family member or the care of a covered military member or veteran.

16. An employee may only work a reduced schedule under this policy if it is necessary for the care and treatment of a serious health condition of the employee, the employee's eligible family member, or the care of a covered military member or veteran.

17. All work time missed as the result of intermittent leave or a reduced work schedule under this policy will be deducted from the employee's 12-week or 26-week leave eligibility in a single 12 month period.

**CERTIFICATION  
REQUIREMENTS**

18. The county has the right to ask for certification of the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's eligible family member when the employee requests or leave under this policy.

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**  
**(CONT.)**

19. The county shall send a request for medical certification to an employee who has been out of work for three (3) or more days to determine the employee's FMLA eligibility. The employee is requested to have their physician complete and return the medical certification within 15 days of the employee's receipt of the form to be eligible for FMLA. An employee's failure to return the medical certification may result in denial of FMLA by the county.

20. The employee must respond to the county's request for certification within 15 days of receipt of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay in writing before the 15<sup>th</sup> day after receipt of the request. If an employee does not provide certification or otherwise respond, the county may deny leave under this policy.

21. An employee is required to provide certification of their serious health condition of the employee by having the employee's treating health care provider complete and submit an FMLA form WH-380-E. Also included with this form is the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination statement to be given to any and all health care providers.

22. An employee is required to provide certification of the serious health condition of an eligible family member by having the family member's treating health care provider complete and submit an FMLA form WH-380-F. Also included with this form is the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination statement to be given to any and all health care providers.

23. An employee is required to provide certification for leave taken because of a qualifying exigency by having the employee complete and submit an FMLA form WH-384. An employee is required to provide certification for leave taken for a serious injury or illness of a covered military member or veteran by having the member's or veteran's Department of Defense treating health care provider complete and submit an FMLA form WH-385. The employee may also be required to provide the county with confirmation of the family or next of kin relationship to the seriously injured or ill covered military member or veteran.

24. If an employee requests intermittent leave or a reduced work schedule, the certification submitted must also include the dates and duration of treatment and a statement of medical necessity for taking intermittent leave or working a reduced schedule. The county may request re-certification for intermittent or reduced schedule leave every six months in connection with an eligible absence.

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE  
(CONT.)**

**REQUIRMENTS  
(CONT.)**

25. The county may ask for a second opinion from a health care provider of the county's choice, at the expense of the county, if the county has reason to question the certification, unless the leave is necessary to care for a seriously injured or ill covered service member supported by an invitational travel order (ITO) or invitational travel authorization (ITA) to join an injured or ill service member at their bedside.

26. If there is a conflict between the certification submitted by the employee and the second certification obtained by the county, the county may require a third certification, at the expense of the county, from a health care provider agreed upon by both the employee and the county. The third opinion is final and binding on the county and the employee.

**REQUESTING  
LEAVE**

27. Unless FMLA leave is unforeseeable, an employee is required to submit a written request for leave under this policy to their immediate supervisor. Where reasonably practicable, an employee should give their immediate supervisor a minimum of 30-days' notice before beginning leave under this policy. Where it is not reasonably practicable to give 30-days' notice, the employee is required to give as much notice as possible. If an employee fails to provide 30 days notice for foreseeable leave, the leave request may be denied until at least 30 days from the date the County received notice.

**REINSTATEMENT**

28. An employee returning from leave under this policy, and who has not exceeded the 12-week maximum leave period allowed, will be returned to the same job or a job equivalent to the job the employee held before going on FMLA leave. An employee who has not exceeded the 26-week maximum leave period in a single 12-month period, allowed to care for a seriously ill or injured covered military member, will be returned to the same job or a job equivalent to the job the employee held before going on leave

29. If an employee is placed in a different position, it will be one with equivalent status, pay, benefits, and other employment terms and which entails substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility, and authority.

30. The county has no obligation to reinstate an employee who takes more than the 12 weeks of leave allowed under this policy, or who elects not to return to work after using the maximum leave allowed, including an employee with available sick or vacation leave.

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT/MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE  
(CONT.)**

**REPAYMENT  
OF BENEFITS**

31. Unless an employee is unable to return to work because of the serious medical condition of the employee or an eligible family member, or another situation beyond the control of the employee, an employee who does not return to work after using the maximum leave allowed under this policy will be required to reimburse the county for all medical premiums and other benefits paid by the county while the employee was on leave without pay related to their FMLA leave.

**OTHER  
BENEFITS**

32. While on leave without pay under this policy, an employee does not earn vacation or sick leave, is not eligible for holiday pay, and does not earn other benefits afforded to employees actively at work, except as stated in this policy.

33. An employee who is out on approved FMLA leave may not take trips outside of the county unless the travel is related to the employee's own serious health condition, the serious health condition of the child, spouse or parent of the employee or to attend qualifying military events. An employee may ask their immediate supervisor for written permission to take other trips outside of the county which may be granted at the supervisor's sole discretion.

34. If the county has a policy forbidding employees from working other jobs, an employee on approved FMLA leave may also be forbidden from working another job while on FMLA leave from the county.

**REGULATION**

35. Any area or issue regarding family and medical leave that is not addressed in this policy is subject to the basic requirements of the FMLA and the regulations issued to implement it.

**RETURN-TO-WORK**

36. An employee is required to provide a fitness-for-duty certification before the employee returns to work.

**ENFORCEMENT**

37. An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer for unlawful discrimination under the FMLA. The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any federal or state law that provides greater family of medical leave rights.

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON ATTENDANCE AND TIMELINESS**

**ATTENDANCE**

1. Each employee shall report to work on each day they are scheduled to work unless prior approval for absence is given by the employee's supervisor or the employee is unable to report for work because of circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

**TARDINESS**

2. Each employee shall be at their place of work at the starting time set by their supervisor unless prior approval is given by the supervisor or the employee is unable to be at work on time for reasons beyond the control of the employee.

3. Each employee shall remain on the job until the normal quitting time established by the supervisor unless permission to leave early is given by the supervisor.

**NOTIFICATION**

4. If an employee is unable to be at work at their normal reporting time, the employee shall be responsible for notifying their supervisor as soon as is reasonably practicable of the circumstances causing the tardiness or absence.

**EXCUSED AND  
UNEXCUSED**

5. Each supervisor shall be responsible for determining if an unscheduled absence or tardiness is to be classified as excused or unexcused, based on the circumstances causing the absence or tardiness.

6. Frequent unexcused absences or tardiness shall make an employee subject to disciplinary measures, up to and including termination of employment.

**ABANDON  
OF POSITION**

7. An employee who does not report for work for three consecutive scheduled work days, and who fails to notify their supervisor, shall be considered to have resigned their position by abandonment.



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE,  
WEATHER CLOSING AND EMERGENCIES**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE:** Administrative Leave is temporary paid absence from work which has been authorized by our County Judge or the overseeing Elected Official. Administrative Leave is typically used during investigations of alleged employee misconduct, but may occasionally be approved due to local emergencies, during office closures, or the purposes which are in the best interest of Carson County.

**WEATHER AND EMERGENCY:** As a general practice, Carson County does not close its operations unless the health, safety and security of county employees are seriously brought into question. When this happens, either because of severe weather conditions or other emergencies, the County Judge is responsible for initiating the closing. Public safety will be foremost in the development of departmental emergency action plans. However, each elected official controls the working hours of their employees, even in an emergency situation.

When the Carson County Judge or designee officially closes an office due to adverse weather conditions, time shall be reported as follows:

1. Administrative leave shall be granted for scheduled work hours missed during the closing. An employee shall not be required to use vacation hours for hours missed while the office was officially closed.
2. Any employee in a non-emergency position who worked their scheduled hours while an office was officially closed, will report the hours as regular hours worked.
3. Any employee who was scheduled to work during the hours that the office was officially closed shall not receive administrative leave for the hours that the office was closed.
4. Some county departments are continuous operating public safety and service departments. Some county personnel will be required to work during emergency closings. Each department head is responsible for designating their own employees and providing alternate information to personnel designated as essential during emergency closings.
5. An employee who is unable to travel to work may be granted administrative leave for scheduled work hours missed when an office is not officially closed if a particular geographical area has widespread officially closed major roadways due to adverse weather conditions; and no practical alternative routes are available.

**CARSON COUNTY  
LICENSE AND CERTIFICATIONS**

Carson County has many positions that require licenses and certifications. It is the responsibility of each employee to maintain all required licenses and certifications. If an employee is unable to renew or loses a license or certification, they must immediately notify their supervisor. If this license is a requirement for the position, the employee may be demoted, transferred or terminated. Under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to continue in the position where a license or certification is required if failure to have such license or certification is illegal under either Federal or State Law.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON COUNTY PROPERTY**

**RESPONSIBILITY**

1. Each County employee shall be responsible for the care, maintenance, proper use, and upkeep of any vehicle, tool, or other County equipment assigned to them.
2. County employees shall only use equipment, vehicles, tools, and other County property that they are authorized to use.
3. An employee is responsible for regular maintenance on a county assigned vehicle.

**PERSONAL USE**

4. Personal use of County vehicles, equipment, supplies, tools, and any other County property shall not be permitted, and may result in discipline up to and including termination. If personal use of a County vehicle is permitted, the employee will be required to keep a log of all personal miles driven, including to and from work. These personal miles will be subject to payroll taxes at the current IRS rate in accordance with IRS rules and regulations.

Personal use of any County Owned vehicles by an Employee or Elected Official is prohibited, if receiving a monthly stipend. This includes commuting between the residence and the principal place of business.

**LICENSES**

5. A County employee who operates any County equipment or vehicle which requires a license shall be required to have a current active license for that vehicle or equipment any time they operate it.
6. Any employee who operates a vehicle or equipment which requires a license for legal operation shall notify their supervisor of any change in the status of that license.
7. An employee whose job involves operation of a vehicle or equipment requiring a license for its legal operation shall be subject to possible job change or termination if that license is suspended or revoked.
8. An employee whose job involves operation of a vehicle or equipment requiring a license for its legal operation, but who is deemed uninsurable by the County's vehicle insurance carrier even though the employee's license has not been revoked or suspended, shall be subject to possible job change or termination.

**ACCIDENTS**

9. Any employee involved in an accident while operating County equipment or vehicles shall immediately report the accident to their supervisor and to the proper law enforcement or other authority immediately.

10. A copy of all accident and incident reports prepared by the employee shall be sent to the supervisor and the Loss Control Coordinator (AUDITOR) and County Treasurer.

**TELEPHONES/  
CELL PHONES**

11. Personal phone calls shall be kept to a minimum. Long distance calls made using a landline shall be for business only. Abuse of this policy is subject to disciplinary action by the department head or supervisor, up to and including termination.

12. Use of personal cell phones during business hours will be a matter addressed by the elected official/ department head.

13. Carson County strongly discourages the use of any cell phone while operating any vehicle. Employees should plan to allow placement of calls either prior to traveling or while on rest breaks.

14. The State of Texas has banned all employees from texting while operating any county owned vehicle. County employees who are driving their own personal vehicle are also banned from texting while driving on county business. Federal law prohibits any CDL driver operating any vehicle over 10,000 GWR from texting with fines and penalties, up to including loss of CDL.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON COMPUTER/INTERNET**

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures concerning the installation, de-installation, maintenance, care, acquisition and use of County hardware and software. All hardware and software installations are to be directed through IT. This will insure that all installations are compatible with existing systems and to insure minimal network problems. These procedures will safeguard the County network from possible computer virus infections, potential unauthorized use of county internet and e-mail accounts.

Maintenance of Computers is the responsibility of the IT personnel only. Employees should notify their supervisor of any maintenance problems and the supervisor will then notify IT personnel of the problem. Problems will be handled in a timely, efficient manner.

**Acceptable use** of County computers and internet is for County business and use by County employees only. Any work related to job responsibilities and communication with other departments of the County or State by e-mail.

**Unacceptable use** of County computers and internet.

- a. Use of profanity, offensive or harassing remarks to co-workers or third parties, accessing, displaying, distributing pornographic sites, obscenities or sexually explicit material of any kind.
- b. Copying or downloading any unauthorized software or copyrighted material.
- c. Loading software for personal use on any County computer.
- d. Using the system in such a manner as to create a breach of security.
- e. Using the system for personal gain or any illegal purpose.
- f. Forwarding messages with derogatory, inflammatory remarks or content regarding race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, physical attributes, or sexual preferences.
- g. Knowingly or carelessly performing an act that will interfere with the normal operations of computers, terminals, peripherals, or networks.

Use of Carson County computers, network and Internet access is a privilege granted by department heads and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct carried out on such systems. Improper use may result in discipline up to and including termination.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON COMPUTER/INTERNET**

**Filtering:** Filters are designed to track the usage patterns of the users. Filters assist in preventing viewing or sending any violent messages, profanity, nudity, sexual pictures or illegal activities. Filtering is monitored by the Elected officials or department heads have the ability and may with or without advance notice, view usage and usage patterns of their staff

**No Right of Privacy/Monitoring:** Carson County owns the rights to all data and files in any computer, network or other information system used in the county. Carson County also reserves the right to monitor electronic mail messages (including personal/private/instant messaging systems, Facebook, etc.) and their content, as well as any and all use of the Internet and of computer equipment used to create, view, or access e-mail and Internet content. Employees must be aware that the electronic mail messages sent and received using county equipment are not private and are subject to viewing, downloading, inspection, release, and archiving by county officials at all times. Carson County has the right to inspect any and all files stored in private areas of the network or on individual computers or storage media in order to assure compliance with policy and state and federal laws. No employee may access another employee's computer, computer files, or electronic mail messages without prior authorization from either the employee or an appropriate county official. No employee shall break any copyright law, download any illegal or unauthorized downloads. Carson County employees may be subject to discipline up to and including termination for any misuse of county informational systems.

Employees should not bring personal computers to the workplace or connect them to Carson County electronic systems, unless expressly permitted to do so by their supervisor. Violation of this policy, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**CONFLICT OF  
INTEREST**

1. Employees of Carson County shall not engage in any employment, relationship, or activity which could be viewed as a conflict of interest because of the potential or appearance of affecting the employee's job efficiency, or which would reduce their ability to make objective decisions in regard to their work and responsibility as a County Employee.

2. Employees involved in conflict of interest situations shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination and these actions may have criminal consequences for employees.

**PROHIBITED**

3. Activities which constitute a conflict of interest shall include but not be limited to:

a. Soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept a financial benefit, gift, or favor, other than from the County, that might reasonably tend to influence the employee's performance of duties for the County or that the employee knows or should know is offered with the intent to influence the employee's performance;

b. Accepting employment, compensation, gifts, or favors that might reasonably tend to induce the employee to disclose confidential information acquired in the performance of official duties;

c. Accepting outside employment, compensation, gifts, or favors that might reasonably tend to impair independence of judgment in performance of duties for the County;

d. Making any personal investment that might reasonably be expected to create a substantial conflict between the employee's private interest and their duties for the County.

e. Soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept a financial benefit from another person in exchange for having performed duties as a County employee in favor of that person.

**PRIOR APPROVAL**

4. Employees must obtain prior approval from their department head before accepting or commencing outside employment or engaging in any activity which might result in a violation of this policy.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY**

**POLITICAL  
ACTIVITY**

1. Employees of Carson County shall have the right to support candidates of their choice and to engage in political activity during their personal time.
  
2. County employees shall not:
  - a. Use their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the result of any election or nomination for office;
  - b. Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command, or advise another person to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency, or person for a political reason; or
  - c. Use any equipment, property or material owned by the County for political activity or engage in political activity while on duty for the County.



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SAFETY**

**SAFETY  
STANDARDS**

1. Each County employee shall be required to adhere to the general safety standards established for all employees and to all additional safety standards for their job or the department in which they work.

**VIOLATIONS**

2. Failure to follow the safety standards set by the County or your supervisor subjects an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

3. An employee causing an accident resulting in major injury or death because of failure to follow safety standards shall be terminated.

**REPORTING**

4. Employees seeing unsafe working conditions shall either take steps to correct those conditions or report the unsafe conditions to the department head.

5. Any job related injury to a County Employee requiring medical attention, must have an accident report form filled out immediately by the Department head, and reported to the Treasurer's Office.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SEAT BELTS**

Carson County recognizes that seat belts are extremely effective in preventing injuries and loss of life. We care about our employees, and want to make sure that no one is injured or killed in a tragedy that could have been prevented by the use of seat belts. Therefore, seat belts shall always be used by both drivers and passengers while traveling on official county business and at all times when operating county owned vehicles. Employees are strongly encouraged to use their seat belts off the job as well.

**Application:** The seat belt use policy applies to all employees and occupants of any vehicle driven by employees, including rentals and personal vehicles when used on official county business.

**Responsibility:** Elected officials and supervisors must demonstrate their commitment to this policy by communicating it to their employees, monitoring compliance, evaluating effectiveness and taking disciplinary action against violations.

**Belt Systems Maintenance:** Seat belts in all Carson County vehicles are to be maintained so that they are clean and in good working order.

**Enforcement:** Seat belt use is such a common, healthy practice that the need to actively enforce this policy should be rare. However, the policy will be enforced the same as other Carson County rules, and employees who violate it will be subject to disciplinary actions which may include dismissal. Elected officials and supervisors have an obligation to encourage and routinely monitor usage. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for enforcing seat belt use by all occupants.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT**

**POLICY**

1. Carson County is committed to workplace free of harassment. Harassment includes unlawful, unwelcome words, acts or displays based on sex, sexual orientation including lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender status, race, color, religion, national origin, age, genetic information, pregnancy, disability, family or military leave status or veteran's status. Such conduct becomes harassment when (1) the submission to the conduct is made a condition of employment; (2) the submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision; or (3) the conduct creates an offensive, intimidating or hostile working environment or interferes with work performance. Harassment is strictly prohibited by Carson County whether committed by an elected official, appointed official, department head, coworker or non-employee with whom the county does business

2. Any employee who feels they have been subjected to, or observes any instance of harassment, shall file a complaint with their direct supervisor. If the employee does not feel comfortable filing the complaint with their supervisor, they may file the complaint with the County Attorney or County Judge.

3. Every incident reported will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and will be treated in as confidential manner as possible during and after the investigation of the complaint. If it is found that an employee has subjected another employee to harassment in violation of this policy, that employee will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

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

**HARASSMENT**

4. It shall be the policy of Carson County to provide a work place free from all forms of illegal harassment for all employees and to take active steps to eliminate any form of harassment which the County becomes aware.

5. Employees engaging in any form of harassment shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

1. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited by Carson County, whether committed by an elected official, department head, or co-worker. Carson County does not tolerate harassment in the workplace of its employees by non-employees or other employees. It shall be the policy of Carson County to provide a work place free from sexual harassment for all employees and to take active steps to eliminate any sexual harassment of which the County becomes aware.

2. Employees engaging in sexual harassment shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

**DEFINITION**

3. Sexual harassment shall include, but not be limited to, unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which includes slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, touching, pictures, emails, or cartoons where:

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

**CLAIMS**

4. All claims of harassment shall be taken seriously and investigated promptly, thoroughly and when possible, confidentially.

5. While all claims of harassment shall be handled with discretion, there can be no complete assurance of full confidentiality.

6. No retaliation or other adverse action shall be taken against an employee who, in good faith, files a claim of harassment.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT  
(CONT.)**

**REPORTING**

7. Employees who feel they have been harassed should immediately report the situation to the elected or appointed official who is responsible for the department in which they work.
8. If, for any reason, the employee feels that reporting the harassment to the department head may not be the best course of action, the report should be made to the County Judge or County Attorney.
9. The official or Carson County head, to whom a claim has been reported, shall be responsible for seeing that prompt action is taken to investigate the claim.
10. Once the investigation is complete, the employee making the claim shall be notified of the result of the investigation and any actions which are to be taken.
11. Employees should use the following procedures so that the complaint may be resolved quickly and fairly.
  - a. When practical, confront the harasser and ask them to stop the unwanted behavior.
  - b. Record the time, place and specifics of each incident, including any witnesses.
  - c. Report continuing harassments to the elected Official or Appointed Official who is responsible for the employee's department or to the County Judge or County Attorney.
  - d. If a thorough investigation reveals that unlawful harassment has occurred, Carson County will take effective remedial action in accordance with the circumstances up to and including termination.
12. Reporting or failing to report claims in accordance with the procedure given in this policy shall not limit other legal recourse an employee may have in regard to harassment charges.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON OTHER RIGHTS**

**DRESS CODE**                    1. Carson County expects all employees to be well groomed, clean and neat at all times. Each department head will determine the type of attire that is acceptable.

2. You are required to act in a professional manner at all times and extend the highest courtesy to co-workers and to the public being served. A cheerful and positive attitude is essential to our commitment to customer service.

**POLICY ON  
TOBACCO USE**                    3. Carson County is a tobacco and vaping free entity. Therefore, any form of tobacco consumed in county buildings is strictly prohibited. Additionally, no Smoking/Vaping is allowed within 10 feet of the exterior entrance ways.

**BREAKS**                            4. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act amended the Fair Labor Standards Act to require reasonable breaks for nursing mothers to express breast milk. The Texas Right to Express Breast Milk in the Workplace Act also imposes duties on public employers and, under other state law, is applicable for the duration of a nursing mother's need to express breast milk.

5. Carson County will provide reasonable paid breaks for a nursing mother to express breast milk. The location will be shielded from view and free from intrusion and appropriate for expressing breast milk. The specific location will be determined on a case by case basis. Carson County does not allow any retaliation against a nursing mother for asking for this break. An employee of the county who needs to express breast milk may not be discriminated against.

6. All other employee breaks are determined by each department head and are not required to be given. If your department provides you with a break, it may not be accumulated or used for time off. The Fair Labor Standards Act does not require any breaks other than for nursing mother; however, if paid breaks are provided for employees, a nursing mother must be given the same amount of paid break.

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON PAY PERIOD AND TIME SHEETS**

- PAY PERIOD**
1. The pay period for Carson County shall be monthly, and shall begin on the first day of each month and end on the last day of the same month. Checks shall be direct deposited or mailed the last business day of month.
  2. If a payday falls on a holiday or a weekend, paychecks shall be mailed, or directly deposited on the last workday immediately preceding the holiday or weekend.
- WORK SCHEDULES**
3. The normal hours of work for most positions in the County shall be from 8:am until 5:pm, Monday through Friday. Each department head shall determine the exact working schedules for their employees. In order to meet the needs of the County, certain departments or employees may be required to work a schedule that varies from the normal work schedule or they may be subject to call back in case of emergency or special need. Except in emergency situations, an employee shall be required to have authorization from their supervisor before working overtime.
- TIME SHEETS**
4. Each employee must fill out a time sheet to be turned in to their supervisor on the date specified by the County Treasurer. Failure to complete a time sheet may result in an employee only receiving minimum wage payment until the proper timesheet has been completed and turned into the County Treasurers' office. All corrections will be made on the next regularly scheduled payroll. The timesheet prepared by the employee shall show an accurate record of all time worked and leave taken, whether paid or unpaid, for the pay period. Timesheets are governmental documents and as such require accurate and truthful information.  
**FALSIFYING A TIMESHEET, A GOVERNMENTAL RECORD, IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.**
- WORK DAY**
5. The workday for the County shall begin at 12:01 am each day and end 24 consecutive hours later.
- WORK WEEK**
6. For the purposes of recordkeeping and to determine overtime in Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the workweek for Carson County shall begin at 12:01 am on each Saturday, and end seven (7) consecutive days later.
- PAY ADVANCES**
7. Advances in pay shall not be made to any employee for any reason.

**CARSON COUNTY  
LAW ENFORCEMENT WAGE, COMPENSATORY TIME,  
CERTIFICATION INCENTIVE AND LONGEVITY PAY**

**FLSA COMPLIANCE** 1. In administering its wage and salary program, the minimum standards of Carson County shall be the basic standards set forth in the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and its amendments as it applies to county government.

**207(k)** 2. Carson County Commissioners Court has adopted the 207(k) exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act for law enforcement employees, which includes deputies and jailers. These employees have a work period of 171 hours in a 28-day period. A law enforcement employee will be paid a salary based on a minimum of 160 hours reported and a maximum of 171 actual hours worked, plus overtime for any authorized hours worked over 171 during a work period. Overtime may be paid as compensatory time or paid time as determined in the county's annual budget. An employee will be paid their full salary if the employee reports at least 160 hours during a work period, by reporting actual hours worked or sick, vacation or compensatory time. Overtime will not accrue in any work period during which an employee reports sick, vacation, or compensatory time until the number of actual hours worked reported during the work period exceeds 171.

A law enforcement employee must account for 160 hours during each work period, by reporting actual hours worked or vacation, sick, or compensatory time. If an employee reports more than 160 actual hours worked during a work period, they will receive no additional salary compensation for the actual hours worked between 160 hours and 171.

**CERTIFICATION INCENTIVE** 3. Certification pay will be paid to regular full-time deputies in an amount determined by the Commissioners' Court for the following certification Levels:

- a. Intermediate Level            20x12= \$240
- b. Advanced Level                40x12= \$480
- c. Master Level                    65x12= \$780

Certification pay will be paid out, annually at the end of the County's fiscal year in September. Employees will qualify for the certification allowance beginning at the end of the first full year of certification.

**LONGEVITY** 4. Longevity pay will begin accumulating at the end of the fiscal year of the regular full-time employees' (6) sixth year of employment and will be paid out in September each year in the amounts determined by the Commissioners' Court.

Steps for the Longevity Pay:

- a. (6) through (10) years of employment \$ 360.00
- b. (11) through (15) years of employment \$ 400.00
- c. 16 + years of employment \$ 480.00



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON COMPENSATION**

Carson County Commissioners Court annually sets the maximum compensation for each employee in accordance with Texas State law.

Carson County complies with the Fair Labor Standards Acts as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Safe Harbor policy.

**APPLICATION**

1. This policy shall apply to all County employees except law enforcement employees.
2. Law Enforcement personnel (Deputies/Jailers) are treated in accordance with the 207 (k) Exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Commissioners' Court Adopted this exemption. (See Policy)

**SALARIED  
EMPLOYEES**

3. All non-exempt County employees shall be paid an hourly wage. Some employees may have the classification of hourly employees paid on a salary basis, but they remain non-exempt for FLSA purposes.
4. For full-time non-exempt employees, the monthly salary compensates the employee for all hours worked up to 40 in each workweek of the month.
5. For regular part time employees, the monthly salary compensates the employee for all hours worked in a work week up to the amount designated by the County for the position.
6. Salaried employees shall be paid all their monthly salary each pay day except when no leave is available or when full day docking for disciplinary reasons.
7. Temporary employees shall be paid hourly at least the minimum wage established by the Fair Labor Standards Act, (FLSA) as amended.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON LONGEVITY PAY**

**ELIGIBILITY**

1. All regular full-time employees (except Law Enforcement as it is defined under the FLSA Jailers and Deputies) shall be eligible for the Longevity pay benefit. Should an employee leave employment with the County and return after 365 days, they will not receive longevity for past employment with Carson County.
  
2. Longevity pay shall equal \$10.00 per month for each completed full year of employment. (Example: After an employee completes the initial one year of employment in an eligible position, the longevity pay for the next 12 months shall be \$120.00 based on 12 months at \$10.00 per month. The longevity pay at the end of two years will be \$240.00 based on 24 months at \$10.00 per month.)
  
3. Longevity will be paid monthly after an elected official or employee has worked for one full year. Such payment will start at the beginning of the next fiscal year (October 1) after being a full-time employee for one full year.
  
4. The cap for longevity is \$200.00 monthly, or \$2,400.00 annually.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

**REQUIRED  
DEDUCTIONS**

1. Deductions shall be made from each employee's paycheck for Federal withholding, Social Security, Medicare and any other deductions required by law.
  
2. Employees eligible for membership in the Texas County and District Retirement System shall have their contributions to that system deducted from each paycheck. Employee contribution is 7% of gross pay.
  
3. Any optional deduction authorized by the Commissioner's Court and approved by the employee shall also be deducted from the employee's paycheck.
  
4. No optional deductions shall be made from the employee's paycheck unless the employee turns in written authorization for the deduction to the Treasurer's Office.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON HOURS WORKED AND OVERTIME**

**HOURS  
WORKED**

1. Hours worked shall include all time actually spent in the service of the County as defined in the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and its regulations.

**OVERTIME  
APPLICATION**

2. Overtime, as defined by this policy, shall apply to all employees eligible for overtime compensation under the FLSA, except for law enforcement employees.

3. Overtime for Deputies/Jailers is defined under Section 207 (k) Fair Labors Standard Act as adopted by Commissioner's Court.

4. Overtime shall include all time actually worked for the County in excess of 40 hours in any work week.

5. Holiday, sick leave, vacation and compensatory time (paid leave) shall not be counted in determining if overtime has been worked in any work week.

6. Except in emergency situations, an employee shall be required to have authorization from their supervisor before working overtime.

**CARSON COUNTY**  
**POLICY ON OVERTIME COMPENSATION**

**POLICY  
APPLICATION**

1. This policy shall apply to all County employees eligible for overtime compensation under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) except for law enforcement employees. (see policy on Law Enforcement Pay and Overtime)

2. Paid leave shall not be counted in determining if overtime has been worked in any workweek. Except in emergency situations, an employee shall be required to have authorization from their supervisor before working overtime

**OVERTIME  
COMPENSATION**

3. Overtime compensation shall be paid in the form of compensatory time off in accordance with the provisions of the FLSA.

4. Covered employees shall receive compensatory time off, with pay, at a rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times the amount of overtime worked.

**MAXIMUM  
COMPENSATORY**

5. The maximum amount of unused compensatory time an employee shall be allowed to have at the end of any pay period is (240) hours. When an employee has reached the maximum accrual of compensatory time, any additional overtime worked shall be compensated at a rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times the employee's regular rate of pay until compensatory time has been used to bring the balance below the maximum.

**USE OF  
COMPENSATORY  
TIME**

6. Employees shall be required to use earned compensatory time prior to usage of vacation time. All request for leave, shall be subject to approval by the department head based on the timeliness of request and the needs of the department.

7. Compensatory time may be used for any purpose desired by the employee.

8. The Department Head shall retain the right to control the accumulation and disbursement of compensatory time.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON OVERTIME COMPENSATION**

**USE OF  
COMPENSATORY  
TIME (CONT.)  
TERMINATION**

9. If an employee terminates employment, for any reason, prior to using all earned FLSA compensatory time, the employee shall be paid for all unused compensatory time in accordance with the requirements of the FLSA.

**CASH PAYMENT  
FOR  
OVERTIME**

10. The County shall retain the right to pay all or part of the overtime worked in any work week by paying for that overtime at one and one-half (1 ½) the employee's regular rate of pay. Carson County shall retain the right to "buy back" all or part of an employee's unused compensatory time by paying the employee for that time at the employee's current regular rate.

**RECORDKEEPING**

12. Each employee shall be responsible for recording any compensatory time used within a pay period on the time sheet for that pay period.

13. The County Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping records of all compensatory time earned and used by each eligible County employee in their department and shall update the balance due to each employee at the end of each pay period.

**OTHER ISSUES**

14. Any issues on overtime compensation not addressed in this policy shall at least meet the minimum requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the regulations issued by the Department of Labor to administer that Act.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON GRIEVANCES**

**PROCEDURE**

1. Any employee having a grievance related to their job should discuss the grievance with their immediate supervisor.
2. If the discussion with the immediate supervisor does not resolve the grievance, and, if the immediate supervisor is not the elected or appointed official with final responsibility for the employee's department, the employee shall have the right to discuss the grievance with that official.
3. The decision of the elected or appointed official with final responsibility for the employee's department shall be final in all grievances.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Carson County is a public entity; however, some county employees acquire Confidential (confidential, non-public) information as a result of their position with the county. This information must be protected. Employees who reveal confidential (confidential, non-public) information they have received as a result of their position may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Regarding the personnel information on employees of Carson County; much of the information in an employee's personnel file, including salary and job evaluations is subject to disclosure under the Public Information Act, however, highly personal matters are typically not subject to disclosure. The county will adhere to the Public Information Act requirements.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON DISCIPLINE**

**DISCIPLINE**

1. Each supervisor shall have the authority to administer discipline to employees in their department for poor performance, violation of policies, disruptive behavior, or any other behavior or activity which the supervisor feels is not acceptable as it relates to the employee's job or the best interest of the department or County.

**TYPES OF  
DISCIPLINE**

2. Depending on the severity of the situation, discipline may range from informal counseling up to and including immediate termination.

**REASONS**

3. Examples of reasons for administering discipline shall include, but not be limited to, any violation of the rules, regulations, or policies contained in the Carson County Personnel Handbook or documented performance issues.

**AT WILL  
EMPLOYMENT**

4. All County employees are "at will" employees and nothing in this policy gives an employee any contract of employment, guarantee of any duration of employment, or any other property interest in the employee's job.

5. The County retains the right to terminate the employment of any individual at any time for any legal reason, or no reason, with or without notice. The County also retains the right to change any condition, benefit, privilege, or policy of employment at any time, with or without notice.



**CARSON COUNTY  
WHISTLEBLOWER**

1. An employee may, in good faith, report an alleged violation of a Carson County Policy or federal or state law to their supervisor, department head, or Treasurer, unless all of these persons are the alleged perpetrators of the alleged violation of policy or law. If all of the listed persons are alleged to be involved in the violation, the employee may report the allegation to County Attorney. The county will investigate the reported activity.
  
2. An official, supervisor, department director, or any other employee is prohibited from taking adverse employment action against an employee who, in good faith, reports an alleged violation of County policy or federal or state law to a designated person, pursuant to this policy.
  
3. An employee who intentionally makes a false report of wrongdoing may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
  
4. An employee who, in good faith, believes they are being subjected to retaliation based on a report of alleged wrongdoing under this policy should immediately contact the County Judge.
  
5. An employee with a question regarding this policy should contact the County Treasurer.

**CARSON COUNTY  
WORK PLACE VIOLENCE**

Carson County is committed to providing a workplace free of violence. Carson County will not tolerate or condone violence of any kind in the workplace. The county will also not tolerate or condone any threats of violence, direct or indirect, this includes jokes. All threats will be taken seriously and will be investigated. Employees must refrain from any conduct or comments that might make another employee suspicious or in fear for their safety. Employees are required to report all suspicious conduct or comments to their immediate supervisor. Employees should be aware of their surroundings at all times and report any suspicious behavior from the public, former employees or current employees to their immediate supervisor or the sheriff's department. If an employee has a valid current license to carry and wishes to carry at their place of work, they must have permission from their department head who then submits request to the County Judge. If employees believe that a person is violating this policy, they should immediately report to their immediate supervisor or the Sheriff's department. Employees found in violation of this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including immediate termination.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

**PURPOSE** 1. The purpose of this policy shall be to establish a drug and alcohol-free workplace to help ensure a safe and productive work setting for all employees.

**APPLICABILITY** 2. This policy shall apply to all employees of Carson County regardless of rank or position and shall include temporary and part-time employees.

3. The only exception to this policy shall be the possession of controlled substances by law enforcement personnel as part of their law enforcement duties.

**POLICY** 4. The following shall be a violation of this policy:

- a. The manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, sale, purchase, or use of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia on County property.
- b. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on County property or while on duty for the County.
- c. The unauthorized possession or use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs while on County property or while on duty for the County.
- d. The use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs, while on County property or while on duty for the County, in a manner other than that intended by the manufacturer or prescribed by a physician.
- e. Any positive test on drugs or alcohol will result in termination of employee.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL  
(CONT.)**

**DEFINITIONS**

5. **A controlled substance** shall include any substance listed in Schedules I-V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. S 812), as amended. (A copy of this information is available for review in the Treasurer Office.)

6. **County property** shall include all County owned, rented, or leased real property such as buildings, land, parking lots etc. and property used by employees such as vehicles, lockers, desks, closets, storage areas, etc.

7. **Drugs** shall include any chemical substance that produces physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral change in the user.

8. **Drug paraphernalia** shall include equipment, a product, or material that is used or intended for use in concealing an illegal drug or for use in injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise inducing into the human body an illegal drug or controlled substance.

9. **Illegal drug** shall include any drug or derivative thereof which the use, possession, sale, transfer, attempted sale or transfer, manufacture, or storage of is illegal or regulated under any federal, state, or local law or regulation and any other drug, including (but not limited to) a prescription drug, used for any other than a legitimate medical reason, and inhalants used illegally. Included is marijuana or cannabis in all forms.

10. **Under the influence** shall be defined as a state of having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.02.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL  
(CONT.)**

**POLICY  
VIOLATIONS**

11. Any employee who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

**PRESCRIPTION**

12. Employees may use prescription and over-the-counter drugs in standard dosage or according to a physician's prescription, if the use will not impair the employee's ability to do their job safely and effectively.

An employee taking prescribed or over-the-counter medications is responsible for consulting the prescribing physician or a pharmacist to determine if the medication could interfere with the safe and effective performance of the employee's job duties. If the use of a medication could compromise an employee's ability to do their job or the safety of the employee, fellow employees or the public, the employee must report the condition to their supervisor at the start of the workday or used appropriate personnel procedures.

13. Any information concerning prescription medications being used by an employee, and any other medical information of which the supervisor becomes aware, shall be treated as confidential information.

14. Prescription medications used at work are to be kept in their original container.

**TREATMENT**

15. Employees having problems with drugs or alcohol are encouraged to seek treatment from qualified professionals.

16. Information on benefits provided for treatment of alcohol and drug problems through the County's medical insurance program is available in the employee's insurance coverage booklet or from the County Treasurer's Office.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL  
(CONT.)**

**RESERVATION  
OF RIGHTS**

17. Although adherence to this policy is considered a condition of continued employment, nothing in this policy shall alter an employee's status and shall not be deemed a contract or promise of employment.

18. Any employee who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

Any employee who admits to drug use without seeking rehabilitation may be terminated. An employee who voluntarily asks for time off to get treatment and recover from a drug or alcohol abuse problem will be given protections as required by law. Upon returning to work from a bona fide inpatient treatment facility, the employee will be subjected to a volunteer drug testing program as often as monthly until there is evidence that the employee no longer uses. Failure to comply with the requirements of the post rehabilitative program including refusing the volunteer testing program will result in termination. The post rehabilitative program will last for as long as two (2) years. If at any time the employee tests positive, or refuses the volunteer drug test during this post rehabilitative program, the employee will be terminated.

**SUSPICION-BASED  
TESTING**

19. Under the Influence shall be defined as having a blood alcohol concentration of .02 or more.

**REASONABLE  
SUSPICION**

20. If any employee is having work performance problems or displaying behavior that may be alcohol or drug related, or is otherwise demonstrating conduct that may be in violation of this drug and alcohol policy where immediate action is necessary, the elected official or supervisor will require that employee to submit to breath test or urinalysis. The following conditions might be signs of possible alcohol or drug use (not an all-inclusive list).

- a. Abnormally dilated or constricted pupils
- b. Glazed stare- redness of eyes (sclera)
- c. Flushed face
- d. Change of speech (faster, slower, slurred)
- e. Constant sniffing
- f. Increased absences
- g. Redness under nose
- h. Sudden weight loss
- i. Needle Marks

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL  
(CONT.)**

- j. Change in personality (i.e. paranoia)
- k. Increase appetite for sweets
- l. Forgetfulness, performance faltering, poor concentration
- m. Borrowing money from co-workers or seeking an advance for pay or other unusual display of need for money
- n. Constant fatigue or hyperactivity
- o. Smell of alcohol
- p. Difficulty walking
- q. Excessive, unexplained absences
- r. Dulled mental processes
- s. Slow reaction rate

**ACTION**

21. Elected Officials or supervisors must take action if they have reason to believe one or more of the above listed conditions is indicated and that the substance abuse is affecting their employee's job performance or behavior. The following steps will be taken:

- a. Confront the employee involved and keep them under direct observation until the situation is resolved. Inform the employee of the problem with their job performance and specific violations of the County Policy.
- b. If the supervisor believes, after observing or talking to the employee, that the conduct or performance problem could be due to substance abuse, the employee will be immediately required to submit to a breath test or urinalysis. If the employee refuses to submit to testing for any reason, the employee may be terminated.
- c. Employees will be asked to release any evidence, such as alcohol or drug paraphernalia, relating to the observation for further testing. Failure to comply may subject the employee to subsequent discipline, up to and including termination. All confiscated evidence will be receipted for with signatures of either the elected officials or supervisors as well as the employee.
- d. The elected official or supervisor will **remove** the employee from the county work station and insure that the employee is transported to an appropriate collection site and thereafter to the employee's residence. Under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to drive a vehicle until a confirmed negative test result is received.
- e. The elected official or supervisor shall, within (24) hours or before the results of the controlled substance test are released, document the particular facts related to the behavior or performance problems and present such documentation to the Treasurers' office for filing.

**CARSON COUNTY POLICY  
ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL  
(CONT)**

**POST-ACCIDENT  
TESTING**

22. All employees directly involved in an on-the-job accident or incident resulting in property damage and/or medical treatment shall be required to be tested.

**TESTING  
PROCEDURES**

- a. The employee will be escorted and driven to the designated facility for specimen collection and/or testing.
- b. The employee will be required to follow the drug testing protocol of the medical facility providing the testing.
- c. If the employee desires another test to be given, they may do so within (2) hours of the specimen being collected and the same specimen will be used. The cost of this request will be paid for by the employee. All initial costs will be paid for by Carson County.
- d. The employee will be placed on paid administrative leave until the results of the test are known. The elected official or supervisor will make arrangements to ensure that the employee is safely returned to their residence.
- e. Under no circumstances, unless required or authorized by law, will alcohol or drug testing information be released without written consent from the employee.

Each employee is expected to cooperate and consent to a drug test when requested under the terms of this policy. Refusal to consent to a drug and/or alcohol test when requested is cause for termination.

Any employee who violates this drug and alcohol policy shall be terminated.



**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY FOR DRUG /ALCOHOL  
FOR CDL EMPLOYEES**

Carson County prohibits CDL employees from being under the influence of or using illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours. Under the influence shall be defined as having a blood alcohol concentration of .02.

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

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

A detailed policy and procedure can be found in the back of this employee's handbook.

## CARSON COUNTY SOCIAL MEDIA

1. For purposes of this policy "social media" includes, but is not limited to, online forums, blogs and social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Myspace.
2. Carson County recognizes the importance of social media for its employees. However, use of social media by employees may become a problem if: it interferes with the employee's work; is used to harass supervisors, co-workers, customers or vendors; creates a hostile work environment; or harms the goodwill and reputation of Carson County among the community at large. Carson County encourages employees to use social media within the parameters of the following guidelines and in a way that does not produce the adverse consequences mentioned above.
3. Where no policy or guideline exists, employees are expected to use their best judgment and take the most prudent action possible. If you are uncertain about the appropriateness of a social media posting, check with your manager or supervisor.
  - a. If your posts on social media mention Carson County, make clear that you are an employee of Carson County and that the views posted are yours alone and do not represent the views of Carson County.
  - b. Do not mention Carson County supervisors, employees, customers or vendors without their express consent.
  - c. Do not pick fights. If you see a misrepresentation about Carson County, respond respectfully with factual information, not inflammatory comments.
  - d. Remember, you are responsible for what you write or present on social media. You can be sued by other employees, supervisors, customers or vendors, and any individual that views your social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. Employees can be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for what they post on social media platforms, even if the employee did not use a county computer or if the post did not occur during work hours or on county property.
  - e. Employees may not use Carson County computer equipment for non-work related activities without written permission. Social media activities should not interfere with your duties at work. Carson County monitors its computers to ensure compliance with this restriction.
  - f. You must comply with copyright laws, and cite or reference sources accurately.

**CARSON COUNTY  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
(CON'T.)**

- g. Do not link to Carson County's website or post Carson County material on a social media site without written permission from your supervisor.
- h. All Carson County policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to illegal harassment and code of conduct.
- i. Any confidential information that you obtained through your position at Carson County must be kept confidential and should not be discussed through in social media forum.
- j. Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including the immediate termination of employment

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SEPARATIONS**

- DEFINITION** 1. A separation shall be defined as any situation in which the employer-employee relationship between the County and a County employee ends.
- TYPES OF SEPARATION** 2. All separations from Carson County shall be designated as one of the following types:
- a. Resignation
  - b. Retirement
  - c. Dismissal
  - d. Reduction in force (layoff)
  - e. Death
  - f. Other
- RESIGNATION** 3. A resignation shall be classified as any situation in which an employee voluntarily leaves their employment with Carson County and the separation does not fall into one of the other categories.
4. Employees who are resigning should submit a written notice of resignation to their supervisor.
- RETIREMENT** 5. A retirement shall be any situation in which an employee meets the requirements to collect benefits under the County's retirement program and voluntarily elects to leave employment with the County to do so.
6. An employee who is retiring should notify their supervisor of that intent at least 30 days prior to the actual retirement date to help prevent delays in starting the payment of retirement benefits.
- DISMISSAL** 7. A dismissal shall be any involuntary separation of employment that does not fall into one of the other categories of separation.
8. Carson County is an "at will" employer and a supervisor may dismiss an employee at any time for any legal reason or no reason, with or without notice.

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON SEPARATIONS (CONT.)**

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>REDUCTION<br/>IN FORCE</b> | 9. An employee shall be separated from employment because of a reduction in force when their position is abolished or when there is a lack of funds to support the position or there is a lack of work to justify the position.  |
| <b>DEATH</b>                  | 10. A separation by death shall occur when an individual dies while currently employed by the County.<br><br>11. If an employee dies while still employed by the County, their designated beneficiary or estate shall receive all earned pay and payable benefits.                                       |
| <b>OTHER</b>                  | 12. Any separation that does not fall into one of the categories outlined previously in this policy shall be designated as an "other" separation.<br><br>13. When a separation is designated as "other", the supervisor shall provide details of the nature of the separation for the personnel records. |
| <b>NOTIFICATION</b>           | 14. As soon as a supervisor becomes aware of separation from employment, or the intent to separate employment, by an employee, the supervisor shall be responsible for immediately notifying the County Treasurer.   |

**CARSON COUNTY  
POLICY ON TRAVEL ADVANCE**

This policy covers all employees and officials who are required to travel outside of Carson County as agents or representatives of Carson County.

Advance payments or reimbursements of expenses for travel will be made only if for definite county business and must be approved by the proper elected official or department head; properly documented with Travel Expense Voucher, Event Agenda, and required receipts, etc.; and approved by the Commissioner's Court. Per Diem Expense Reimbursements Standard Policy:

1. A maximum per person will be the Meals & Incidental Expenses as defined by the schedule provided annually under the GSA portal ([www.GSA.gov](http://www.GSA.gov)). Per Diem will be allowed for actual number of days of the meeting/conference plus first and last day of travel. Overnight stay will be excluded from taxation. Meals away from home, but not overnight will be paid through payroll, according to IRS rules. No per diem will be paid if meal is provided at the event.
2. If traveling in a personal vehicle within the State of Texas, the employee can be advanced the IRS rate per mile round trip to their destination. Mileage will be reimbursed based on actual odometer reading or Mapquest, plus parking and tolls. If a rental car at the destination is approved, employees may charge to Carson County credit card. Travel time for county employees will be reimbursed based on time allocated by the above website (Mapquest). Employees who are flying will be reimbursed for coach class. Carson County will not pay for in-flight movies or beverages. Reservations should be made in advance to secure the most economical rate if possible. Travel time for employee will be paid through payroll.
3. Lodging can be charged either to Carson County credit card, or employees can pay the charges and will be reimbursed with proper documentation.
4. Additional refunds will be made for those expenses incurred over and above the normal expenses (i.e., taxi fare, shuttle fare, airport and hotel parking).
5. Checks for reimbursement of travel expenses will be issued on the next Commissioners' Court day following the submission of the expense report.

**CARSON COUNTY  
FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT  
SAFE HARBOR**

1. Carson County makes every effort to pay its employees correctly. Occasionally, however, inadvertent mistakes can happen. When mistakes do happen and are called to the Treasurer's attention, Carson County will promptly make any corrections necessary. Please review your pay stub when you receive it to make sure it is correct. If you believe a mistake has occurred or if you have any questions, please use the reporting procedure outlined below. If you are overpaid the county will make the necessary corrections at the next payroll.

2. Employees who are classified as non-exempt employees must maintain an accurate record of the total hours worked each day. It is the responsibility of each employee to verify that their time sheets are correct. Your time sheet must accurately reflect all regular and overtime hours worked; any absences, late arrivals, early departures, and meal breaks. Do not sign your time sheet if it is not accurate. When you receive each pay check, please verify immediately that you were paid correctly for all regular and overtime hours worked each work week.

3. Non-exempt employees, unless authorized by your supervisor, should not work any hours that are not authorized. Do not start work early, finish work late, work during a meal break, or perform any other extra or overtime work unless you are authorized to do so. That time worked is to be recorded on your time sheet. Employees are prohibited from performing any "off-the-clock" work. "Off-the-clock" work means work you may perform but fail to report on your time sheet. Any employee who fails to report or inaccurately reports any hours worked will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If anyone directs you to work without documenting your time worked, you must tell the Treasurer.

4. It is a violation of Carson County policy for any employee to falsify a time sheet, or to alter another employee's time sheet. It is also a serious violation of County policy for any employee, supervisor or official to instruct another employee to incorrectly or falsely report hours worked, or to alter another employee's time sheet to under- or over-report hours worked. If anyone instructs you to (1) incorrectly or falsely under- or over-report your hours worked, or (2) alter another employee's time records to inaccurately or falsely report that employee's hours worked, you should report it immediately to the Treasurer's Office, (806)537-3753 or County Judge (806) 537-9622.

**CARSON COUNTY  
FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT  
SAFE HARBOR  
(CON'T.)**

5. If you are classified as an exempt salaried employee, you will receive a salary which is intended to compensate you for all hours worked for the County. This salary will be established at the time of hire or when you become classified as an exempt employee. While it may be subject to review and modification from time to time, the salary will be a pre-determined amount that will not be subject to deductions for variations in the quantity or quality of the work you perform.

For exempt employees, your salary may also be reduced for certain types of deductions such as your portion of health, dental or life premiums; state, federal or local taxes, social security, retirement; or, voluntary contributions to a deferred compensation plan. In any workweek in which you performed any work, your wages may be reduced for any of the following reasons:

- 1) absence from work for one or more full days for personal reasons, other than sickness or disability; or
- 2) full day disciplinary suspensions for infractions of our written policies and procedures; or
- 3) full day for violating safety rules of a major significance; or
- 4) Family and Medical Leave or Military Leave absences; or
- 5) to offset amounts received as payment for jury and witness fees or military pay; or
- 6) the first or last week of employment in the event you work less than a full week.

If you are an exempt employee, in any workweek in which you performed any work, your salary will not be reduced for any of the following reasons:

- 1) partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability; or
- 2) your absence because the facility is closed on a scheduled work day; or
- 3) your absence because of the County's operating requirements; or
- 4) absences for jury duty, attendance as a witness, or military leave in any week in which you have performed any work; or
- 5) any other deductions prohibited by state or federal law.

6. It is not an improper deduction to reduce an employee's accrued vacation, personal or other forms of paid time off for full or partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability.



**CARSON COUNTY  
FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT  
SAFE HARBOR  
(CON'T.)**

7. If you have questions about deductions from your pay, please immediately contact your supervisor. If you believe you have been subject to any improper deductions or your pay does not accurately reflect your hours worked, you should immediately report the matter to the Treasurer's office, (806) 537-3753. If you are unsure of who to contact or if you have not received a satisfactory response within five business days after reporting the incident, please immediately contact the County Judge (806)537-3622. Every report will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate, up to and including discharge for any employee(s) who violates this policy. In addition, the County will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report alleged violations of this policy or who cooperate in the County's investigation of such reports. Retaliation is unacceptable, and any form of retaliation in violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received a copy of the Carson County Employee Handbook that outlines my benefits and obligations as a County employee. I understand that I am responsible for reading and familiarizing myself with the information in this manual and understand that it contains general personnel policies of the County. If I need clarification on any of the information in this manual, I will contact my immediate supervisor.

I further understand that the Carson County Employee Handbook is not a contract of employment. I understand that I am an at-will employee and that my employment may be terminated by either myself or the County, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

I understand that this employee handbook is intended to provide guidance in understanding Carson County's policies, practices and benefits. I understand that Carson County retains the right to change this handbook at any time, and to modify or cancel any of its employee benefits when the need for change is recognized.

I further understand that as a Carson County employee, I am expected to provide quality service to the public; to work towards the highest degree of safety possible for my fellow workers, to continually make suggestions for improvements, and to display a spirit of team work and cooperation.

I understand that I will be granted compensatory time off in lieu of payment of overtime to the extent provided by law and I may be required to take earned compensatory time off at the County's discretion.

I understand that I may be subject to reasonable suspicion or post-accident drug and alcohol testing. If I am required to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) for my county position, I will be subject to random, reasonable suspicion, post-accident and follow-up drug and alcohol testing.

I have read these policies and understand these policies and I agree to abide by and adhere to these policies.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed