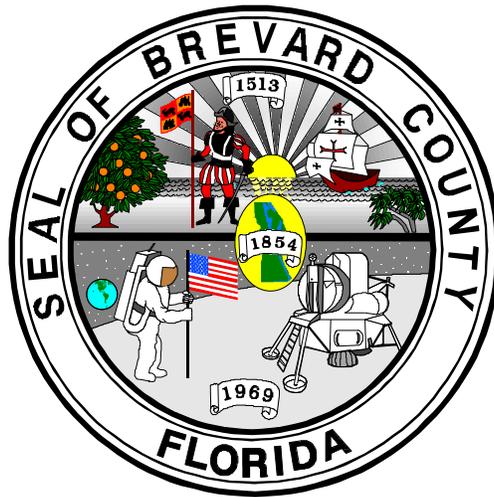


# HANDBOOK OF INFORMATION



## FOR EMPLOYEES OF BREVARD COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Published by the Office of Human Resources  
Revised June 13, 2012

**This book is issued to: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Your first payday will be: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Your initial probationary period is \_\_\_\_\_ months.**

**Your initial leave accrual rates are:**

**Annual Leave (full time): \_\_\_\_\_ hours monthly**

**Sick Leave (full time): \_\_\_\_\_ hours monthly**

**Part time employees accrue Annual Leave and Sick Leave based on the hours worked in pay period.**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

## YOU AND YOUR JOB

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.....	1
The County Service .....	1
Career Service.....	1
Appointive Service .....	1
Employee Organizations.....	1
Job Classification.....	2
Family Employment .....	2
Employee Fitness and Health .....	2
Probationary Periods, Career Service .....	2
Probationary Period for Original Appointments.....	2
Training Requirements during Probationary Period.....	2
Probationary Period for Promotional and Lateral Appointments .....	3
Probationary Period for Demotions .....	3
Probationary Period for Employee of New County Departments or Functions .....	3
Extension of Probationary Periods .....	3
Dismissal during Probationary Period.....	3
Release from Probation .....	3
Advancement.....	4
Performance Evaluation .....	4
Loyalty Oath .....	4
Conflict of Interest.....	4
Outside Employment and Business Activities.....	5
Gifts .....	5
Other Conflicts .....	5
Political Activities .....	6
Bulletin Boards .....	6
Personnel Records .....	6
Salary, Wages and Pay Increases.....	6
Pay Days .....	7
Payroll Deductions .....	7
Pay Advances.....	7
Working Hours .....	7
Meal Periods.....	8
Overtime .....	8
Time Sheets .....	8
Appearance and Conduct.....	8
Attendance and Punctuality .....	9
Personal Mail and Telephone Calls .....	9
Use of County Property .....	9

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

County Records .....	9
Salespersons and Solicitors .....	9
Parking.....	9
Disciplinary Policies and Procedures .....	10
Minor Offenses.....	10
Major Offenses .....	11
Dismissal Offenses .....	11
Pre-Disciplinary Hearings .....	13
Questions and Complaints.....	13
Grievances .....	13
Grievance Procedures .....	14
Appeals to the Personnel Council.....	14
Right of Appeal to the Personnel Council.....	14
Notice of Appeal.....	15
Review By the Personnel Council .....	15
Decision of the Personnel Council .....	15
Equal Employment Opportunity Plan Complaint Resolution Procedure .....	15
Employees Charged With Crimes Not Connected With Work .....	15
Drug and Alcohol Testing of Applicants and Employees .....	16
Objective.....	16
Policy .....	16
Resignations .....	17
Code of Ethics .....	17

## You and Your Benefits

Employee Organizations.....	18
Your Holidays.....	18
Eligibility for Holiday Pay.....	18
Annual Leave.....	19
Use of Annual Leave .....	19
Vacation Scheduling.....	20
Leave In Excess of Maximum Carryover .....	20
Annual Leave upon Termination .....	20
Sick Leave .....	20
Use of Sick Leave.....	21
Donations to Sick Leave.....	21
Trade-back Pro-rated Sick Leave for Annual Leave .....	21
Notification and Proof of Illness .....	21
Sick Leave Incentive.....	22
Final Note on Sick Pay .....	22
Emergency Leave .....	22
Jury Duty .....	22
Court Leave .....	23
Military Leave .....	23
Special Meetings.....	23

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Family & Medical Leave Act of 1993 .....	23
Notice of Employee Rights and Responsibilities under FMLA .....	25
Domestic Violence Leave.....	26
Leave Of Absence without Pay .....	26
Requests and Prior Approval.....	26
Return to Duty .....	27
Employee Assistance Program .....	27
Insurance Plans .....	28
Group Life Insurance .....	29
Group Health Insurance.....	29
Dental Insurance .....	29
Vision Insurance .....	30
Disability Insurance Programs.....	30
Short Term Disability .....	30
Long Term Disability .....	30
Flexible Spending Accounts.....	30
Workers' Compensation & Safety .....	31
Florida Retirement System .....	31
Social Security .....	32
Employee Recognition Programs .....	32
Employee Innovations Program Awards .....	32
Excellence in Action Awards .....	32
Health and Wellness .....	34
Training and Development Opportunities .....	34
Mandatory Training Requirements during Probationary Period .....	34
Training and Development Opportunities Manual .....	34
Education Assistance Program .....	35
Reimbursement/Payment of Licensing Fees.....	36
Deferred Compensation.....	36
Direct Deposit.....	36
Miscellaneous Benefits.....	37
Fitness Centers.....	37
Travel Expenses.....	37

# INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure to welcome you as an employee of the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners!

Answers to questions you may have about the County's benefits, policies, regulations and opportunities are here. Keep this handbook in a safe and convenient place.

If you should have further questions about your job or policies that are not answered in this handbook, please consult with your supervisor, or the Office of Human Resources. Additional information and greater detail are contained in the Brevard County Merit System Policies & Procedures. A copy of the Merit Policies & Procedures is kept in the reference section of each public library in Brevard County, as well as, in each Department and Office, the Office of Human Resources, the Human Resources website at (<http://www.brevardcounty.us/humanres/docs.cfm>), and under Policies on the County's Intranet (BEACH).

You enter employment with Brevard County voluntarily and you are free to resign at any time. While you work here, we have a right to expect certain things of you, and you, of course, have a right to expect certain things of us. In order to achieve the expectations of both, we must join in a spirit of teamwork and cooperation. We enlist your help to maintain and improve the quality of service we provide.

The County has formulated the following mission statement to guide us in performing our jobs:

***CONTRIBUTE TO  
ENHANCING AND ENSURING  
BREVARD'S QUALITY OF LIFE . . .  
TODAY AND ALWAYS!***

We take pride in inviting you to join us in achieving this mission.

In closing, we sincerely hope you will enjoy working here and wish you the best in your career with us.

# YOU AND YOUR JOB

## Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of the Board of County Commissioners to recruit, hire, train and promote in all job categories without regard to race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status or a disability which does not preclude the performance of the essential functions of the job, with reasonable accommodations provided as necessary. It is also the policy of the Board to base employment decisions on merit principles so as to further the concept of equal employment opportunities. However, the County reserves the right to terminate any employment due to economic necessity, reorganization, proper cause, or other such reasons.

Unlawful discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Any employee who has a complaint of discrimination because of political opinion or affiliation, race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status or a disability which does not preclude the performance of the essential functions of the job, with reasonable accommodation(s) provided as necessary, may address that complaint through the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan Complaint Resolution Procedure or file an appeal to the Brevard County Personnel Council.

## The County Service

Employment in the County public service under the Board of County Commissioners generally falls into two types of service; Career or Appointive.

### ***CAREER SERVICE***

Most County jobs are found in the Career Service and consist of those positions which serve a probationary period, and upon satisfactory completion of that probationary period, have all the rights and privileges provided by the County Merit System. These positions include those covered under the different bargaining units. The Merit System is a personnel program which establishes policies and procedures for the hiring, advancement, terms of employment and other actions affecting our employees. The Merit System is designed to assure that you and your fellow employees are hired and considered for advancement on the basis of merit and individual qualifications.

### ***APPOINTIVE SERVICE***

Positions in the appointive service include those in upper level management, grant funded positions, temporary employees and positions which do not report to the Board of County Commissioners through the County Manager. Employees of the Appointive Service serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority and do not have appeal or grievance rights under the Merit System.

## Employee Organizations

Some of our employees work in job classifications that are covered by a collective bargaining agreement that has been negotiated with a labor union. If you are such an employee, you will have been given a copy of the labor agreement that governs your employment at the time of employment enrollment. **Wherever the information in the labor agreement differs from this handbook, you, as a bargaining unit employee, are subject to the provisions of the agreement.**

## **Job Classification**

Employees who are employed in the County Service are usually assigned to a job classification under the County's Classification and Pay Plan. The classification system places positions in the same group with other positions performing similar types of work or according to the degree of responsibility and difficulty involved.

Job classifications are used for budgeting, payroll and other personnel transactions. They *do not* necessarily indicate all of the actual duties called for in your job. If you have any questions about your job responsibilities, please check with your supervisor.

## **Family Employment**

Generally, it is the policy of the County not to hire, promote or transfer a member of an employee's family within the same program unless such employment has been determined in the best interest of the County and approved by the County Manager or the Manager's designee. Exceptions will be narrowly interpreted and shall only be applied when circumstances obviously benefit the County. Under no circumstances will an individual be appointed, employed, retained, promoted or transferred to any position where a relative has direct supervision, jurisdiction or control over that position.

## **Employee Fitness and Health**

For most full time permanent jobs you will be required to satisfactorily pass a physical examination or provide other information as to your ability to perform the work. After employment, if you have been ill or injured we may ask for additional medical information to make sure it is safe for you to return to work.

## **Probationary Periods, Career Service**

All employees receiving an original appointment to a position in the career service, being promoted to a position in the career service, or being competitively appointed to a lateral position in the career service are required to serve a probationary period. Employees may also be placed on probation as a disciplinary action.

### ***Probationary Period for Original Appointments***

The duration of an original probationary period is for a minimum period of nine months of continuous, uninterrupted service from the date of original appointment. Longer periods may occur in occupations where permanent status is dependent upon training, certification or other requirements. Employees who are in training will begin their probationary period effective with the date the training is completed, or they otherwise become qualified for the position. Employees whose classifications are covered by a collective bargaining agreement will serve a probationary period in accordance with the terms of the agreement. An employee leaving the Appointive Service to accept a position in the Career Service will serve a probationary period as if it were an original appointment.

### ***Training Requirements during Probationary Period***

New employees are required to attend all mandatory training classes and receive a satisfactory performance evaluation during their original probationary period before their probationary status can end.

New employees who are appointed to a supervisory or managerial position must attend all classes in Phase III of the Employee Development Program during their original probationary period in addition to all mandatory training classes as described above. Employees already employed who are promoted to a supervisory or managerial position must attend all classes in Phase III of the Employee Development Program during their three (3) month probationary period. In addition, all employees who are appointed to a supervisory or managerial position must complete all three (3) phases of the Employee Development Program and obtain a certificate of completion within 24 months of being appointed.

Employees who do not successfully complete the specified training requirements during their probationary period will have their probationary period automatically extended.

### ***Probationary Period for Promotional and Lateral Appointments***

An employee who is promoted, a part-time employee who gains full time status or an employee who is competitively appointed to a lateral position will serve a probationary period of three (3) months in the new position. Any employee who is promoted and has not completed an original probationary period will serve the remainder of the original probationary period or three (3) months, whichever is greater.

### ***Probationary Period for Demotions***

Upon accepting a non-disciplinary demotion (voluntary demotion), a probationary employee will need to serve the balance of the unserved original probationary period, but a permanent employee will not be required to serve another probationary period. An employee demoted for disciplinary reasons may be required to serve a new probationary period.

### ***Probationary Period for Employees of New County Departments or Functions***

The employees of any private enterprise, non-profit agency, or other organization whose functions are assumed by the County, and such employees become a part of the County Service without competition in Career Service positions, are required to serve an original probationary period of nine months before becoming employees of the Career Service.

### ***Extension of Probationary Period***

An appointing authority, for good reason, may extend an employee's probationary period.

### ***Dismissal during Probationary Period***

The appointing authority may remove an employee at anytime during any probationary period when it is considered to be in the best interest of the County. Upon such removal, the employee will receive written notification and, whenever reasonably possible, be given advanced written notice of dismissal. A probationary employee in a career service position should receive a pre-termination hearing. A probationary employee, however, does not have the right to appeal.

### ***Release from Probation***

Release from probation and appointment to the Career Service are not automatic upon expiration of the designated probationary period. Permanent appointment requires a minimum of a "Successful Performer" performance evaluation in each rating category of the performance evaluation and no documented evidence of major disciplinary action. An employee who receives a "Needs Improvement" rating in any area of their performance evaluation shall have their probationary period extended or be released from County Service.

## Advancement

It is the policy and goal of Brevard County to offer employees career advancement through promotion when it is in the best interest of the County and in keeping with professional standards.

Promotions are made on the basis of merit and qualifications and your advancement to higher level positions will depend upon you; your abilities, and how well you have prepared yourself to take on greater responsibilities.

It is important that you make your interest in promotional opportunities known to the Employment Section of the Office of Human Resources. If you find an open position for which you are interested, you may submit an application through the online application system at:

<http://ww3.brevardcounty.us/easy>.

You will need to submit a separate application for each position in which you are interested. For some jobs, written, oral or performance tests, designed to measure an individual's ability to perform the duties of the position, may be required. When you submit your application, your name will be placed on the appropriate list of applicants. The list of applicants and applications are then available to the appointing authority for consideration for the vacant position.

You are entitled to receive an interview from the appointing authority for any supervisory or management position for which you applied, once you have completed all three (3) phases of the Employee Development Program and passed all three tests.

## Performance Evaluation

All of us like to know "how am I doing" and this is the purpose of performance evaluations. During probation and at least once each year thereafter, your supervisor will evaluate your work performance. It is a continuous part of your growth to point out your strengths and also help you with those areas where you may improve your job performance, and thereby improve your service to the public. You are evaluated on such things as job knowledge, communication skills, dependability/adaptability and interpersonal skills, as they relate to your job.

Your supervisor will discuss your performance evaluation with you and you will have an opportunity to reply. (See the signature portion of the *Performance Evaluation* form for additional information.) Your performance evaluation should be looked upon as a means to gain a better understanding of what is expected of you and how to become a better employee in your job.

The current Performance Evaluation Form and Self-Evaluation Form, along with instructions, can be found on the County's intranet, the BEACH, in Human Resources under "Departments".

## Loyalty Oath

Florida law requires all County employees to take an Oath of Loyalty at the time they are hired. It is illegal for the County to issue a pay check to employees who have not signed a loyalty oath.

## Conflict Of Interest

The Board of County Commissioners has adopted conflict of interest policies patterned after Florida law. These regulations establish standards of conduct for County employees in such matters as outside employment and business activities, acceptance of gifts, etc.

The information below summarizes these regulations. Should you have any doubts about your particular situation, please contact the Director of Human Resources.

### **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES**

No employee of the County Service shall, during non-duty hours, engage in employment, enterprise or other activities, whether paid or unpaid, which would interfere, be inconsistent, incompatible or in ethical, legal or technical conflict with the employee's duties, functions and responsibilities as a County employee.

Prior to acceptance of supplemental employment, or engaging in an enterprise or business activity, you must request approval from your appointing authority by completing and submitting a request form, available from Human Resources. Newly hired employees must declare outside employment or business activities at the time of employment processing for their appointing authority's authorization.

No equipment, facilities, vehicles, other property or staff time of the County may be used by employees while engaged in such outside activities.

Any employee who engages in non-County employment or business activity shall be ineligible to receive Workers' Compensation from the County when the injury, illness or disability resulted from the outside employment or business activity.

Disclosure of specified business interest must be completed by any employee who is an officer, director, partner, proprietor, associate or general agent of, or who owns more than a 5% interest in any of the following business entities; state and federally chartered banks and savings and loan associations, cemetery companies, insurance companies, mortgage companies, credit unions, small loan companies, alcoholic beverage licensees, pari-mutuel wagering companies, utility companies, and entities controlled by the Public Service Commission or granted a franchise to operate by either a city or county government. Disclosure must be made on Commission on Ethics form "*Disclosure of Specified Business Interests*" (available from Human Resources) within 45 days of acquiring such position or material interest. New employees with specified business interests must file within 45 days of employment.

### **GIFTS**

No employee may solicit, accept or agree to accept, directly or indirectly, any favor, gift, loan, fee, service or other item of value in any form whatsoever, from any organization or individual if it is intended to reward or influence, or gives the appearance of rewarding or influencing the employee in carrying out his duly appointed duties.

This is not intended to prevent an employee from accepting an award or recognition for meritorious or outstanding achievement for community or government service.

### **OTHER CONFLICTS**

No employee may use, or attempt to use his/her official position to secure a special privilege, benefit or exemption for himself/herself or another person.

No employee may disclose or use information not available to the general public and gained by reason of his/her official position for his/her personal benefit or for the personal benefit of another person or business entity.

No employee may have or hold any employment or contractual relationship with any business entity that is regulated by the County or would cause a continuing or frequent conflict of interest.

No employee may, acting in a private capacity, rent, lease or sell any realty, goods or services to his/her own agency.

## **Political Activities**

The County supports every employee's right to cast their vote for candidates and issues as they choose and to support candidates and issues with their personal efforts and voluntary contributions. However, no such activities should be conducted during work or at the expense of the County. It is the intent of the County to maintain an impartial service, fair and equal treatment, and to avoid a conflict of interest.

Any employee seeking elective office may request to take annual leave or leave without pay not to exceed 30 days prior to the scheduled Election Day for that office.

Any employee who holds an elective public office must use annual leave or take leave without pay whenever the duties of the elective office require the employee's attention during normal duty hours. Of course, no County equipment, supplies, vehicles or staff time may be used by an employee in the performance of the duties of, or the process of seeking elected office.

## **Bulletin Boards**

Most of our organizations have bulletin boards. You should find out where it is located in your area and get into the habit of checking it often. Announcements of special events, changes in policies, job opportunities and other items of interest are usually posted on bulletin boards.

## **Personnel Records**

Each employee has his/her own personnel file, which is maintained in the Office of Human Resources. Information pertaining to your employment such as: salary advancement, promotions, performance evaluations, commendations and disciplinary actions are kept in this file. In other words, this is your employment history with the County. Most of what goes into this record depends on you.

Employees should be aware of the importance of keeping their personnel records up to date. The Office of Human Resources, Records Section, should be promptly notified of any changes of address, phone number, beneficiaries, dependents, whom to notify in the event of an emergency at work, etc. The Records Section staff will be happy to assist you in the completion of any documents necessary to effect the change but, remember, you must notify us a change has occurred.

As an employee you have the right to inspect your personnel file and what it contains. You also have the right to refute any information in the file that is inaccurate.

## **Salary, Wages and Pay Increases**

Your salary or wages are determined by the type of work you do. Taken into consideration is the level of education, special training, experience, skill, responsibilities and effort required. From time to time the requirements for each job and pay levels are reviewed and compared with those of other local government agencies.

Most jobs are assigned a pay grade that has a minimum and maximum salary range. Normally new employees are appointed at the minimum rate and progress through the range by means of periodic merit increases. The Board of County Commissioners determines whether merit increases can be funded for each fiscal year.

If you are promoted during the course of your employment with the County, your anniversary date will change to the effective date of the promotion.

## **Pay Days**

All employees are paid on a bi-weekly schedule. Official paydays are the Fridays after a pay period ends. At the time of your employment processing you were issued a payroll schedule for the current calendar year which provides information about pay periods, pay days, holidays, leave accrual and payroll deductions. Near the end of each year, a schedule for the coming year is provided in your paycheck envelope.

## **Payroll Deductions**

The law requires certain deductions from your pay. These are: FICA (which stands for Federal Insurance Contributions Act), commonly called "Social Security," which includes funding for Medicare, and federal income tax (usually called withholding tax).

There are additional deductions that you may authorize:

- Health Insurance Premiums (including Dependent Health Insurance)
- Vision and Dental Insurance Premiums
- Flexible Spending Account Deductions (Medical or Dependent Care)
- Life & Disability Insurance Premiums
- Short Term Disability Premiums
- Long Term Disability Premiums
- Cancer/Intensive Care/Disability Insurance Premiums
- Deferred Compensation (457 Plan)
- United Way Charitable Contributions
- Additional Withholding Tax
- Florida Prepaid College Fund
- Union Dues (for IAFF and LIUNA bargaining unit employees only)

Temporary employees are not eligible for most of these optional deductions.

Additional information on most of these deductions is contained in the *You and Your Benefits* section of this handbook.

## **Pay Advances**

Because of the burden it places upon our payroll system, the County does not normally make advances against an employee's pay, however, advance payment for vacation leave may be granted provided a written request is made to the Finance Department at least two calendar weeks prior to the beginning of the leave. Such advances are limited to ten days within the same payroll period and subject to the employee having sufficient annual leave accumulated.

## **Working Hours**

Most of our full time employees work a minimum of 40 hours in five days of each week, and whenever possible, have two consecutive days off out of seven. However, as job conditions and responsibilities vary, your work hours and days off may also vary according to the needs of the County. If your schedule is different or should a change of your particular work schedule be necessary it will be explained to you by your supervisor.

Our part time employees work a variety of different hours based upon the needs of the County. Your supervisor will explain your work schedule to you.

## **Meal Periods**

Meal periods for full time employees vary from one-half to one hour per day and are scheduled in a manner to best serve the public. Your supervisor will discuss with you the exact time you are to take your meal break. We expect our employees to take their meal break; this time cannot be accumulated or used for the purpose of coming to work late or leaving work early.

Part time employees may or may not receive a meal break dependent upon the hours worked and the nature of the work performed. Whether or not a meal period will be scheduled should be discussed with your supervisor.

## **Overtime**

If you are employed in an overtime-eligible position and are required to work overtime, you will be paid at one and one-half times your regular rate of pay for all time worked in excess of forty hours. Your supervisor must authorize all overtime work in advance. The accrual of compensatory time in lieu of cash overtime is permitted only by the mutual agreement of you and your supervisor. A Compensatory Time Agreement must be completed prior to accruing compensatory time. The maximum accumulation of compensatory time may not exceed eighty (80) hours.

For purposes of computing overtime, jury duty and holidays are counted as hours worked, provided the employee completes the regular workweek. Annual leave, sick leave, emergency leave and other such absences from work will not be counted as time worked for overtime computations, except compensatory time usage, annual leave and excused sick leave, which has been approved at least one (1) week in advance.

Employees occupying certain managerial, administrative and professional positions are exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and do not normally receive overtime pay. However, you may be granted straight time compensatory time under special circumstances, such as attending meetings outside your normal working hours.

Please check with your supervisor if there are any questions about overtime.

## **Time Sheets**

The number of hours you work or are absent from work is kept on a time sheet. You will be asked to review and sign your time sheet for each payroll period. Your supervisor or appointing authority will also sign the sheet to authorize your pay. It is important that you review your time sheet in order that there will be no misunderstanding about the time you worked or were off.

## **Appearance and Conduct**

As one of our employees, you represent the County in all of your dealings with the public. Your appearance, attitude and behavior all announce to our customers "the taxpayers" what they may expect from their County government. Our business is service, which should be provided as quickly and cheerfully as possible. We have a big responsibility to the public and it is a responsibility all County employees should assume with dedication and pride. For these reasons we stress the importance of neat dress, good grooming and courteous behavior as minimum standards for County employees.

Keeping your work area in a neat and orderly fashion is also important. It indicates a safe, efficient operation.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

Because we serve the public, the importance of getting to work on time, returning promptly from meal periods, not leaving early and being present every day possible should need no explanation. The public expects and has a right to demand prompt and efficient service. If you must be absent or late, it is your responsibility to notify your supervisor at once. This is necessary so that your work may be reassigned to maintain our standards of service.

## **Personal Mail and Telephone Calls**

The County is not in the position to handle personal mail. Employees should direct their mail to be delivered to their home or post office box, not to their place of work. County stationery, postage, electronic mail or courier service may not be used for personal business.

Personal telephone calls should be kept to a minimum, both in number and time. If it does become necessary for you to receive a personal call, be sure the caller has been supplied with your correct telephone number and extension.

## **Use of County Property**

The County provides employees with necessary equipment, materials and vehicles to carry out their job assignment. It is your responsibility to exercise reasonable care and observe all necessary safety precautions in the use of those items assigned to you, to protect yourself and others and to preserve the life of the equipment.

Personal use of vehicles, materials, supplies, tools or other County equipment is not permitted. Violation could result in discharge, prosecution or both.

## **County Records**

Occasionally someone from outside the County may ask you for information about records, procedures or other internal matters. When this happens, please refer the person to your supervisor, unless you have been specifically authorized to release such information. No records, official documents, materials, manuals or other property of the County are to be loaned, given or sold to an outside person or concern by any employee without proper approval by the property's official custodian.

## **Salespersons and Solicitors**

Only certain soliciting agencies are recognized by the Board of County Commissioners. Solicitation for non-recognized purposes, however worthy, is not permitted without the express permission of the County Manager. If a solicitor or salesperson calls upon you during working hours he/she should be informed, in a courteous manner, that solicitation is not permitted.

## **Parking**

Parking spaces around County operated facilities are generally reserved for the public and visitors. Employees who work in the government center or service complexes are to park their vehicles in the employee parking lots. Employees who work at outlying facilities should check with their supervisors about parking arrangements.

# Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

As in any place of work, there are certain important rules you must be aware of in order to avoid problems for yourself and the County. The rules you will use come from County Policies and Administrative Orders, the Merit System Policies and Procedures, as well as, operating procedures that are established by your appointing authority.

In order to make you aware of what is not acceptable in the workplace we have listed below **examples of offenses and appropriate penalties**. This list is not intended to include all possible offenses.

Penalties should normally fall within the range described; however, these ranges are merely guides and are not intended to limit the right of management to determine what constitutes an appropriate penalty. Depending upon the nature of the offense, the past record of the employee, or extenuating circumstances, a more severe penalty, a lesser penalty, or a penalty outside of the range may be imposed. Should more than one offense be under consideration, the violations do not necessarily have to be identical in order to be classified as a second or third offense. In the case of a dismissal offense, the minimum penalty for a first offense will be suspension. Penalties for offenses not listed will be prescribed in consistence with offenses of comparable gravity.

Deductions from pay of all employees (including exempt employees) may be made for unpaid disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed for infractions of workplace conduct rules. Exempt employees will be subject to unpaid suspensions only as permitted by F.L.S.A.

## Minor Offenses

- Poor housekeeping or occasional substandard work quality.
- Selling or soliciting on County property without prior authorization.
- Failure to obtain approval prior to engaging in other than County employment or business activity.
- Failure to call in and report an absence from work to the immediate supervisor or his/her designee in a timely manner. Call-in times may be adjusted in each operation to comply with functional requirements. Employees shall be provided with notification of specific requirements.
- Neglect, carelessness or disregard of common safety practices.
- Any act of negligence which results in a failure to complete assigned tasks or responsibilities in a timely and/or satisfactory manner.
- Failure to pay or make reasonable provision for future payment of legal debt which has caused annoyance or discredit to the County.
- Use or possession of another employee's working equipment without the employee's consent.
- Malicious mischief, horseplay, wrestling, or other undesirable conduct.
- Unexcused tardiness.
- Creating or contributing to unsafe or unsanitary conditions.
- Loafing, neglect of duties or otherwise wasting work time.
- Smoking in designated nonsmoking areas in County facilities.

### Suggested Ranges - Minor Offense Penalties

First Offense - Verbal counseling up to written reprimand

Second Offense - Written reprimand up to three (3) days suspension

Third Offense - Up to five (5) days suspension

Fourth Offense - Up to discharge

## Major Offenses

- Leaving the job during working hours without notice to or permission from supervisor.
- Absence without approved leave or failure to report after leave has been disapproved, revoked or canceled.
- Failure to report for overtime work without good reason after being scheduled to work.
- Failure to report a personal injury or equipment damage immediately to one's supervisor.
- Careless use of County property resulting in damage.
- An accident resulting in personal injury, due to carelessness, neglect or disregard of safety practices.
- Distribution of or posting written or printed matter of any description unless approved.
- Unauthorized removal of notices or signs from County bulletin boards.
- Abuse or misuse of the grievance procedure by filing habitual or unjustified grievances.
- Sleeping during working hours unless otherwise authorized, as in the Fire Rescue Service.
- Fighting, threatening, intimidating, coercing or otherwise interfering with the rights of other persons.
- Gambling on County property.
- Loss of County property through carelessness or negligence.
- Conduct which is considered disrespectful, or the use of insulting, abusive or obscene language to or about fellow employees or the public.
- Hindrance of operations because of excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
- Improper or unauthorized use of County property or equipment.
- Smoking in an area designated as non-smoking because of safety considerations.
- Operation of any County owned vehicle or equipment while under the influence of any medication or drug which causes drowsiness or other physical or psychological impairments.

### Suggested Range - Major Offense Penalties

First Offense - Written reprimand up to three (3) days suspension

Second Offense - Up to five (5) days suspension

Third Offense - Up to discharge

## Dismissal Offenses

You may be subject to discharge for any of the following as a first offense:

- Wanton or willful neglect in the performance of assigned duties.
- Deliberate misuse, destruction or damage to any County property or the property of another person.
- Deliberate misuse of County's time, personnel and/or property for personal purpose.
- Failure to return to work upon expiration of a leave of absence.
- Abandonment of position by being absent from duty for three (3) consecutive workdays without proper authorization.
- Insubordination by refusing to perform assigned work or to comply with an official and legal supervisory directive, or by demonstrating an antagonistic, insolent, disrespectful or belligerent attitude toward management.
- Violation of a safety rule or regulation resulting in an injury or death, or refusal to use proper safety equipment when provided.
- Misappropriation of County funds; unauthorized sale or disposal of County property for personal gain or profit; deliberate falsification of official reports; or violation of any other public trust.

## Dismissal Offenses (continued)

- Falsification of any County records, reports, documents or correspondence.
- Providing false information to a supervisor or member of management.
- Conviction or guilt of any felony crime or a misdemeanor concerned with immoral conduct.
- Engaging in an illegal strike, work stoppage, slow down or acts of sabotage or vandalism.
- Refusal to sign or execute an oath of citizenship, oath of loyalty or other document required by law or County regulations.
- Possession of firearms, explosives or other weapons on County property or in a County vehicle, unless authorized by proper authority.
- The sale of narcotics or other illegal substances.
- Inability or unfitness to perform assigned duties.
- Providing entrance or access to County facilities or property to unauthorized persons.
- Theft, concealment or removal of County property or the property of another employee without proper authorization.
- Demonstrated pattern of inefficiency or incompetence in the performance of assigned duties.
- Making false claims or deliberate misrepresentations in an attempt to obtain sickness or injury benefits, workers' compensation or other such benefits.
- Threatening physical violence or striking a supervisor.
- Consumption of or being under the influence of intoxicating beverages or controlled substances not prescribed by a physician, while on official duty.
- Loss or suspension of a required license, certification, permit or other requirement needed by an employee to perform the duties of his/her position.
- Failure to cooperate in an official investigation related to work.
- Conduct that raises obvious questions as to the employee's ability to maintain public trust.
- Discriminatory Harassment - Any unwelcome verbal comments or physical acts of a discriminatory nature which interferes with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or which creates an offensive working environment.
- Sexual Harassment - Any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which interferes with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or which creates an offensive working environment.
- Possession/use of intoxicating beverages, non-prescribed drugs or illegal controlled substances at place of work, in official County vehicles or while on official duty.
- Reporting for duty under the influence of intoxicating beverages, non-prescribed drugs or illegal controlled substances.
- Solicitation or acceptance of any gift, gratuity or other form of compensation of any value whatsoever by an employee that is based on any understanding that the performance/non-performance of any duties or responsibilities associated with employment by the County or any official action or judgment of the employee would be influenced by such gift, gratuity or other form of compensation.
- Any other incidents or series of incidents which, when considered on their merit, are equal in gravity to the offenses listed above.

**Please remember that the offenses listed here are only examples. If you find yourself in a situation where you are unsure of the consequences of your actions, consult with your supervisor.**

## **Pre-Disciplinary Hearings**

When an appointing authority has determined that an employee's actions may require discipline above a written reprimand, a pre-disciplinary hearing will be scheduled and the employee notified in writing at least 24 hours in advance. At the hearing, the appointing authority explains the charges and the type of disciplinary action being considered. The employee will be given an opportunity to offer any contrary evidence, explanation and/or comments. The employee is notified of the decision after management discusses and decides upon the appropriate disciplinary action.

## **Questions and Complaints**

Should you have a question about your job, the terms of your employment, or you do not fully understand the reason behind any action affecting you, we encourage you to discuss the problem with your immediate supervisor.

If an employee believes a rule or disciplinary action has been applied unjustly, the County has special grievance procedures to resolve such complaints. In order to use these procedures the employee must have completed a probationary period and be a member of the Career Service. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement may elect to use the County procedure or the procedure set up in the agreement.

### **GRIEVANCES**

A grievance is defined as a formal complaint made by a career service employee when they feel the application of a rule or disciplinary action has been applied unjustly, or when some condition of employment is unfair or unjust.

The following areas of personnel administration are considered management prerogatives and will not be subject to grievance:

1. Scheduling and assigning work, work hours and work stations.
2. Establishing work standards and quality.
3. Size of workforce and reorganizations.
4. Reductions to the work force.
5. Appropriations and budgets.
6. Scope of work within job classification except when an assignment is clearly determined not to be within the job classification.
7. Performance evaluations.
8. Salary scales and rates of pay falling within officially established ranges.
9. The right to discipline.
10. The missions of the County.

It is the responsibility of supervisory and management employees to hear and consider any valid employee grievance, and take necessary corrective action when indicated, or provide a reasonable explanation as to why the complaint is not justified.

Each employee has the responsibility to ensure any grievance filed is reasonable and based upon factual information, and not abuse the purpose and intent of the system.

### ***Grievance Procedures***

An employee who feels that he/she has a legitimate grievance shall first complete a Notice of Grievance form and verbally discuss the problem with their immediate supervisor. This must be done within ten working days of the occurrence of the incident from which the grievance arose. All grievance forms discussed in this section and detailed instructions are available at your supervisor's office or the Office of Human Resources.

Your supervisor will take appropriate action to resolve the problem when indicated or provide you with a verbal answer within seven working days.

If the problem is not resolved, or you are not satisfied with the answer given you may, within seven working days, put the grievance in writing on an Employee Written Grievance form to be reviewed by higher levels of supervision. The Department or Office Director is normally the person to whom the Written Grievance would be submitted. The Department or Office Director will conduct a hearing on the grievance within ten working days. A written reply on the Employee Written Grievance form shall be furnished to the employee within ten working days following the hearing.

For grievances concerning **terms or conditions of employment or discipline up to a written reprimand**, the decision of the Department or Office Director is final and non-appealable.

For grievances concerning **suspension without pay, demotion, involuntary reduction in pay or disciplinary probation**, if, after being reviewed by higher levels of supervision, concluding normally with the Department or Office director, you are still aggrieved, you may request a review by the Grievance Committee. This is done by submitting the Written Grievance form to the Director of Human Resources within seven working days of the final management reply. Such requests should be accompanied by all facts and information concerned with the complaint and the written replies given by management.

The Grievance Committee shall, after its review, render its findings and an advisory recommendation to the County Manager. The decision of the County Manager shall be final except in grievances concerning disciplinary probation, when the County Manager disregards the advisory recommendation of the Grievance Committee. In such instances the employee shall have the right of appeal to the Personnel Council.

### ***APPEALS TO THE PERSONNEL COUNCIL***

The Board of County Commissioners has appointed a five member Personnel Council made up of private citizens experienced in employee relations or personnel administration. A major function of the Council is to hear appeals from Career Service employees who feel they have been dismissed **without good cause**.

#### ***Right of Appeal to the Personnel Council***

Appeals will be accepted and reviewed by the Personnel Council only if:

- The employee has attained permanent status in the **Career Service** and has been dismissed.
- The County Manager, in a grievance concerning disciplinary probation, has disregarded the recommendations of the Grievance Committee.
- An act of unlawful discrimination is alleged.

### ***Notice of Appeal***

A notice of appeal and petition for review by the Personnel Council must be submitted to the Office of Human Resources, in writing and signed by the appellant, within five working days from the date the appellant was officially notified of management's action. The necessary form to file a notice of appeal can be obtained from the Office of Human Resources. A detailed description of the appeals process will be provided with the form.

### ***Review by the Personnel Council***

Upon receipt of a valid and timely appeal, the Director of Human Resources will arrange a hearing before the Personnel Council to receive evidence and hear testimony from witnesses. The appointing authority and appellant will be given advance notice of the time, date and location of the hearing.

### ***Decision of the Personnel Council***

The Personnel Council may affirm, modify or reverse the decision of management. The decisions and orders of the Personnel Council are final.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Plan Complaint Resolution Procedure**

In addition to the grievance and appeals procedures previously described, special internal procedures are in place to resolve complaints of discrimination and/or disparate treatment of members of protected groups and complaints of unlawful discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment. It is the intent of these procedures to provide an avenue for employee relations problems to be appropriately resolved in-house. However, nothing in the County's Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and Complaint Resolution procedures preclude an employee from initiating a discrimination complaint with any outside civil rights agency, nor are time limits for such agencies waived by any of the County's procedures contained herein.

Step 1. An employee with a complaint, or a supervisor to whom a complaint is first reported, reports the complaint to Employee Relations Manager/EEO Officer as soon as possible after the alleged act of unlawful discrimination, disparate treatment or sexual harassment.

Step 2. The Employee Relations Manager/EEO Officer consults with the County Attorney's Office to determine if the complaint should be addressed through the County's EEO complaint resolution procedure or referred to an outside third party for investigation.

Step 3. When it is determined that the complaint will be handled internally, the Employee Relations Manager/EEO Officer confers with employee and other concerned parties, as appropriate, and attempts to resolve the complaint by conducting a thorough investigation as expeditiously as possible after request for investigation. Provides proposed findings and recommends course of action to Human Resources Director for review.

## **Employees Charged with Crimes Not Connected with Work**

We hope that you will never need this information, but it is important that you know; if you are ever arrested for any crime, you must notify your supervisor within 24 hours of the arrest and advise your supervisor of what the charges are and your availability for work. During criminal proceedings you have a continued obligation to notify your supervisor within 48 hours of any change in the status of those proceedings.

# **Drug and Alcohol Testing of Applicants and Employees**

This policy was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners as BCC Policy 7. Excerpts from the policy objective and policy statement are reprinted here for your information. The full policy may be reviewed in the Office of Human Resources, your Director's office or the Reference Section of any County Library.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this policy is to establish a drug free workplace, better maintaining employee reliability and providing a healthier, safer, and more secure work environment for all Brevard County Board of County Commissioners' employees. The County recognizes that an employee's health affects personal job performance as well as the performance and job safety of other employees and citizens. Abuse of alcohol and other drugs has been an increasing problem affecting all facets of American society and ranks as one of the major health problems in our country. Brevard County is no exception to that trend. The County has an obligation to its employees and must take the initiative to prevent alcohol and other drug abuse from entering or continuing to exist within our work force.

## **POLICY**

The unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensing, possession, use of alcohol, drugs, controlled, and illegal substances, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol in the workplace, while conducting County business on or off County premises is absolutely prohibited.

Any employee, who has a confirmed positive test, refuses to be tested, submits a false sample or tampers with a test sample during the testing process for drugs and/or alcohol will be terminated.

Failure to provide adequate breath or urine for testing within a reasonable time (consistent with the most current federal rules, regulations, and guidelines) without a valid medical explanation from a doctor shall constitute refusal to submit.

Any employee reasonably suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs shall be prevented from engaging in further work of any sort and will have given the County cause to subject them to immediate testing, in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Policy.

Brevard County employees must NOT consume alcohol while on duty, four (4) hours before performing a safety sensitive function or as specified by department policy and up to eight (8) hours following an accident or until the employee undergoes a post-accident test, whichever occurs first.

Alcohol testing shall be conducted by an Evidential Breath Testing Device (EBT).

All employees are encouraged to make use of the available resources for treatment for substance abuse problems. Under certain circumstances an employee may be required to undergo treatment for substance abuse. Any employee who refuses or fails to comply with Brevard County requirements for treatment, after care, or return-to-duty, or follow-up testing shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All employees must, as a condition of employment, abide by the terms of this Policy and must report any arrest made under a criminal drug and/or DUI statute to his/her supervisor within twenty-four (24) hours of the arrest, or as soon as practical. A report of a conviction must be made to the Office of Human Resources within five (5) days of the conviction. Failure to comply with this Policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

Brevard County is dedicated to assuring fair and equitable application of this substance abuse Policy. Therefore, supervisors and managers are expected to use and apply all aspects of this Policy in an unbiased and impartial manner. Any supervisor or manager who knowingly disregards the requirements of this Policy, or who is found to deliberately misuse the Policy in regard to subordinates, shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Resignations**

If it becomes necessary to resign we request that you present a letter of resignation to your supervisor or appointing authority indicating the date you plan to leave and the reason, giving at least two calendar weeks notice to ensure you leave in good standing. It is important that you leave the County service in good standing to protect your eligibility for rehire, and to receive your accrued annual leave pay and percent of sick leave pay if you have completed the first nine (9) months of employment.

If you are absent from work without permission from your supervisor for three days or more, this may be considered as your having abandoned your position and could result in loss of all rights to employment.

## **Code of Ethics**

As employees of the County we are in a unique position. We have a greater responsibility in our jobs than would normally be found in other places of work. Our employer, the public, demands and has a right to expect from us certain standards and integrity of conduct. Whether we are a laborer or a manager, we reflect the values of County government in the eyes of the public. Our actions, both on and off the job are being evaluated and judged. For this reason all of us must adhere to the ethics guidelines outlined in the "Code of Ethics" booklet that is distributed at New Employee Orientation.

# YOU AND YOUR BENEFITS

## Employee Organizations

Some of our employees work in job classifications that are covered by a collective bargaining agreement with a labor union. If you are such an employee, you will have been given a copy of the labor agreement that governs your employment at the time of employment enrollment. Wherever the information in the labor agreement differs from this handbook, you as a bargaining unit employee, are subject to the provisions of the agreement.

## Your Holidays

The Board of County Commissioners normally recognize the following eleven (11) holidays, although there may be times when some holidays have to be skipped by some of us due to the nature of our work or operating conditions.

1. New Year's Day .....January 1<sup>st</sup>
2. Martin Luther King's Birthday .....Third Monday in January
3. Memorial Day .....Last Monday in May
4. Independence Day .....July 4<sup>th</sup>
5. Labor Day .....First Monday in September
6. Veteran's Day .....November 11<sup>th</sup>
7. Thanksgiving Day .....Fourth Thursday in November
8. Friday after Thanksgiving Day .....Fourth Friday in November
9. Christmas Eve .....December 24<sup>th</sup>
10. Christmas Day .....December 25<sup>th</sup>
11. Personal Holiday .....see below

The Personal Holiday is awarded the first pay period ending in January of each year and must be used during the calendar year in which it is awarded. Use of the Personal Holiday must be scheduled with your supervisor's approval.

If a holiday falls on a Saturday it is observed on Friday, or if it falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. If you normally work weekends you will observe the holiday on the day it occurs.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR HOLIDAY PAY**

All employees filling permanent positions are eligible to receive holiday pay. Temporary employees are not eligible for holiday pay.

If you are a non-exempt employee and you are required to work on a holiday, you will receive extra pay for the hours worked on the holiday, or be granted another work day off in place of the holiday. Should a holiday fall on your regular day off, you will receive holiday pay, or be given an additional day off.

If you are a part-time employee, you will receive pro rata holiday pay for any holiday. For example, an employee whose average part-time work week is 20 hours would receive 4 hours of holiday pay.

If you work 24 hours on duty and 48 hours off duty, you receive 11.2 hours of holiday pay per holiday.

If a holiday occurs while you are on annual or sick leave, you will be given credit for the holiday hours and that amount will not be deducted from your leave balance.

New employees must work a regular scheduled workday immediately before the holiday to be eligible for holiday pay. Terminating employees must work a regular scheduled workday immediately following the holiday to receive holiday pay. Employees on leave without pay or unpaid leaves of absences are not eligible for holiday pay.

## Annual Leave

All employees in permanent positions are eligible to earn annual leave. Temporary employees do not earn annual leave. You may accumulate your annual leave, but cannot carry over more than 240 hours at the end of any calendar year including December accruals.

Our full-time permanent employees earn annual leave, or vacation time, as follows:

<b>Years of Permanent Service</b>	<b>Hours Per Pay Period (24/Year)</b>	<b>Work days Per Year</b>
01 thru 05	4	12
06 thru 10	5	15
11 thru 15	6	18
16 thru 19	7	21
20 and over	8	24

Our part-time employees earn annual leave based on actual number of paid hours for the pay period and includes actual hours worked, paid absence hours and paid holiday hours, but not hours that are paid at an overtime rate. The following rules apply:

- Bi-weekly leave accruals shall be based on the part-time employee's number of hours worked each pay period, not to exceed full-time leave accrual amounts.
- Leave shall accrue over 26 pay periods. The formula to be applied for each bi-weekly period shall be: (number of actual hours worked + paid absence hours + paid holiday hours) ÷ (80 hours x fulltime leave accrual hours based on year of service).

Employees working schedules of 24 hours on duty and 48 hours off duty will accrue annual leave at a rate of 1.4 times the normal amount. These employees are allowed to carry over up to 336 hours of annual leave, including December accruals, at the end of the calendar year.

New employees shall begin to earn annual leave as of the first full pay period of employment. Annual leave is not credited until the last calendar day of the pay period for which it is earned and may not be used until after it is credited. **Note:** Annual leave is accrued twice per month (24 pay periods) for full-time employees, so there are two pay periods per year where there is no annual leave accrual.

### **USE OF ANNUAL LEAVE**

You may use your annual leave as earned for such things as vacations, personal business or childcare, or for absences for sickness if you have used all of your sick leave. However, all requests for annual leave must be approved in advance by your supervisor.

Unauthorized leave or failure to obtain prior approval can be cause for denial of pay for annual leave.

The County reserves the right to deny an annual leave request if the absence would interfere with the work schedule, or causes an inconvenience to the operation.

On any day, the minimum unit of annual leave that may be used is one-quarter hour.

Annual leave may not be used until after the completion of six months of permanent service except as a continuation of authorized sick leave substantiated by a physician's statement.

### **VACATION SCHEDULING**

When vacations can be taken depends upon work loads and other factors. Your supervisor will make every effort to schedule vacations when you want to take them, however, in unusual circumstances this may not always be possible.

### **LEAVE IN EXCESS OF MAXIMUM CARRYOVER**

It is not the County's policy to pay you for vacation if it is not taken, except when you separate from employment in good standing as described below. However, if the County has prevented you from taking leave in excess of the maximum to be carried over at the end of the calendar year, your director may recommend to the County Manager that you be paid for the excess annual leave.

An exception to this is for employees who submit written notice of his/her intention to enter the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) during the two-year period prior to his/her entering the DROP program or who submit written notice of his/her retirement during the two-year period prior to his/her retirement date. These employees will be allowed to continue to accrue annual leave in excess of the limits outlined above, up to the FRS maximum accrual limit of 500 hours.

### **ANNUAL LEAVE UPON TERMINATION**

If you leave the County in good standing, you will be paid for any unused annual leave. This pay would appear in your final pay check. You may forfeit your right to terminal leave pay if you fail to give two weeks notice, or are discharged for cause.

## **Sick Leave**

All employees in permanent positions are eligible to earn sick leave credits. Temporary employees do not earn sick leave. Sick leave as earned, may be carried forward and accumulated with no limit.

Our full-time permanent employees earn sick leave as follows:

<b>Years of Permanent Service</b>	<b>Hours Per Pay Period (24/Year)</b>	<b>Work days Per Year</b>
01 thru 10	4	12
11 and over	5	15

Our part-time employees earn sick leave based on actual number of paid hours for the pay period and includes actual hours worked, paid absence hours and paid holiday hours, but not hours that are paid at an overtime rate. The following rules apply:

- Bi-weekly leave accruals shall be based on the part-time employee's number of hours worked each pay period, not to exceed full-time leave accrual amounts.
- Leave shall accrue over 26 pay periods. The formula to be applied for each bi-weekly period shall be: (number of actual hours worked + paid absence hours + paid holiday hours) ÷ (80 hours x fulltime leave accrual hours based on year of service).

Employees working schedules of 24 hours on duty and 48 hours off duty accrue sick leave at a rate of 1.4 times the normal amounts.

New employees shall begin to earn sick leave as of the first full pay period of employment. Sick leave is not credited until the last calendar day of the pay period for which it is earned and may not be used until after it is credited. Sick leave is accrued twice per month (24 pay periods) so there are two pay periods per year where there is no sick leave accrual.

**USE OF SICK LEAVE**

You may use your sick leave as earned for personal illness or disability, doctor and dentist appointments, or officially approved professional counseling. It may also be used as a continuation of approved emergency leave (not to exceed 4 days) due to the death or critical illness of a member of your immediate family. Sick leave pay is not available for baby-sitting or child care, vacation, personal business or similar purposes. However, sick leave may be used if the illness or injury of a member of your immediate family requires your personal care and attention. For this purpose, immediate family means only members of an employee’s household and natural or adopted children of non-custodial parents or an employee’s non-household parents. In the case of non-household immediate family members, a maximum of forty (40) hours of sick leave may be utilized annually.

On any day, the minimum unit of sick leave that may be used is one-quarter hour.

During your first six months of permanent service, you may not use your sick leave unless the need has been verified by a physician's statement.

**DONATIONS TO SICK LEAVE**

You may donate leave to a needy employee from your annual leave on an hour for hour basis; or from your sick leave on a pro-rata basis. Donations may be made under the following conditions: the employee has not abused sick leave in the past; the illness is documented; all sick and annual leave is exhausted; and only the specific amount of sick leave time which is needed may be donated.

**“TRADE BACK” SICK LEAVE FOR PRO RATED ANNUAL LEAVE**

Career service employees on the first pay period in January may “Trade Back” up to eighty (80) hours of sick leave for additional annual leave on a pro rata basis as follows, as long as the employee keeps a minimum of two hundred (200) hours of sick leave on his/her sick leave balance.

Sick Leave	Annual Leave
1 hour	.5 hour

**NOTIFICATION AND PROOF OF ILLNESS**

If you must take sick leave, it is your responsibility to notify your supervisor as early as possible on the first day of absence, and each day thereafter unless instructed to do otherwise. A doctor's statement or other proof of illness or injury may be required. Failure to give proper notification or to provide proof of illness may be cause for denial of sick leave pay. You may be required to furnish a doctor's statement attesting to your recovery when you return to work.

Sick leave may be restricted when use of sick leave is for an extended period of time or appears to be abused. During sick leave restriction, an employee may be required to furnish competent proof of the necessity of such absence and/or may, at the County's expense, be required to be examined by a County designated physician or nurse practitioner. If an employee fails to provide competent proof when requested, or fails to submit to an examination when requested, the employee may be charged leave without pay and may be disciplined

## **SICK LEAVE INCENTIVE**

If you do not use any sick leave during any twelve (12) consecutive month period except for your own hospitalization or for physician's appointments that are pre-approved by your supervisor at least one (1) week in advance, you will be awarded eight (8) hours of annual leave. You must notify your supervisor within 60 days of becoming eligible to receive this award. The award if you are a part-time permanent employee is on a pro-rata basis. Probationary employees and employees taking a leave of absence during the period are not eligible for the incentive.

## **FINAL NOTE ON SICK PAY**

Remember that sick leave is a privilege and not an automatic right. Abuse or making false claims for sick leave is cause for disciplinary action, including dismissal. Career Service employees who properly resign, are laid off, or otherwise separate in good standing after completing their first nine (9) months of service are eligible to receive pay for twenty percent (20%) of any unused sick credits not to exceed a total of 230 hours pay. Employees who resign, or are otherwise separated in good standing and are vested under the Florida Retirement System shall be paid thirty percent (30%) of any unused sick leave, not to exceed 346 hours pay. Employees who meet the requirements for retirement under the Florida Retirement System and retire from County Service in good standing shall receive pay for fifty (50%) percent of their unused sick leave balance. For employees hired after October 1, 2011: Employees who meet the requirements for retirement under the Florida Retirement System and who retire from the County in good standing, shall receive thirty percent (30%) of their unused sick leave balance.

## **Emergency Leave**

In the event of a death or critical illness of a member of an employee's or an employee's spouse's immediate family, an employee may be granted emergency leave upon request, in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Employees whose workday normally consists of shifts of twelve (12) hours or less may be granted up to three (3) working days paid emergency leave. In case of the death of the employee's spouse, parent, grandparent or child, up to five (5) days emergency leave may be granted.
- Employees whose workday normally consists of shifts of more than twelve (12) hours may be granted up to one and one-half (1-1/2) workdays paid emergency leave. In case of the death of the employee's spouse, natural parent or child, up to two and one-half (2-1/2) work days of emergency leave may be granted.
- Permanent employees may be authorized additional days to be charged against the employee's accrued sick leave balance, if needed to cope with the emergency. Employees whose workday normally consists of shifts of twelve (12) hours or less may have a maximum of up to four (4) workdays of sick leave authorized. Employees whose workday normally consists of shifts of more than twelve (12) hours may have a maximum of up to two (2) workdays of sick leave authorized.

Use of emergency leave or sick leave for emergency leave purposes is not a matter of right. An appointing authority may deny leave or grant less than the maximums.

## **Jury Duty**

If you are filling a permanent position and are called upon to serve as a juror, you will receive your regular pay for the time you are absent from your regular work schedule. In addition, you may keep any fees you receive from the court for jury service. You must present a copy of your jury summons to your supervisor to be eligible for pay. When you are released from jury duty during work hours you are to return to work, unless otherwise instructed by your supervisor.

## **Court Leave**

If you are filling a permanent position and are summoned to appear in court as a witness in any official capacity, you will be granted court leave and receive your regular pay for that time. However, any fees received for such service shall be turned over to the County. If you are subpoenaed to court as a witness in a case which does not involve your employment, or you personally, you will be granted paid leave for your regular scheduled hours. Fees will be treated in the same manner as jury duty. However, if you are summoned to appear in court as a witness or participate in a court related activity in a case involving you personally or where you appear voluntarily on behalf of a friend or relative, you cannot use court leave. In these cases, you would use your annual leave credits, or take leave without pay.

## **Military Leave**

In accordance with State law, employees on all days during which they are engaged in training ordered under the provisions of the United States military or naval training regulations will be granted 240 working hours in any one annual period . A copy of your military orders should be attached to the appropriate timesheet. Other military leaves will be granted to employees in compliance with current State and Federal laws. Please contact the Office of Human Resources if you need information about a military leave.

## **Special Meetings**

When considered in the best interest of the County, you may be granted leave with pay to attend professional and technical institutes or conferences which contribute to your knowledge or improve your effectiveness in County service. All such leaves must be approved in advance by your director and when the meeting involves overnight travel, the Board of County Commissioners.

## **Family & Medical Leave Act Of 1993**

In order to be eligible for this leave, you must be employed by us for at least twelve (12) months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the past year.

Up to twelve (12) workweeks of job protected leave during any 12-month period is available to employees who need time off for the following reasons:

- The birth of your son or daughter in order to care for your son or daughter. \*
- The placement of a son or daughter with your for adoption or foster care.\*
- In order to care for your spouse, or a son, daughter, or parent, if your spouse, son, daughter, or parent has a serious health condition. Leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary, subject to proper certification.
- A serious health condition that makes you unable to perform the functions of your position. Leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary, subject to proper certification.
- Any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your spouse, child or parent is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of contingency operation.

\* *Your entitlement to leave for the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child expires at the end of the 12-month period after the child's birth or placement with you.*

Up to twenty-six (26) weeks of Military Caregiver Leave in a 12-month period is available to employees who need time off to care for a spouse, child, parent or next of kin of a covered military service member.

When you return from this leave you have the right to be returned to the job position you held when you went on leave or be placed in an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment. A full time permanent employee's health insurance will be maintained at County expense for insurance periods which fall within periods of FMLA protected leave.

If the leave is due to your own serious health condition or that of an eligible family member and is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment you must:

- \* Make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt work operations.
- \* Provide your appointing authority with thirty days notice or, if treatment is to begin in less than thirty days, provide as much notice as is practicable.
- \* Provide certification of the health care provider stating the date on which the serious health condition commenced, the probable duration of the condition and the appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition.

If the leave is to be taken for the birth or placement of a child you must provide your appointing authority with thirty days notice or, if the circumstances of the birth or placement requires leave to begin in less than thirty days, provide as much notice as is practicable.

This type of leave may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless the employee and appointing authority agree otherwise or unless certified as medically necessary.

Please see the "Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Leave Act" below for more information:

## **EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

### **Basic Leave Entitlement**

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

### **Military Family Leave Entitlements**

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

### **Benefits and Protections**

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

### **Definition of Serious Health Condition**

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

### **Use of Leave**

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

### **Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave**

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

### **Employer Responsibilities**

Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

### **Unlawful Acts by Employers**

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

### **Enforcement**

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

**FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(a) may require additional disclosures.**



For additional information:  
1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627  
[WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV](http://WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV)



U.S. Department of Labor | Employment Standards Administration | Wage and Hour Division

WHD Publication 1420 Revised January 2009

## **Domestic Violence Leave**

Domestic violence – means domestic violence as defined in Florida Statutes, Section 741.28, or any crime the underlying factual basis of which has been found by a court to include an act of domestic violence.

An employee is eligible for Domestic Violence Leave after three (3) months of employment and may request and take up to three (3) unpaid working days of leave from work in any twelve (12) month period if the employee or a family or household member of an employee is the victim of domestic violence. An employee may be required to utilize accumulated annual, compensatory or sick leave, if applicable, at the discretion of the appointing authority, prior to receiving domestic violence leave.

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of the employee, or to the health and safety of a family or household member, an employee seeking domestic violence leave from work must provide appropriate advance notice of the leave as well as reasonably sufficient documentation as required by the appointing authority to verify entitlement to this leave.

Requests for domestic violence leave must be approved and maintained by the appointing authority. Each appointing authority shall maintain personal identifying information that is contained in any records documenting an act of domestic violence including any use of domestic violence leave as confidential and exempt from disclosure to the extent authorized by statute.

The use of Domestic Violence Leave is limited to the following activities:

- Seek an injunction for protection against domestic violence or an injunction for protection in cases of repeat violence, dating violence, or sexual violence;
- Obtain medical care or mental health counseling, or both, for the employee or a family or household member to address physical or psychological injuries resulting from the act of domestic violence;
- Obtain services from a victim services organization, including but not limited to, a domestic violence shelter or program or a rape crisis center as a result of the act of domestic violence;
- Make the employee's home more secure from the perpetrator of the domestic violence or to seek new housing to escape the perpetrator; or
- Seek legal assistance in addressing issues arising from the act of domestic violence or to attend and prepare for court-related proceedings arising from the act of domestic violence.

## **Leave Of Absence without Pay**

If you are filling a permanent position you may apply for a leave of absence without pay for continuing education, maternity, extended medical problems or other such reasons. These leaves of absence are usually for periods not to exceed six months.

### ***REQUESTS AND PRIOR APPROVAL***

A request for a leave of absence should be made on form PER-18, available from Human Resources, and presented to your supervisor as far in advance as possible. It should state the reason and length of leave desired. Except for military leaves, and leaves granted in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, specific approval must be obtained and the County reserves the right to deny any request.

## **RETURN TO DUTY**

In case of personal, maternity and medical leave, reinstatement and return to duty will be subject to the agreement reached at the time the leave was taken. Employees returning from military service are eligible for re-employment in accordance with the provisions of existing Federal and State laws.

## **Employee Assistance Program**

Very few individuals or families go through their life without suffering some sort of emotional problem at one time or another. Many of these problems are the result of our rapidly changing society. There are pressures on men, women and children today which have never before existed. These pressures cause family problems . . . stress, abuse of alcohol and drugs, marital problems, and other difficulties. Money problems can also increase the pressure on us. Unfortunately, once these problems start, they usually continue to get worse and affect other parts of our lives: our marriage; our work; our faith; our health; even our feelings about ourselves.

The greatest barrier we all face is admitting to ourselves that we do have a problem and that we need help. Unfortunately, the stigma attached to mental health counseling has stopped people from receiving help at an early stage before the problems grow more serious. It is difficult to tell another person that we are not able to handle our problems alone, but what is a tremendous burden to one person can become a lighter load when shared with someone else specially trained to counsel others on personal problems. Just discussing a problem, particularly with an unbiased and confidential listener, can ease a situation. Because of our concern for our employees and their families, the Brevard County Commission has developed a program to assist with these problems. We encourage you to read further.

### **YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CAN HELP!**

With your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), you receive confidential consultation and resource services at no cost to you. Your EAP benefits include:

- 24/7 telephonic assessment and triage
- Immediate assistance from a qualified member advocate
- Up to six face-to-face counseling sessions
- Up to six telephonic counseling – unlimited number of issues per year
- Up to six coaching services - unlimited number of issues per year
- Work Life benefits: eldercare, childcare and dependent care consultation and referral - unlimited number of issues per year
- Financial consultation
- Identity theft consultation
- Online EAP services, including webinars.

Fees for any additional help are normally based on what you can afford and may be covered by the County's mental health benefit plan.

Your EAP is there when you need help . . . without red tape and lengthy waits. A simple telephone call to **1-800-955-6422** is all that is needed to start the process working for you and your family.

### **WHAT TO WATCH FOR:**

Personal issues and problems show themselves in many ways. If you see any of the following in yourself or a member of your family, this program may be for you!

- Increased arguments at home.
- Difficulty in sleeping or waking up.
- Fluctuating weight - gain or loss.

- Children avoid staying home.
- Lingering depression or feeling of hopelessness.
- Drinking to calm nerves or relax.
- Changes in mood or behavior.
- Late **or** missing work.
- Mixing drugs and alcohol.
- Interference with job functioning.
- Memory lapses.
- Hiding the fact you drink.
- Problems with children.
- Driving under the influence.
- Financial problems.
- Communication problems at home.

### **WHY PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING IS EFFECTIVE:**

A professionally trained counselor can provide an objective viewpoint and guide you toward a better understanding of your particular problem and its causes. Additionally, the counselor is familiar with other resources in your community that deal with personal problems and can refer you to the proper agency - ranging from self-help groups to private facilities or physicians - best equipped to provide the assistance you need.

### **HOW DO I KNOW IF I NEED HELP?**

It doesn't hurt to ask. Often it helps just to get an unresolved problem out into the open and discuss it. By discussing your problem, the EAP counselor will be able to help you judge the extent and seriousness of your problem.

But remember, you're not alone. We all are troubled by problems from time to time. Seeking professional help is not a sign of weakness, but a desire to resolve one's problems.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR HELP?**

Any employee or immediate family member may utilize the Employee Assistance Program's service by simply telephoning **1-800-955-6422**, to arrange a private meeting for free initial counseling.

## **Insurance Plans**

Another advantageous feature of your job with the County is your insurance coverage. The Board of County Commissioners has a **Cafeteria Benefits Plan**. Under this plan, if you are a **full-time permanent employee**, your basic life insurance premiums are paid for you. You may then select from the other available benefits those that best meet the needs of you and your family, and pay for them with "pre-tax" dollars (except where noted) through payroll deduction.

The effective date of your health and life insurance policy was given to you at the time of employment processing. The available benefits are explained briefly to you below. The booklets and the claims package you received during processing explain the programs in more detail.

### **GROUP LIFE INSURANCE**

The Board of County Commissioners provides basic term life insurance at no cost to you, as a full-time permanent employee. The amount of coverage is equal to your annual salary, rounded up to the nearest one thousand dollars. For example, if your annual salary is \$16,575.50, the amount you are insured for is \$17,000.00.

In addition, we offer separate Supplemental Term Life insurance that you may purchase for yourself, your spouse and your dependents. You can purchase up to the lesser of 3 times your annual salary or \$300,000 for your self and up to \$20,000 for your spouse. You have an added benefit of Guaranteed Issue only during the first 30 days of employment. This means that if you elect coverage for you and/or your spouse, a medical history statement will not need to be completed. Once this 30-day period is over, you will be required to complete the medical history statement for this supplemental insurance. For complete details, please refer to the policy Certificate or contact the Employee Benefits Section. Premiums for supplemental life insurance are deducted from your paycheck on an after-tax basis.

### **GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE**

Your Board of County Commissioners realizes that accidents and illnesses strike suddenly and can cause heavy financial burdens. Therefore, as a full-time, permanent employee, group health insurance is available to you and your family at group rates. Eligibility requirements apply and you will be required to supply a marriage certificate and/or birth certificates for any dependents you add to the plan(s).

You may add any of your dependents at the time of hire, but if you wish to add them at a later date, you may do so only under two circumstances: (1) when you incur a Qualifying Life Event (QLE), such as marriage, birth of a child, adoption, change in work status of your spouse, etc. or (2) during Open Enrollment. To enroll a member of your family to your policy due to a QLE, the Employee Benefits Section must be notified within 30 days of the event; otherwise, you can only make the change during the annual Open Enrollment period. Supporting documentation of the QLE will be required and should be sent to the Employee Benefits Section.

If you have been without health insurance for 63 days or more and are over the age of 19, pre-existing conditions will apply to your health coverage. Please refer to your Summary Plan Description (SPD) or contact Human Resources Employee Benefits Section for additional details.

The health insurance plan covers most hospital expenses, prescription drugs, surgical and physician costs, maternity benefits, mental health treatment and other medically necessary items. Please refer to your Summary Plan Description (SPD) for a more detailed description of these benefits.

All premiums for medical insurance are deducted twice a month from your paycheck on a pre-tax basis. If you wish to waive participation in the health plan, you will receive a small monthly cash payment.

### **DENTAL INSURANCE**

Dental insurance options are available to you as an employee and to your dependents that are eligible for coverage. If you are interested in detailed information about the plans available, please refer to your insurance package. You may enroll for optional dental programs within the 30 days of your hire as a full time permanent employee, change of family status, or during the annual open enrollment period.

## **VISION INSURANCE**

In addition to any value-added vision benefits that may be included in your health insurance, a separate vision insurance plan is also available to full time permanent employees. Dependents may also be covered under this plan. Please refer to your insurance booklet for detailed information about this coverage. As with the dental insurance, you may enroll within 30 days of your hire, change of family status or during the annual enrollment period.

## **DISABILITY INSURANCE PROGRAMS**

A major financial risk that every worker faces is the possibility of a loss of income due to an extended illness or injury that is not covered by Workers' Compensation and for which other benefits; such as social security, may be greatly delayed or denied.

- **Short Term Disability:** You are eligible to enroll in one of two Short Term Disability Program options for continuation of 60% of your annual salary. Employees can choose between a 14-day Benefit Waiting Period that is payable for up to 24 weeks and a 90-day Benefit Waiting Period that is payable up to 13 weeks. Employees will not be required to use all paid time off prior to short-term disability benefits beginning. Brevard County will allow employees to utilize paid time off to increase the pre-disability earnings of 60% to 80% pre-disability earnings (60% from carrier benefits and 20% from the County). Premiums are deducted on an "after-tax" basis.
- **Long Term Disability:** You are also eligible to enroll into a Long Term Disability program with a waiting period of either 90 days or 180 days. The monthly benefit is 60% of insured pre-disability earnings reduced by deductible income. Benefits are paid on a monthly basis and at a maximum of \$5,000 per month and will continue as long as the employee remains continuously disabled. Employees will be required to exhaust all leave prior to long-term disability benefits beginning. Premiums are deducted on an "after-tax" basis.

For additional information on disability benefits, please refer to the Certificate of Coverage Policies for these products. These documents are available in the HR department or online under the Resources Tab at [www.brevardbenefits.com](http://www.brevardbenefits.com).

## **Flexible Spending Accounts**

The County offers both full-time and part-time permanent employees the opportunity to participate in Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) for medical expenses and/or dependent care costs. All contributions to these plans are deducted on a pre-tax basis, which provides a tax advantage to you. The Medical FSA allows you to pay for expenses for yourself and your dependents that are not covered under the medical, dental, and/or vision care plans. The Dependent Care FSA allows you to pay for daycare related expenses, including day camps, for your eligible child(ren) under the age of 13, or for adult day care related expenses for a tax-dependent parent, so that you and/or your spouse may work and/or attend school.

You may choose to initiate one or both accounts within 30 days of hire or during the annual open enrollment period. These plans are governed by the IRS; thus, they determine what expenses are considered eligible and ineligible. If you enroll in the Medical FSA, you are also required to have your annual election available to you on day one of the plan year, or when you are first eligible to participate. Eligible expenses must be incurred by March 15<sup>th</sup> of the following year or you risk losing the remaining balance. The election of an FSA **does not renew automatically** and must be made for each calendar year. For further plan details, please refer to your FSA Summary Plan Description.

## **Workers' Compensation & Safety**

Your safety and well being are of vital concern to Brevard County. We strive to ensure that all of our employees work in a safe environment and have been provided with all necessary safety equipment. All employees are protected by Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida. This insurance pays the costs for doctors, hospitals, or treatment should you be injured on the job. It further provides for continuation of part of your salary should you become disabled. Additionally, you may choose to utilize accrued leave benefits for absences related to the injury for which Workers' Compensation Insurance does not provide continuation of partial salary. Also, you may utilize accrued leave benefits in combination with Workers' Compensation to receive a combined payment equal to 85% of the salary received prior to the occurrence of the disability (90% for employees who are covered under an IAFF bargaining agreement). Because the Workers' Compensation partial salary continuation benefit is not subject to federal income tax or social security (FICA), most employees exercising their option to use accrued leave will not experience any significant loss of net pay.

It is very important that you notify your supervisor of any injury at work, as soon as possible, no matter how small it may seem to you at the time. Minor injuries sometimes have a way of becoming major ones. If you need outside medical care for your injury, check with your supervisor who will see that the proper forms are prepared to be sent to Risk Management. Then you will be protected if there are any questions later about who should pay the bills. Other than for emergency situations, you must use the approved medical provider network for treatment of on-the-job injuries.

## **Florida Retirement System**

The Florida Retirement System (FRS) covers all County employees who work in permanent positions. Membership in the FRS requires a contribution by both the employee and the County. There are two types of membership classes that cover most of our employees, "Regular" and "Special Risk." The Special Risk class primarily covers employees who work in the occupation of fire fighter and/or paramedic, as defined in the Florida Retirement System Law and Rules. Employees who are members of either class will have the option of participating in the Florida Retirement System Pension Plan or Investment plan. All new employees will receive a packet of information regarding the Investment plan soon after they are on payroll so that they can make an informed decision about which plan they choose.

Being vested means that you have met the service requirements to be eligible to receive a future FRS retirement benefit. If you are initially enrolled in the FRS on or after July 1, 2011, you will be vested in the Pension Plan after 8 years of creditable service, regardless of your membership class.

If you are initially enrolled in the FRS before July 1, 2011, you will be vested in the Pension Plan after 6 years of service, unless your covered employment ended before July 1, 2001. Before July 1, 2001, members of the Regular Class vested in the FRS Pension Plan after completing 10 years of creditable service. If you terminated covered employment before July 1, 2001, and you were more than one year away from vesting at the time, you must return to covered employment for one work year in order to be eligible for 6-year vesting. However, if you were within one work year of vesting under the provisions of law in place when you terminated employment, you will vest upon working the number of months that were required for you to vest before you terminated.

If you are enrolled in FRS prior to July 1, 2011, normal retirement age for the Regular plan is 62 and for the Special Risk plan, the age is 55. If you are enrolled in FRS after July 1, 2011, normal retirement age for the Regular plan is 65 and for the Special Risk plan, the age is 60. Please see the FRS website at [http://www.dms.myflorida.com/human\\_resource\\_support/retirement](http://www.dms.myflorida.com/human_resource_support/retirement) for up-to-date information.

The percent credit for each year of service varies dependent upon the plan, retirement age and years of service. For further information about membership, creditable service and benefits of the FRS please review the Summary Plan Description provided to you at the time of employment processing. Assistance in applying for benefits or to receive other information concerning your FRS account is available in the Employee Benefits Section of Human Resources.

County employees, who retire and collect FRS benefits upon terminating, are eligible to continue participation in the County's medical, dental, vision and life insurance plans. When you plan to retire, you should contact the Employee Benefits Section of Human Resources for details.

## **Social Security**

All our employees are covered for Social Security, including mandatory Medicare. Payments into the Social Security system are automatically deducted from your paycheck. Your contributions are matched by the County. When otherwise eligible you may receive Social Security and Medicare benefits in addition to benefits from the Florida Retirement System.

## **Employee Recognition Programs**

Brevard County is committed to creating a work environment that attracts and retains quality employees. Our employees are our most valued asset and we believe it is important to recognize their contributions to continued improvement in service delivery. County recognition programs include:

### ***EMPLOYEE INNOVATIONS PROGRAM AWARDS***

Brevard County employees are encouraged to look for better ways to do things. Through the Employee Innovations Program, if employees take the opportunity to make suggestions that result in improved productivity, health/safety and/or operating savings for the County, they may receive a monetary award.

Employees whose ideas are implemented and result in a measurable savings to the County will receive a monetary award not to exceed 25% up to \$5,000 of net potential first-year savings. Employees may receive a \$100.00 award for ideas that improve efficiency, effectiveness and/or health/safety suggestions for which no monetary savings can be readily ascertained. Employees who suggest a better way to do business receive a written response and a certificate of appreciation from management.

### ***EXCELLENCE IN ACTION AWARDS***

We have outstanding employees who provide quality services for the County. To show that their diligent efforts are appreciated, the *Excellence in Action (EIA)* award program was developed. Four of the categories award administrative leave to eligible employees, in addition to a certificate and recognition in the County's newsletter:

**EXTRA MILE AWARD** - Recognizes individuals or groups who demonstrate extra effort and superior performance on specific project, task force or routine assignment. Nominated by immediate supervisor or above. Reviewer is the Department Director. Award is four hours of administrative leave.

**PULLING TOGETHER AWARD** – Recognizes teams which meet one or more of the following criteria: outstanding contribution to accomplishing team goals and objectives benefiting employees; recommend an improvement in the way we do business; demonstrate effective communication, information sharing, joint problem solving, consensus decision making and cooperation. Nominated by immediate supervisor or above. Reviewer is the Department Director. Award is four hours of administrative leave.

**EXCEPTIONAL COOPERATION AWARD** - Recognizes individuals or groups who meet the following criteria: aid to other Departments; cooperative activity is above and beyond normal expectations. Nominated by Director or above. Reviewer is the County Manager. Award is six hours of administrative leave.

**BREVARD'S BEST AWARD** – Recognizes individuals who excel at several of the following criteria: consistently produces a quality product and/or service; listens; expresses ideas effectively; provides feedback; achieves objectives beyond what is required; is enthusiastic; self-motivated; always looking for improvements; and in addition for Managers: recognizes employees; supports mission and goals of County; initiates change to policy and procedure to foster improvements. Nominated by Director or above. Reviewer is the County Manager. Award is eight hours of administrative leave.

The following award categories recognize excellence in employees with a plaque and recognition in the County's newsletter:

**DIVERSITY WORKFORCE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** - Recognizes Departments who meet the following criteria: exhibits an exceptional record of hiring a diversified group of employees and maintaining a diverse workforce; promotes a work environment that values diversity; supports missions and goals of the County. Nominated by Employee Relations Manager, Human Resources Director, or an Assistant County Manager. Reviewer is the County Manager.

**SAFETY EFFECTIVENESS AWARD** - Recognizes safety teams or departments who meet the following criteria: effective Safety Programming; problem solving resulting in positive safety indicators for employees, citizens, customers and clients; exceptional record of safe work operations. Nominated by Insurance Director or the County's Executive Safety Committee. Reviewer is the County Manager.

**EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD** - Recognizes the value of teamwork in providing service to County's citizens: excellence in service to the County's citizens; exceptional ability to work together as a team in order to provide programs, completed projects, or establish methods that provide excellent public service. Nominated by Director or above. Reviewer is the County Manager.

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD** - Recognizes individual employees who meet the following criteria: employee volunteer work; broadens support of volunteer efforts; exceptional contributions to the community and improved the quality of life for others. Nominated by Director or above. Reviewer is the County Manager

We also recognize employees for their years of service:

**EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS** - recognizes long-term employees for their years of faithful service. Employees who make long-term commitments to our mission of quality service enhance our success. We recognize employee's length of service at selected five-year intervals. Employees recognized for length of service receive recognition by management and are presented with a plaque or pin to commemorate the occasion.

**RETIREMENT RECOGNITION** - recognizes individuals retiring after 20 or more years of service to Brevard County. Appointing authorities may nominate eligible employees who are retiring to receive a proclamation from the Board and a letter from the County Manager.

## Health and Wellness

Several employee Health Fairs are conducted each year, at the Brevard County Government Center and at the Government Center North for employees and family members. Local hospitals and health facilities provide various health screenings and informational booths at these fairs.

Health and Wellness also provides a variety of services to employees on an outreach basis, including biometric screenings and wellness programs.

## Training and Development Opportunities

As an organization, we believe continuous training and development of our employees is the key to providing efficient and effective quality service to our community. In order to supplement the training and development provided within your department or office, the Office of Human Resources has developed a variety of informative classes that provide an opportunity to learn how to improve the way we do business.

### ***Mandatory Training Requirements during Probationary Period***

New employees are required to attend all mandatory training classes during their original probationary period before their probationary status can end. There are six classes that are mandatory for all employees:

- New Employee Orientation
- Workplace Harassment Awareness and Prevention
- Preventing Workplace Violence
- Anger Management
- Customer Contact-Lasting Impressions
- The Role of Ethics in Public Government

New employees who are appointed to a supervisory or managerial position must attend all classes in Phase III of the Employee Development Program during their original probationary period in addition to all mandatory training classes as described above. Employees already employed who are promoted to a supervisory or managerial position must attend all classes in Phase III of the Employee Development Program during their three (3) month probationary period. In addition, all employees who are appointed to a supervisory or managerial position must complete all three (3) phases of the Employee Development Program and obtain a certificate of completion within 24 months of being appointed.

Employees who do not successfully complete the specified training requirements during their probationary period will have their probationary period automatically extended.

### ***Training and Development Opportunities Manual***

The Training and Development Opportunities Manual is a detailed list of all classes offered by the Office of Human Resources and it is published at the beginning of each calendar year. For each class, it includes the goal, a summary of the content, who should attend and the name of the instructor. It also lists the specific dates, times and locations of each class. An individual class may be offered anywhere from two to twenty different times during the year in an effort to reach all those who have need of the training. The latest version of the *Training and Development Opportunities Manual* can be found on the S-drive in the "humres" folder, and on the County's Intranet (BEACH) at:

<http://beach/EMPTraining/Training-Development/default.aspx>

Together with your supervisor, you should determine which classes you should attend. Registration is primarily scheduled through the SAP system; however, if you have questions you may contact the Training section at 617-7564. We encourage you to register early because class sizes are limited.

From time to time classes are added, cancelled or modified to meet changing needs. If you have any questions or suggestions on additional workshops we should offer, please contact our Employee and Organizational Development Manager, Jennifer Meyer, 633-2031.

## **Education Assistance Program**

To be eligible for the Education Assistance Program you must be a full time, permanent employee with a satisfactory job performance record over the past twelve months. The course(s) that you request tuition assistance for must be directly related to your current position or directly enhance your knowledge, skills and abilities relating to your official duties. The educational facility must be accredited and listed in the database of Accredited Post-Secondary Institutions and Programs.

You may apply for education assistance by obtaining a form BCC-208a, Application for Reimbursement of Education Expense, from your supervisor or Director. After you have completed the form, submit it to your Director for consideration. Your Director must indicate his/her concurrence before submitting to the Human Resources Director for approval. A denial by the Human Resources Director may be appealed to the County Manager, whose decision shall be final. To assure eligibility for reimbursement your approval should be obtained prior to the first day of class.

Within 90 days following completion of your approved course work, submit a copy of your official notice of grades and the original tuition receipt to the Office of Human Resources. Be sure to keep a copy for your records.

Reimbursement will be made in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Reimbursement</u>
A	100%
B	90%
C	75%
D or below	None

When used in lieu of letter grade:

Pass	100%
Fail	None

Maximum reimbursement is \$3,000.00 per fiscal year.

Should you terminate your employment within two years after completion of a course for which you have received tuition assistance, you must reimburse the County in an amount proportionate to the two year period of employment not completed, rounded to the nearest month.

Additional information about this program may be obtained by reviewing Brevard County Ordinance 09-29, policy BCC-08 - Education Assistance Program and Licensing Fee Reimbursement/Payment Program and Administrative Order-08 - Education Assistance Program.

## **Reimbursement/Payment of Licensing Fees**

To be eligible for reimbursement/payment, the license must be a prerequisite by the State of Florida for you to maintain your professional, skilled craft or technical status to perform your job duties and responsibilities. If you are receiving a stipend or other pay specifically for having the license, you shall not be entitled to reimbursement/payment of the licensing fee.

To request reimbursement/payment, obtain form BCC-208b, Application for Reimbursement/Payment of Licensing Fee, from your supervisor or Director. Submit the completed form to your Director for his/her concurrence. He/she will submit to the Human Resources Director for approval. Denial by the Human Resources Director may be appealed to the County Manager, whose decision is final. The original receipt for payment, invoice or other appropriate document must be attached to the application. Be sure to keep a copy for your records.

If you terminate employment during the period for which the license is applicable you must reimburse the County in an amount proportionate to the period not meeting the guidelines for payment.

Additional information about this program may be obtained by reviewing Brevard County Ordinance 09-29, policy BCC-08 - Education Assistance Program and Licensing Fee Reimbursement/Payment Program and Administrative Order-08 Education Assistance Program.

If you occupy a position that requires a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) you may receive reimbursement for the cost of the license and any endorsements required for your position, less the amount the State currently charges for an Operator's License. The form to apply for reimbursement is available from your supervisor. The original receipt for payment must be attached to the application. Again you should keep a copy for your records. After your supervisor approves your application, he/she will forward it directly to Finance for payment.

## **Deferred Compensation**

The Deferred Compensation Plan is an income tax-deferred supplemental retirement program authorized under Internal Revenue Code Section 457. It allows you to contribute a portion of your salary before federal income taxes to a retirement account of your choice. Fixed return, variable return and insurance options are all available.

The Board of County Commissioners' Deferred Compensation Plan is sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo) and administered for us by Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS). Additional information is provided in pamphlets available from the Office of Human Resources. You may contact NRS to discuss your personal needs by calling 1-877-677-3678. A licensed investment counselor will return your call.

## **Direct Deposit**

All employees are requested to establish at least one Direct Deposit account, and can have up to four (4) accounts. Your pay is electronically deposited in your checking and/or savings accounts at the financial institution(s) of your choice. To change your direct deposit account, you may obtain a form from the County's intranet (the BEACH) under Forms/Human Resources or from Human Resources at 633-2031. Those employees who do not set up direct deposit will receive payroll checks at home through the US mail.

## **Miscellaneous Benefits**

### ***FITNESS CENTERS***

Fitness Centers are available to employees at the Government Centers in Viera and Titusville. Contact the Human Resources Office at 655-2031 for current information. In addition, a variety of private fitness centers offer special rates if you mention that you are a Brevard County employee.

### ***TRAVEL EXPENSES***

Employees who must travel in their personal vehicles on County business will be reimbursed at the rate currently authorized by the Board of County Commissioners in Administrative Order 21 (AO-21). Additionally, employees who are required to travel for extended periods of time are eligible for per diem or meal allowances and reimbursement of lodging expenses. If you are authorized to travel on County business, please consult with your supervisor on the particulars of travel reimbursement.