

County of Zapata



Personnel

Policy Manual

Revised & Proposed to Commissioners' Court on September 23, 2013

ZAPATA COUNTY

POLICY ON EMPLOYMENT AT WILL

All employment with Zapata County shall be considered “at-will” employment.

No contract of employment shall exist between any individual and Zapata County for any duration, either specified or unspecified. Zapata County shall have the right to terminate the employment of any employee at any time for any reason not prohibited by law, or no reason, with or without notice, as determined by the needs of Zapata County. Zapata County shall also have the right to change any condition, benefit, policy, or privilege of employment at any time, with or without notice, not prohibited by law. Employees of Zapata County shall have the right to resign from their employment with the County at any time, with or without notice. If an employee abandons employment without notice, employee will be considered terminated after a 14 day period.

I. Introduction

Zapata County's governmental organization is established by the Constitution of the State of Texas and by State Statutes. Its operations are governed by state and federal law and by actions of the Commissioners' Court.

The Commissioners' Court consists of four County Commissioners, each elected by the voters of a Commissioner's precinct, and the County Judge, elected by all of the voters of the County. The Commissioners' Court is the primary policy-making body of the County.

County operations are conducted through departments each administered by an Elected Official or Appointed Department Head. As used herein, "Department Head" shall be construed to include Elected Officials where appropriate.

The policies herein are established by the Commissioners' Court of Zapata County and replace all previously approved policies. They are applicable in their entirety to all departments under the direct authority of the Commissioners' Court. Further, these policies are applicable to all County employees has authority over the subject matter of any particular policy including, but not limited to, issues of pay, leave, employee benefits, and fiscal matters.

Certain of these personnel policies may be contingent upon available funds in each County department's budget in the general Zapata County Operating Budget, as well as any other funding sources.

Each reference in these policies to the County means the Zapata County, Texas, County Seat, Zapata, Texas 78076.

II. Statement of Personnel Policy

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with Zapata County and provide you with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and obligations of employment with the County. The policies contained herein have been prepared and adopted in order to promote consistent, equitable, and effective practices which will result in high quality public service by both employees and supervisors.

You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by Zapata County to benefit employees. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

It is impossible for any employee handbook to anticipate and address every policy circumstance or question that may arise. As Zapata County continues to grow, the need may arise to change practices described in the handbook. Zapata County therefore reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. These policies may be revised at any time, without notice to employees, or where legally necessary, with notice mandated by law.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES OF ZAPATA COUNTY

The policies and provisions contained in this manual do not constitute any type of employment agreement with Zapata County, but are intended only to articulate standards and guidelines for personnel administration.

A. Employment At-Will Statement

All employees of Zapata County are considered “at-will” employees and employee status shall not be considered a contract of employment or for any specified length of time. This means the employment relationship may be ended at the will of either the employer (Zapata County), or the employee. Also, employment may be terminated with or without cause, for any reason not prohibited by law and with or without notice at any time by the employer or the employee. Nothing in this manual or in any document or statement shall limit the right to terminate employment at-will. No Elected Official or Department Head has the authority to enter into an agreement for employment other than at-will employment.

B. Employee Relations

Zapata County believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers in this area and in this industry. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly with their Immediate Supervisors or Department Head.

Zapata County is committed to its employees and will respond appropriately to employee concerns.

C. Equal Opportunity Employment

I. Equal Opportunity

It shall be the policy of Zapata County to be an equal opportunity employer.

Thus, Zapata County is committed to providing equal employment opportunities without regard race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, or veteran’s status, as required by state and federal laws. The County’s commitment extends to all employment related decisions as well as to terms and conditions of employment. In addition to the foregoing, no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or belief be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be subject to discrimination under, or be denied employment in the administration of or in connection with, any program or activity of Zapata County regardless of funding source. This policy is not to be construed to prohibit the County from establishing bona fide occupational qualifications (BFOQ) that relate to abilities required to perform a job under circumstances permitted by law.

Any employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisors or the Personnel Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

II. Accommodations

Zapata County is committed to equal employment opportunities and shall make reasonable accommodation for otherwise qualified disabled individuals to afford them the same opportunities for employment and all other benefits and privileges of employment afforded to non-disabled individuals, unless doing so would result in an undue hardship for, or pose a direct threat to, Zapata County. All Zapata County employees are expected to be able to perform their job duties as required by their job description. Reasonable accommodation shall be determined through consultation with the disabled individual and, where deemed necessary, through consultation with outside resources as necessary.

D. Immigration Law Compliance

I. Objective

Zapata County is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States. Zapata County does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin and is responsible for verifying the identity and work authorization or eligibility of all individuals, whether United States citizens or not, hired after November 6, 1986. This policy clarifies the process as directed by the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (“IRCA”), through the Department of Homeland Security (formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service).

II. Scope of Policy

All employees of Zapata County hired after November 6, 1986, for employment in the United States, regardless of citizenship or national origin, as a condition of employment, must complete and have on file with Human Resources, an I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification).

III. Procedures

A. Definitions

Employee is any individual compensated for services or labor by an employer, whether by payment in the form of wages or other remuneration (such as goods or services).

B. Completion of the I-9 Form

The employee must complete and sign the form upon the date of hire. Zapata County’s Personnel Director will list the documents produced to verify the identity and employment eligibility. The same representative will sign, date, and provide all requested information in the Certification portion.

C. Updating and Re-verification

Zapata County's Personnel Director will re-verify employment eligibility when an employee's authorization or evidence of employment authorization has expired. The re-verification must be completed no later than the date that the authorization expires.

D. Responsibility

Elected and appointed officials, department heads, and any other representative of the County are not permitted under the law to contract for the labor of an individual who is not authorized for employment. Any person who "knowingly continues to employ" unauthorized workers may be subject to civil and criminal penalties.

E. Discrimination

Elected and appointed officials, department heads, and any other employee of Zapata County shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of national origin with regards to hiring, discharging, recruitment, assignment, compensation, or other terms and conditions of employment.

E. Outside Employment

An employee may hold a job with another organization as long as he or she satisfactorily complies with his or her job responsibilities with Zapata County and it is not considered a conflict of interest as described in our "Conflict of Interest" Policy. Employees shall notify their immediate supervisors of any outside employment with three (3) calendar days of being hired by the other entity, whether public or private.

Employees should consider the impact that this outside employment may have on their health and physical endurance. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to Zapata County's scheduling demand, regardless of any existing outside work requirement.

If Zapata County determines that an employee's outside work interferes with the performance or the ability to meet the requirements of Zapata County as they are modified from time to time, employees may be asked to terminate the outside employment if they wish to remain employed by Zapata County. Outside employment may present a conflict of interest if it has an actual or potential adverse impact on Zapata County.

F. Conflict of Interest

Employees of Zapata County have an obligation to conduct County business within the guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes the framework within which Zapata County operate.

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

Employees involved in conflict of interest shall include but not be limited to:

- a. Soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept a financial benefit, gift, or favor, other than from the County, that might reasonably tend to influence the employee's performance of duties for the County or that the employee knows or should know is offered with the intent to influence the employee's performance;
- b. Accepting employment, compensation, gifts, or favors that might reasonably tend to induce the employee to disclose confidential information acquired in the performance of official duties;
- c. Accepting outside employment, compensation, gifts, or favors that might reasonably tend to impair independence of judgment in performance of duties for the County;
- d. Making any personal investment that might reasonably be expected to create a substantial conflict between the employee's private interest and his or her duties for the County;
- e. Soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept a financial benefit from another person in exchange for having performed duties as a County employee in favor of that person.

III. EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

A. General

Zapata County is operated under the administration of the County Commissioners Court, which is made up of the County Judge and four Commissioners. Its main objective is to oversee the management and functions of the County, to adopt policies, and to set rules and regulations that should be carried out by the County Department heads. The Court also oversees that all departments maintain a balanced budget. It also recommends that all job openings or positions that become available through the departments be published in a local newspaper to give equal opportunity to all qualified persons to apply. Personnel files and official leave records are maintained through the office of the Personnel Director. Appointed Department Heads are responsible for hiring their own employees with Commissioners Court approval of salary to be paid to employee.

It is the intent of Zapata County to clarify the definitions of employment classification so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time, and the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time is retained by both the employee and Zapata County.

B. Categories

Regular Full-Time- are employees who are regularly scheduled to work a 40 hour work week schedule. Generally, they are eligible for Zapata County's benefit package, subject to the terms and conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

Regular Part-Time- are employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week. Regular part-time employees are eligible for some benefits sponsored by Zapata County, subject to

the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

Temporary-employees- are those who are hired as interim replacement, to temporarily supplement the workforce, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond the initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of change. While temporary employees receive all legally-mandated benefits (worker's compensation, insurance and social security), they are ineligible for all of Zapata County's other benefit programs.

C. Applications

All persons desiring to be employed by Zapata County should request and complete an application with the Personnel Director.

Zapata County relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as, the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions may result in Zapata County's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

D. Employment Reference Checks

To ensure that individuals who join Zapata County are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is recommended that the Department Heads check the employment references of all final applicants.

E. Personnel Data Changes

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify Zapata County Personnel Office of any changes in personnel data.

Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times.

F. Application Process

Each elected or appointed official, or his/her designee, shall be responsible for selecting the applicant who he/she feels best meets the qualifications for an open position in his/her department.

Reasons for which an applicant shall be disqualified for consideration for employment shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1) The applicant does not meet the minimum qualifications necessary to perform the duties of the position for which he/she is applying;

- 2) The applicant has made a false statement on the application form or any other document related to or which has a bearing on the selection process;
- 3) The applicant has committed or attempted to commit a fraudulent act at any stage of the application process; or
- 4) The applicant is not legally permitted to hold the position.

G. Access to Personnel Files

Zapata County Personnel Department maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's address, date of birth, dependent information, insurance documents, W-4, and salary increases.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact the Personnel Director or Department Head. Employees may review their own personnel files in Zapata County's Personnel Office or their Department Head's office.

Department Heads may maintain a personnel file and it may include the employee's job application, resume, and records of training.

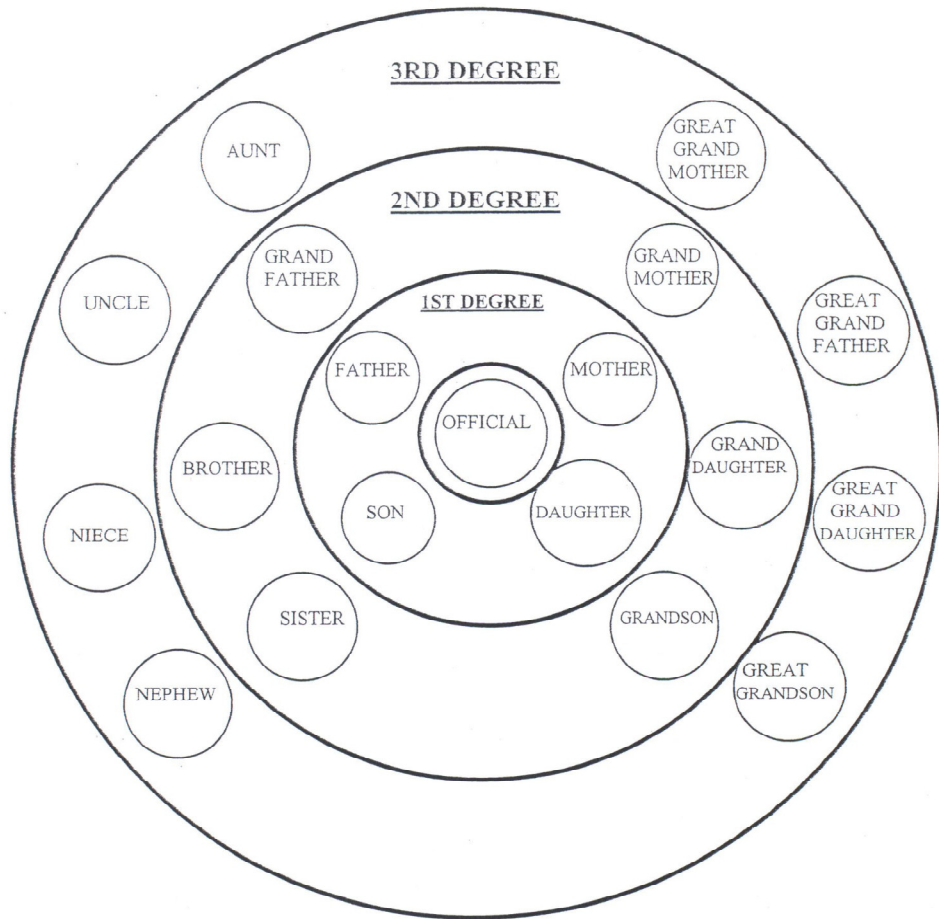
Most information in an employee's personnel file is open to the public unless disclosure of specific items is prohibited or not mandated by law.

H. Hiring of Relatives (Nepotism)

In accordance with the Texas Nepotism Statutes, an Elected or Appointed Official of Zapata County shall not hire a relative related in the third degree of consanguinity (blood) or the second degree of affinity (marriage) to work in a department which he or she supervises.

The civil law method, as approved by the Texas Legislature in 1991 to be effective in August of that year, shall be used for determining degree of relationship. (See the charts that follow).

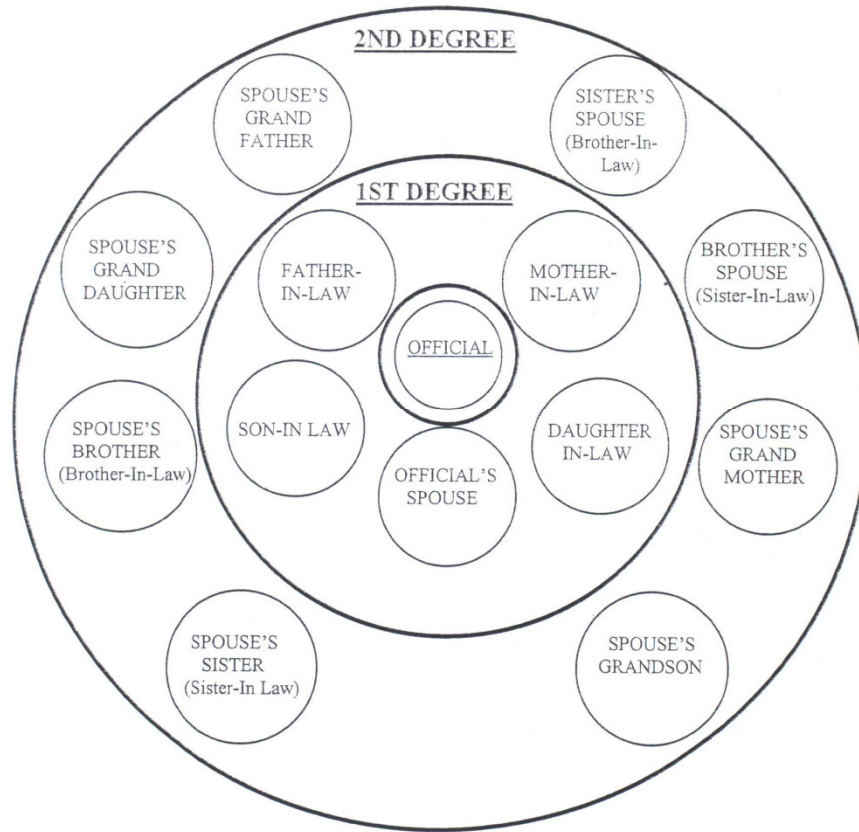
Relatives of persons currently employed by Zapata County may be hired only if they will not be working directly for or supervising a relative. Zapata County employees cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship.



Consanguinity Kinship Chart
(Blood)

**TEXAS NEPOTISM CHART
CIVIL LAW METHOD**

Recommended Change for Zapata County



Affinity Kinship Chart
(Marriage)

**TEXAS NEPOTISM CHART
CIVIL LAW METHOD**

Recommended Change for Zapata County

I. Introductory Period

The first sixty (60) days is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Zapata County uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or Zapata County may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, with or without cause or advance notice.

All employees enter the “regular” employment classification.

During the first sixty (60) days, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law, such as workers’ compensation insurance, and social security. They may also be eligible for other Zapata County provided benefits, subject to the terms and conditions of each program. Employees should read the information for each specific benefits program for the details on eligibility requirements.

IV. WAGES, HOURS AND RECORDKEEPING

A. Policy on Work Schedule and Work Week

The normal hours of work for most positions in the County shall be from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with one hour for lunch, for a total of 40 hours per work week. Law Enforcement Personnel, EMS, and Fire Personnel shall work different schedules in accordance with the needs of their respective departments. Other departments may require their employees to work in varying schedules depending upon the needs of those departments.

All employees shall be expected to report punctually at the start of their work schedule.

Breaks are regulated by each Department Head.

In order to meet the needs of the County, certain departments or employees may be required to work a schedule that varies from the normal work schedule, or they may be subject to call back in case of emergency or special need.

Offices may remain open during the noon hour, and lunch periods may be staggered according to the requirements of the office and the decisions of the Department Head.

The workday for the County shall begin at 12:01 a.m. each day and end 24 consecutive hours later.

For purposes of recordkeeping and to determine overtime in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the workweek for Zapata County shall begin at 12:01 a.m. on each Monday and end seven (7) consecutive work days later (168 hours).

B. Pay Days

All employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis, every other Friday.

Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off (holiday), employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday. Employees may have direct deposit if they provide advance written authorization to Zapata County.

C. Policy on Hours Worked and Overtime

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

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

Overtime shall include all time actually worked for the County in excess of 40 hours in any workweek. For Law Enforcement, EMS, and Fire Personnel shall work designated schedules.

Paid leave shall not be counted in determining if overtime has been worked in any workweek.

Except in emergency situations, an employee shall be required to have authorization from his/her supervisor before working and/or earning overtime or compensatory time.

D. Policy on Overtime Compensation

This policy shall apply to all County employees eligible for overtime compensation under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) except for law enforcement employees, EMS, and Fire Personnel.

Overtime for law enforcement, EMS, and Fire Personnel employees shall be handled in accordance with the policy for overtime compensation.

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

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

The maximum amount of unused compensatory time an employee shall be allowed to accrue at is 240 hours. Law Enforcement, EMT and Fire personnel may accrue a maximum of 480 hours.

When an employee has reached the maximum accrual of compensatory time, any additional overtime worked shall be compensated at a rate of one and one-half (1 ½) the employee's regular rate of pay until compensatory time has been used to bring the balance below the maximum.

Employees shall be allowed to use earned compensatory time within a reasonable period after it is requested provided that the employee's absence will not place an undue hardship on the operations of the department in which the employee works.

The FLSA does not prohibit the County from compelling the use of accrued compensatory time. As such, the County shall have the right to require employees to use earned compensatory time at the convenience of the County. All Elected Officials and Department Heads should require that their employees use all accrued compensatory time within the fiscal year.

Compensatory time shall be recorded bi-weekly at the Treasurer's office to be given credit. Upon termination of employment, an employee shall be paid for all unused FLSA compensatory time at the rate of compensation not less than the average regular rate received by the employee during the last three years of employment or the employee's final rate, whichever is higher.

Any employee who works overtime without advance authorization may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

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

The County shall retain the right to "buy back" all or part of an employee's unused compensatory time by paying the employee for that time at the employee's current regular rate.

The County shall retain the right to pay all or part of the overtime worked in any workweek by paying for that overtime at one and one-half (1 ½) the employee's regular rate of pay.

Each Supervisor or Department Head shall be responsible for recording any compensatory time used within a pay period on the time sheet for that pay period.

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

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

E. Timekeeping

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every employee.

Federal and State laws require Zapata County to keep accurate record of time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties. Hourly employees are required to punch in a time card for proper documentation of the time they begin and end their work, as well as, the beginning and ending time of each meal period. Overtime must always be approved before it is performed.

Non-exempt employees are required to keep record of the time they use in the form of sick and annual leave. Non-exempt employees should report to work no more than 15 minutes prior to their scheduled starting time nor stay more than 15 minutes after their scheduled stop time without expressed, prior authorized from their supervisor. If corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes by initialing the time record.

Altering and falsifying, tampering with time records or recording time on another employee's time record (punching a card for another employee), may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

F. Administrative Pay Corrections

Zapata County takes all reasonable steps to assure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday. In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employees should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of Zapata County Payroll Department so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

In the event Zapata County finds an error in calculations or deductions, the employee will be notified and the correction will be made on the next paycheck.

G. Pay Deductions

The law requires that Zapata County make certain deductions from every employee's compensation, including, but not necessarily limited to, applicable federal income tax, Social Security and Medicare taxes on each employee's earnings up to a limit that is called Social Security "wage base". Zapata County matches the amount of Social Security tax paid by each employee.

Zapata County offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. Eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their pay checks to cover the costs of participation in these programs. If you have any questions concerning why deductions were made from your pay check or how they were calculated, your supervisor can assist in having your questions answered.

H. Emergency Closing

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, and power failures can disrupt County operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility. When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be paid. Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances employees who work will receive regular pay, plus comp time at 1 ½ times their regular rate.

I. Policy on Retirement

All regular full time and part time employees shall be eligible for the retirement benefit through the Texas County and District Retirement System. Temporary employees are not eligible for retirement benefits.

Eligible employees shall make contributions to the retirement program through a system of payroll deduction.

Zapata County shall make a contribution to each eligible employees retirement account equal to the contribution of the employee.

Information on the retirement program may be obtained at the Personnel Office during the normal working hours for that office.

Retired employees shall be eligible to apply for open positions with Zapata County as long as the following conditions are met:

- a. The retiree has been retired for at one calendar year.
- b. No prior arrangement or agreement was made between Zapata County and the retiree for re-employment.

Any retiree who is rehired consistent with this policy will establish a new membership TCDRS and will be considered a new member for the purpose of beneficiary determination and benefit selections.

V. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT, DISCIPLINE AND WORK RULES

A. Conduct

To assure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, Zapata County expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are intended as examples of infraction of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In accordance, the employee must follow a Chain of Command. The Chain of Command should be as follows: Immediate Supervisor, Department Head/Appointed Official, and Commissioners' Court.

1. Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
2. Falsification of timekeeping records.
3. Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment.
4. Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
5. Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned equipment.
6. Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
7. Violation of safety or health rules.
8. Sexual or other unlawful harassment.
9. Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice.
10. Possession of firearms or explosives in the workplace.
11. Unauthorized absence or leave from workstation during the workday.
12. Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, computers, cell phones, or other employer owned equipment.
13. Violation of personnel policies, rules and regulations.
14. Unauthorized use or disclosure of official information.
15. Unauthorized or improper use of official authority.
16. Unsatisfactory performances or conduct.
17. Excessive tardiness without a legitimate excuse.
18. Unsubstantiated rumors/gossip that will disrupt the efficiency of the office.
19. Failure to fulfill duties or responsibilities.

Employment with Zapata County is at will with the County and the employee, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

B. Attendance and Punctuality

The standard work week consists of 40 hours and of five standard working days. To maintain a safe and productive work environment, Zapata County expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on Zapata County. In rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work a schedule they should notify their supervisors as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence. Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

C. Social Media

This policy applies to all County employees.

Zapata County understands that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, we have established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

For the purposes of this policy, *social media* includes, but not limited to online forums, blogs, and social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, MySpace, Instagram, etc. *Social Media* also includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with the County, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow colleagues or otherwise adversely affects the people who work on behalf of the County or the County's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Know and Follow the Rules

Carefully read these guidelines and the County's policies (especially those dealing with discrimination and harassment), and ensure your postings do not violate any policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Be Respectful

Always be fair and courteous to your colleagues and any others who work on behalf of the County. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers than by posting complaints to a social media outlet.

Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage colleagues or people performing business for the County, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law or the County's policy.

Be Honest and Accurate

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous post you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about the County, County employees, or people working on behalf of the County.

Post Only Appropriate and Respectful Content

Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as spokesperson for the County. If the County is subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee and make it clear that your views do not represent those of the County, other County employees, or people working on behalf of the County. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects associated with the County, make it clear that you not speaking for the County. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Zapata County."

Do not share confidential information via social media.

Using Social Media at Work

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment provided by the County, unless it is work-related as authorized by your supervisor. Do not use County email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use. The County monitors its computers to ensure compliance with this restriction.

Retaliation is Prohibited

The County prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

For Additional Information

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact the Personnel Department.

Zapata County recognizes the importance of social media for its employees. However, use of social media by employees become a problem if it interferes with the employee's work, is used to harass supervisors, co-workers, customers or vendors, creates a hostile environment, or harms the goodwill and reputation of Zapata County among the community at large. Zapata County encourages to use social

media within the parameters of the following guidelines and in a way that not produce the adverse consequences mentioned above.

- If your posts on social media mention Zapata County make clear that you are an employee of Zapata County and that the views posted are yours alone and do not represent the views of Zapata County.
- Do not mention Zapata County supervisors, employees, customers or vendors without their express consent.
- Do not pick fights. If you see a misrepresentation about Zapata County, respond respectfully with factual information, not inflammatory comments.
- Remember, you are responsible for what you write or present on social media. You can be sued by other employees, supervisors, customers or vendors, and any individual that views your social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. Employees can be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for what they post on social media platforms, even if the employee did not use a county computer or if the post did not occur during work hours or on county property.
- Employees may not use Zapata County computer equipment for non-work related activities without written permission. Social media activities should not interfere with your duties at work. Zapata County monitors its computers to ensure compliance with this restriction.
- You must comply with copyright laws, and cite or reference sources accurately.
- Do not link Zapata County policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to illegal harassment and code of conduct.
- Any confidential information that you obtained through your position at Zapata County must be kept confidential and should not be discussed through in social media forum.
- Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to including the immediate termination of employment.
- Employees may not post photographs that are taken on Zapata County property and/or in uniform, including trainings, activities, or work assignments.

D. Policy on Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited by Zapata County and shall not be tolerated. It shall be the policy of Zapata County to provide a work place free from sexual harassment for all employees and to take active steps to eliminate any sexual harassment of which the County becomes aware.

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

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which includes slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, touching, pictures, emails or cartoons when:

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

All claims of sexual harassment shall be taken seriously and investigated promptly, thoroughly and in a fair, unbiased manner.

While all claims of sexual harassment shall be handled with discretion, there can be no complete assurance of full confidentiality. During an investigation, witnesses may be needed and a full investigation may be necessary.

No retaliation or other adverse action shall be taken against an employee who, in good faith, files a claim of sexual harassment or those employees who cooperate in the investigation of a complaint.

Employees who feel they have been sexually harassed should immediately report the situation to his or her immediate supervisor or the Elected/Appointed Official who is responsible for the department for which they work.

Alternatively, the employee may report the alleged acts of harassment to the Personnel Director if the employee's allegations are against his/her immediate supervisor or the Elected/Appointed Official who is responsible for the department for which they work.

The Elected/Appointed Official or Department Head to whom a claim has been reported shall be responsible for seeing that prompt action is taken to investigate the claim.

Immediate steps shall be taken to ensure that the victim is not exposed to further harassment.

- 1.) Employees who feel they have been the victim of sexual harassment should record the time, place and specifics of each incident, including any witnesses. Reports of prohibited conduct should be made as soon as possible as a failure to report promptly may inhibit the County's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.
- 2.) Report continuing harassment to the Elected/Appointed Official who is responsible for your department or to the Personnel Director.
- 3.) If a thorough investigation reveals that unlawful harassment has occurred, Zapata County will take effective remedial action in accordance with the circumstances to protect the victim in the long term and shall impose appropriate disciplinary action against the perpetrator up to and termination.

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

E. Policy on Grievances

Any employee having a grievance related to his/her job should discuss the grievance with his/her immediate supervisor in an attempt to resolve the grievance. No grievance hearing shall be held unless the employee first attempts a resolution through the informal process of meeting with her/her immediate supervisor.

If the discussion with the immediate supervisor does not resolve the grievance, and, if the immediate supervisor is not the elected official with final responsibility for the employee's department, the employee shall have the right to have his or her grievance addressed by the following procedure:

- a. All Elected Officials have the final decision for grievance in their departments. Employees who work for Elected Officials should take all grievances to that official for Resolution. The decision of the Elected Official shall be final in all grievances within the Elected Officials office.
- b. If an employee does not work for an Elected Official they must file a written form to their department head or supervisor no later than 10 calendar days after the employee knew or should have known with reasonable diligence of the decision or action giving rise to the grievance.
- c. The department head or supervisor will arrange a hearing with Commissioners' Court, with the employee present, discuss the issue and decide what steps to take.
- d. Employees shall not be subject to reprisal for using the grievance procedure.

Grievance means a complaint from an employee or employee organization that the County has violated, misinterpreted, or inequitably applied an existing law, resolution, policy rule or regulation as it applies the employees' employment. A disagreement over non-existing law, resolution, policy, rule or regulation is not a "grievance".

No part of this grievance procedure is intended to create contract rights, any expectation of continued employment, nor does it in any way alter the "at-will" status of all County employees.

F. Policy on Discipline

DISCIPLINE

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

TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

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

REASONS

3. Examples of reasons for administering discipline shall include, but **not be limited to:**

theft; falsification of timekeeping records; possession, distribution, sale transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs; use of violence; improper use of employer-owned property or equipment; insubordination; violence of safety rules; sexual or unlawful harassment; possession of firearms (except law enforcement personnel who carry firearms as part of the duties); absenteeism or leave without notice; unauthorized leave of workplace; unauthorized use of telephones and mail systems; violation of personnel policies and regulations; improper use of official authority and unsatisfactory performance of conduct.

AT WILL EMPLOYMENT

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

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

VI. EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION

A. Separation

Separation of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment separation occur:

1. Resignation- employment separation initiated by an employee who chooses to leave the organization voluntarily.
2. Dismissal- employment separation initiated by the organization.
3. Reduction in force- employment separation due to lack of work or funds.
4. Elimination of position- employment separation due to changes in duties or reorganization.
5. Retirement- voluntary retirement from active employment initiated by the employee. *An employee cannot return to work with the County for one year after having withdrawn their retirement fund for personal reasons.*

Since employment with Zapata County is based on at-will, both the employee and Zapata County have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause, at any time. Employees will receive their final pay in accordance with applicable policy regulations.

B. Return of Property

Employees are responsible for all property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. All Zapata County property must be returned by employees on or before their last day of work.

VII. EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

Equipment and vehicles are essential in accomplishing job duties, are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using County property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines. All County vehicles are to be used strictly for work purposes only and shall not be used for personal errands and shall be operated only by County personnel authorized to do so.

All employees operating and using County vehicles are required by law to have a valid driver's license in order to use such equipment. It will be the Department Head's responsibility to make sure all employees using County vehicles under their department have a valid driver's license and have a clean driving record, and appropriate insurance coverage.

Employees are to notify supervisor if any equipment, machines, tools or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective or in need of repair. The improper, careless, negligent, destructive or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

VIII. ZAPATA COUNTY DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Application

This policy applies to all employees of Zapata County, regardless of rank or position, except for employees in positions that require a Commercial Drivers' License (CDL) to operate vehicles used in their jobs or other employees whose job description (such as other safety sensitive positions) imposes Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) guidelines. Employees in positions requiring a CDL or employees whose job description imposes (DOT) guidelines, are subject to the Federal Department of Transportation drug and alcohol regulations pertaining to employees in such positions. These requirements are addressed in a separate policy that only applies to those employees.

All County employees will be given a copy of this policy along with a statement to be signed showing that they have received the policy and that they understand that adherence to the policy is a condition of continued employment.

Although adherence to this policy is considered a condition of continued employment, nothing in this policy alters an employee's status and does not constitute, nor should be deemed as, a contract or promise of employment. Employees are free to resign their position at any time and the County may terminate any employee at any time for any legal reason or no reason, either with or without notice. The County also retains the right to change any terms, conditions, or requirements of this policy at any time. Employees will be held responsible for the information in this handbook, including changes and revisions.

Intent

As part of Zapata County's commitment to safeguarding the health of employees, providing a safe place for employees to work, and supplying our citizens with the highest quality products and service possible, we are issuing this policy outlining our position on the use or abuse of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances by employees. Because substance abuse at work or away from work can seriously endanger the safety of employees and render it impossible to supply top-quality service, Zapata County is also establishing a program under this policy to detect and remove from the workplace abusers of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances. Zapata County is committed to preventing the use and/or presence of these substances in the workplace.

The intent of this policy is to:

- Provide clear guidelines and consistent procedures for handling incidents of employees' use of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances that affect job performance and make every effort to institute and maintain a drug-free workplace;
- Ensure that employees conform to all state and federal regulations regarding alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances;

- Provide substance abuse prevention education for all employees; supervisory training regarding problem recognition; and training for all supervisors on the implementation of this policy; and
- Provide information to employees on available resources for the treatment of drug and alcohol abuse problems.

Policy

Zapata County takes a Zero Tolerance Position in regard to drugs and alcohol in the workplace. Violations of this policy will subject an employee to immediate termination. Except as noted elsewhere in this policy, violations of the Zapata County Drug and Alcohol Policy shall include, but not be limited to:

- Working or reporting for work, conducting county business, or being on County property, or in a county owned, leased, rented, or borrowed vehicles while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Possessing and/or using alcohol or illegal drugs while considered to be on duty for the County or while representing the County in any way;
- Manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, selling, purchasing, or using a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia while on County premises;
- Refusing to submit to a search as outlined in the provisions of this policy;
- Refusing to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test as outlined in the provisions of this policy; or
- Failing to provide an adequate breath or urine sample for testing without a valid medical explanation, or engaging in any conduct that clearly obstructs any testing procedure, when directed to be tested in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

Employees involved in vehicle accidents where there is physical damage to one or more vehicles, or in any accident where an injury requires treatment beyond general first aid, shall be required to be tested for drugs and alcohol. If an elected official or supervisor has reasonable suspicion that any employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the employee will be required to take a drug and/or alcohol test. All new employees hired by Zapata County will be required to take a pre-employment drug and alcohol test. In addition all County employees who must maintain a CDL will be subject to random testing for drugs and alcohol.

All test results for drug and alcohol shall be submitted to the Zapata County Personnel Director. Any information concerning the results of a drug or alcohol test will be communicated solely on a need to know basis and anyone who divulges test information for any other reason shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

All results of drug and alcohol testing shall be kept in a locked cabinet and will not be placed in the employees personnel file. Such confidentiality does not prevent the County from using drug and alcohol testing results for a lawful purpose, including but not limited to terminating the employment of those persons in violation of these policies.

Prescription Medications

An employee taking prescription medication under the direction of a physician must advise his or her supervisor in writing of any adverse effects the medication could have on the employee's ability to perform the essential duties of his or her job in a safe manner. Any prescription medications brought to the workplace must be kept in the original container.

Any medical information received by the County, including information on prescription medications, is considered to be confidential information and is to be communicated only on a need to know basis. Any employee who breached this confidentiality shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Searches

Non-investigatory searches in the workplace include accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the County reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The County may search the employee, the employee's personal items, work areas, lockers, and private vehicles parked on County premises or worksites or used in County business.

The County retains the right to contact appropriate law enforcement officials to conduct a search of any County property.

Reasonable Suspicion Training

Before an official, department head, manager, or supervisor of the County shall be considered qualified to determine if there is reasonable suspicion of alcohol or drug use, he or she will be required to take one hour each of training to determine reasonable suspicion of alcohol and drug use.

Employee Training

The County, as part of its drug free workplace program, will provide all employees with training and other information on the adverse effects of drug and alcohol abuse.

Voluntary Referral

Employees having problems with drugs or alcohol are encouraged to seek treatment from qualified professionals. Employees, who notify the County of drug or alcohol or drug problem, prior to being tested positive, will not be terminated if they enter a counseling, rehabilitation, or other assistance program. The County will also provide the employee with information on services available within the community if the employee has not found a program.

Appointments for treatment will be treated in the same manner as other personal business or health matters with regard to use of any accrued leave. Sick leave, vacation, or compensatory time may be taken as needed provided appropriate notification is given to the supervisor to allow for workflow to be managed effectively.

Self referral does not relieve the employee from any other obligations under this policy. Employees who violate any part of this policy will be subject to the same discipline as that applied to any employee who has not self referred for treatment.

Cooperation With Law Enforcement Agencies

The sale, use, purchase, transfer, or possession of an illegal drug or drug paraphernalia is a violation of both state and federal law. The County will report information concerning possession, distribution, or use of any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia to the appropriate law enforcement agency and turn over to law enforcement custody any such items found in searches. In addition, the County will cooperate fully in any follow up investigations.

Severability

Each part of this policy is intended to stand independently. In any part of this policy becomes invalid or unenforceable as the result of local, state, federal law, or other authority, it shall not affect the application and enforcement of the other provisions of this policy.

IX. TRAVEL AND PER DIEM

A. Travel

All travel outside the County of Zapata must be submitted in writing in the form of a travel voucher to the department head or supervisor, who will in turn have it approved by the County Auditor for payment. Then it will be submitted to Commissioners' Court at the monthly meeting for approval of expenditure. All employees requesting travel must be on official County business; attending a school or seminar; attending a meeting which directly involves Zapata County; attending any other event that deals directly with County operations. Appointed Officials shall be allowed two conferences/trainings/seminars per fiscal year. All other requests shall be granted only with Commissioners' Court approval.

Abuse of the travel and per diem policy, including falsifying expense reports, travel arrangements, reimbursements for specific expenses, or any other business issue, can be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Mileage shall not be paid to employees already claiming car or travel allowance paid on a monthly basis. Exceptions to this shall only apply when ordered on official County business to points exceeding 50 miles from the County seat. County employees and officials who use their privately owned vehicles for out of County travel shall be paid mileage at a set fee approved by Commissioners' Court.

B. Per Diem

Per Diem rates will be paid accordingly, as approved by the Zapata County Judge and Zapata County Commissioners' Court. (see Addendum B, Zapata County Travel Claim Voucher, pg. 46).

C. Lodging

Lodging rates will be paid accordingly, as approved by the Zapata County Judge and Zapata County Commissioners' Court. (see Addendum B, Zapata County Travel Claim Voucher, pg. 46).

X. EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT SAFE HAVOR

Employees are paid in accordance with work performed, state and federal guidelines, and the budget approved by the Commissioners' Court.

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

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

Non-exempt employees, unless authorized by your supervisor, should not work any hours that are not authorized. Do not start work early, finish work late, work during a meal period, or perform any other extra or overtime work unless you are authorized to do so. Time worked is to be recorded on your time card. Employees are prohibited from performing any "off-the-clock" work. "Off-the-clock" work means work you may perform but fail to report on your time card. Any employee who fails to report or inaccurately reports any hours worked will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

It is a violation of Zapata County policy for any employee to falsify a time card, or to alter another employee's time card. It is also a serious violation of County policy for any employee, supervisor or official to instruct another employee to incorrectly or falsely report hours worked, or to alter another employee's time card to under- or over-report hours worked. If anyone instructs you to (1) incorrectly or falsely under- or over-report your hours worked, or (2) alter another employee's time records to inaccurately or falsely report that employee's hours worked, you should report it immediately to the Zapata County Personnel Office located at the Zapata County Courthouse, 200 East 7th Avenue, Suite 154, Zapata, Texas 78076 or call to 956-765-9955.

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

For exempt employees, your salary may also be reduced for certain types of deductions such as your portion of health, dental or life premiums; state, federal or local taxes, social security, retirement; or, voluntary contributions to a deferred compensation plan. In any workweek in which you performed any work, your wages may be reduced for any of the following reasons: 1) absence from work for one or

more full days for personal reasons; 2) full day for violating safety rules of a major significance; 3) to offset amounts received as payment for jury and witness fees or military pay; 4) the first or last week of employment in the event you work less than a full week.

If you are an exempt employee, in any workweek in which you performed any work, your salary will not be reduced for any of the following reasons: 1) partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability; or 2) your absence because the facility is closed on a scheduled work day; or 3) your absence because of the County's operating requirements ; or 4) absences for jury duty, attendance as a witness, or military leave in any week in which you have performed any work; or 5) any other deductions prohibited by state or federal law.

If you have questions about deductions from your pay, please immediately contact your supervisor. If you believe you have been subject to any improper deductions or your pay does not accurately reflect your hours worked, you should immediately report the matter to the Zapata County Personnel Office located at the Zapata Courthouse, 200 East 7th Avenue, Suite 154, Zapata, Texas 78076 or call 956-765-9955. If you are unsure of who to contact or if you have not received a satisfactory response within five business days after reporting the incident, please immediately contact the County Attorney's Office located at the Zapata County Courthouse, 200 East 7th Avenue, Suite 305, Zapata, Texas 78076. Every report will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate, up to and including discharge for any employee(s) who violates this policy. In addition, the County will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report alleged violations of this policy or who cooperate in the County's investigation of such reports. Retaliation is unacceptable, and any form of retaliation in violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Eligible employees at Zapata County are provided with benefits that include a number of programs such as social security, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, health insurance and retirement, which covers all employees in the manner prescribed by law. Benefit eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors including employee classifications.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Family and Medical Leave
- Holidays
- Health Insurance & Cobra
- Jury Duty Leave
- Vacation Leave
- Sick Leave
- Military Leave
- Emergency Leave (Funeral Leave)

Some benefit programs require contributions from the employees, but most are paid by Zapata County.

A. Vacation Leave

ELIGIBILITY

1. All full-time regular employees shall be eligible for vacation benefits.
2. Regular Part-time employees shall be eligible for vacation benefits on a prorated basis and temporary employees shall not be eligible for vacation benefits.

ACCRUAL RATE

3. Employees who are eligible to receive vacation shall earn vacation at the rate of 3.10 hours per pay period, which is equivalent to 80 hours per year. Part-time employee benefits will be prorated based on their regularly scheduled hours.

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

**INITIAL ACCRUAL
AND WAITING
PERIOD**

5. Accrual of vacation shall begin at the time an employee begins work in a position eligible to accrue vacation, but an employee must work for a minimum of 12 months in such a position before being eligible to take any vacation.

**MAXIMUM
ACCRUAL**

7. The maximum amount of unused vacation an employee shall be allowed to have at one time is 160 hours. Employees who have accrual balances greater than 160 hours as of September 23, 2013, will have 6 months to bring their accrual balances to the maximum allowed. Any balances over 160 hours will be lost.

8. When an employee reaches the maximum accrual, he/she shall not be allowed to accrue additional vacation time until sufficient time has been used to bring the balance below the maximum allowed under this policy.

SCHEDULING

9. Scheduling of vacations shall be at the discretion of the individual department heads.

MINIMUM USAGE

10. The minimum amount of vacation that may be taken at one time shall be 1 hour.

BORROWING

11. Employees shall only be able to use vacation which has already been accrued and shall not be allowed to borrow vacation against possible future accruals.

PAY IN LIEU OF

12. Employees shall not be allowed to receive pay for **VACATION** vacation in lieu of taking time off.

HOLIDAY DURING

13. If a holiday falls during an employee's vacation, **VACATION** the holiday shall be charged in accordance with the **POLICY ON HOLIDAYS** and shall not be charged against the employee's vacation balance.

**PAY AT
SEPARATION**

14. If an employee has worked for at least 12 months in a position which accrues vacation at the time the employee resigns, is dismissed, reduction in force, elimination in position, retires, or separates from employment for any other reason, the employee shall receive pay for all unused vacation up to the maximum allowed under this policy.

15. An employee who has not worked for a minimum of 12 months in a position which accrues vacation shall not be eligible for any vacation pay upon termination of employment.

RECORD KEEPING

16. Each employee shall be responsible for accurately recording all vacation time used on his or her time sheet.

17. Each Elected Official, Appointed Official, or Department Head is responsible for ensuring accurate recording of employee's vacation time on signed time sheets. (see request for leave form, pg. 47)

B. Policy on Holidays

ELIGIBILITY

1. All full-time regular and part-time employees shall be eligible for the paid holiday benefit.

HOLIDAYS

2. The County holidays for the following calendar year shall be determined by the Zapata County Commissioners' Court at its first meeting of each September.

HOLIDAY DURING VACATION

3. If a paid holiday occurs during the vacation of an eligible employee, that day shall be paid as a holiday and not be charged against the employee's vacation balance.

HOLIDAY ON DAY OFF

4. If a designated holiday falls on an eligible employee's day off, the employee shall be allowed to take another day off with pay during the following 30 days.

5. An employee shall not be allowed to take a day off with pay prior to holiday in anticipation of working on the holiday.

EMERGENCIES

6. If an employee works on a recognized holiday, he/she will be paid for the day plus accumulate additional holiday time off at a rate of 1 ½ hours for every hour worked on the holiday (this holiday time should be kept separate from comp time). Any additional holiday time accrued under this provision must be taken within 30 days of the holiday worked. No carry over will be allowed after this date for any holiday time accruals; and all employees' balances will be reduced to zero. In the event of an employee separation, this holiday benefit will not be paid out at the employee's separation.

SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

7. Special consideration shall be given to employees requesting time off for religious or other special observances which are not designated as paid holidays for the County.

8. Determination of granted leave under Section 7 of this policy shall be made by the supervisor of the department in which the employee works, based on the needs of the department.

9. Vacation, compensatory time, or leave without pay may be used for leave granted under Section 7 of this policy.

C. Unpaid Leave

Leave without Pay

A department head with approval of the Commissioners Court may grant an employee a leave of absence without pay for any good reason upon a written request. This leave should not exceed three weeks. No sick or vacation time will accrue. All other benefits will remain the same. Employees are responsible for their payment on employee insurance premiums.

Extended Leave of Absence

Elected Officials being department heads may use options to continue employees leave of absence due to/and special circumstances. A replacement may be hired as a substitute with the Commissioners Court approval provided the budget allows this replacement. Employees are responsible for their payment on employee insurance premiums. This policy does not apply to Family and Medical Leave (FMLA).

D. Policy on Sick Leave

ELIGIBILITY

1. All regular full time and regular part time employees shall be eligible for the paid sick leave benefit.

ACCRUAL RATE

2. Eligible employees shall accrue sick leave at a rate of 3.10 hours per pay period. Part time employees shall accrue sick leave at a rate of 1.55 hours per pay period.

3. Accrual of sick leave shall start at the time an individual begins work for the County in position eligible for the sick leave benefit.

MAXIMUM ACCRUAL

4. The maximum amount of unused sick leave an employee shall be allowed to have at any time is 480 hours.

USE OF SICK LEAVE

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

- a. Illness or injury of the employee;
- b. Appointments with physicians, optometrists, dentists, and other qualified medical professionals; and
- c. To attend to the illness or injury of a member of the employee's immediate family.

6. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family shall be defined as a spouse, child, parent, or other relative living in the employee's home who is dependent on the employee for care.

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

NOTIFICATION

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

9. Where use of sick leave is not known in advance, an employee shall notify his/her supervisor of the intent to use sick leave within 1 hour of the employee's normal time to begin work, when practicable.

10. Where it is not practicable to notify the supervisor within 1 hour of the normal starting time, the employee should notify his/her supervisor as soon as is reasonably practicable.

11. If the employee feels that the situation will cause the employee to miss more than one day of work, the employee should notify his/her supervisor of the anticipated length of absence. The employee will be placed on FMLA, if event and employee is eligible.

DOCUMENTATION

12. If an employee uses three (3) or more consecutive days of sick leave, the supervisor may require a physician's statement or some other acceptable documentation of injury or illness. A Department Head may require doctor's certificate for any absence if abuse is suspected.

13. Documentation requirement Under Section 12 of this policy shall also apply in situations where the absence is for the care of a member of the immediate family.

14. Documentation of illness or injury shall be required for any sick leave used during two (2) weeks prior to resignation of employment with the County.

MINIMUM USAGE

15. The minimum amount of sick leave that an employ may use at any time shall be 1 hour.

BORROWING

16. Employees shall not be allowed to borrow sick leave against future accruals.

PAY AT SEPARATION

17. Employees shall not be paid for unused sick leave at separation of employment.

E. Emergency Leave (Funeral Leave)

In the event that an employee has to take time off due to death of an immediate family member, the employee should notify his or her supervisor immediately. Up to three (3) working days of paid emergency will be provided to eligible employees in the following classifications, regular full-time and regular part-time.

Any employee may, with the approval of a supervisor, use any available paid leave additional time off as necessary. Zapata County defines immediate family as the employee's spouse, children, parent, sister, brother, grandparents, great grandparents; the employee spouse's parents, children, brother, sister, grandparents or great grandparents. If leave needed beyond the limits set in this policy, it may be charged to available vacation or compensatory time or to leave without pay.

F. Policy on Jury Duty Leave

Regular full time and regular part time employees of Zapata County who are called for jury duty shall receive their regular pay for the period they are called for jury duty which includes both the jury selection process and, if selected, the time they actually serve on the jury. Employees who are subpoenaed or ordered to attend court to appear as a witness or testify in some official capacity on behalf of the County shall be entitled to leave with pay for such period as his/her court attendance may require. The employee should remain in contact with their supervisor and give the supervisor notice of when they will return to work.

Pay for serving on a jury shall only include the time the employee would have normally been scheduled to work and will not include extra pay if jury service involves time outside the employee's normal work schedule.

Any fees paid for jury service may be kept by the employee.

Zapata County employees are required to return to work if released from jury duty before 12 p.m. unless authorized by the department head. An elected Official may require the employee to provide proper documentation for the time served while on jury duty. If you are summoned to out-of-town jury duty, you will be granted the entire day with pay.

If an employee is absent from work to appear in private litigation in which he/she is a principal party, the time shall be charged to vacation, other eligible paid leave, or leave without pay. If an employee shall miss time due to county related litigation, then the employee will not be deducted any vacation time, or other eligible paid leave, and will be paid as if the employee was present at work.

G. Health Insurance Benefits Continuation (COBRA)

Zapata County offers a group insurance for all eligible employees, regular full-time and regular part-time. The County also pays part of premium for all eligible employees as part of their fringe benefits. It is not mandatory for all employees to be part of the group plan, but it is beneficial for the employees in the sense that the County is paying for part of their premium.

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives the employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under Zapata County's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee, an employee's divorce or legal separation, and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

If the employee was terminated for gross misconduct, he or she will not be eligible for COBRA.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at Zapata County's group current rates.

RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS

QUALIFICATIONS FOR RETIRING WITH HEALTH BENEFITS

1. Current employees must not be Medicare eligible at retirement to be eligible to receive medical benefits from Zapata County, dependents are not covered under retiree health benefits; and
2. Current employees must be enrolled in Zapata County Health insurance at the time of retirement in order to qualify for retiree benefits; and
3. Current employees must meet Texas County and District Retirement Systems requirements to receive retiree health benefits.

PAYMENT OF RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS

Zapata County Commissioner's Court will set the premiums for retirees annually. Zapata County may pay a portion of the monthly medical insurance premium for retirees who meet all the qualifications above and are not Medicare eligible upon retirement. Once a retiree becomes Medicare eligible, they are no longer eligible to be covered under the Zapata County health plan and they will be terminated from the county health policy. No dependent coverage will be offered.

Retiree portion of the monthly medical insurance premium shall be paid by bank draft only. Monthly premium will be drafted the first week of the month. Any ACH or NSF returns from the bank shall be cleared within 30 days or retiree will be terminated from the health insurance coverage. Retiree payments should always be current to avoid termination from health insurance.

WHAT IS PROVIDED FOR RETIREES

Retirees, who meet all the qualifications above and are not Medicare eligible upon retirement, will have the same medical benefits that are provided to current employees. If the County makes changes to the medical benefits, these changes can affect the retiree coverage. This policy is not a guarantee of health coverage for retirees and may be amended, changed or terminated at anytime. Only retirees will be covered under this insurance; dependents are not eligible for insurance under the retiree coverage.

Life insurance, dental and vision coverage may also be offered to retirees. Retirees who enroll in the benefits made available to them may be required to pay the premium for any or all of these coverages or a certain portion as set annually by the Zapata County commissioners Court. No dependent coverage will be offered for dependents of retirees for life insurance, dental or vision coverage.

H. Military Leave

County employees who are members of the National Guard or active reserve components of the United States Armed Forces shall be allowed up to fifteen (15) day off per federal fiscal year with pay to attend authorized training sessions and exercises.

The fifteen (15) day paid military leave shall apply to the federal fiscal year and any unused balance at the end of the year shall not be carried forward into the next calendar year. (October 1-Sept. 30)

Pay for attendance at Reserve or National Guard training sessions or exercises shall be authorized only for periods which fall within the employee's work schedule.

An employee going on military leave shall provide his or her supervisor with a set of orders within two (2) business days after receiving them.

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

I. Policy on Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

Family Military Leave Policy

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

- a. Have worked for ZAPATA County at least 12 months (it is not required that these 12 months be consecutive); and
- b. Have worked at least 1250 hours during the previous 12 months.
- c. Is employed at a worksite where 50 or more employees are employed by the County within 75 miles of that worksite.

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

- a. The birth of a child and in order to care for that child;
- b. The placement of a child in the employee's home for adoption or foster care;
- c. To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; or
- d. Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's job;
- e. Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty; and
- f. To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the service member.

Serious health condition of an employee shall be defined as a health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job. An eligible employee may take FMLA leave for one or more of the following qualifying exigencies:

- a. Short-notice deployment
- b. Military events and related activities
- c. Childcare and school activities
- d. Financial and legal arrangement
- e. Counseling
- f. Rest and recuperation

g. Post-deployment activities

h. Additional activities provided that the County and employee agree that the leave shall qualify as an exigency and agree to both the time and duration.

Serious health conditions of a spouse, child, or parent shall be defined as a condition which requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential care medical facility, or a condition which requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider. In the case of military caregiver leave, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a total of 26 workweeks of leave during a "single 12-month period." The "single 12-month period" is measured forward from the date an employee's first FMLA leave to care for the covered service member begins, regardless of the method used by the County to determine the 12-month period for other FMLA leave. During the "single 12-month period," an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of FMLA leave for any qualifying reason.

A husband and wife who are employed by the County may be limited to a combined total of 26 weeks of FMLA leave during the "single 12-month period" if leave is taken as military caregiver leave, for the birth of a son or daughter, for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition.

Up to 12 weeks leave per 12 month period may be used under this policy.

The County will measure the 12 month period as a rolling 12 month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy.

All leave taken under this policy during the prior 12 month period shall be subtracted from the employee's 12 week leave eligibility and the balance is the leave the employee is entitled to take at that time.

If a husband and wife both work for the County, the maximum combined leave they shall be allowed to take in any 12 month period for the birth placement of a child is 12 weeks.

If an employee has accrued leave, the employee shall be required to use the following paid leave: vacation, holiday, sick, and compensatory time may be used under FMLA. The remainder of the 12 weeks, following use of vacation, holiday, sick, and compensatory time will be unpaid leave.

An employee who is taking leave because the employee's own serious health condition, or the serious health condition of an eligible family member, shall be required to first use all paid vacation, holiday and sick leave, except for Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA) compensatory time, with the rest of the 12 week leave period being without pay.

An employee taking leave for the birth of a child shall be required to take paid sick leave, and/or other paid leave for the recovery period, except for FLSA compensatory time, after the birth of the child prior to going on leave without pay.

An employee who is taking leave for the placement of a child in the employee's home for adoption or foster care shall be required to use all paid leave due, except for sick leave or FLSA compensatory time, prior to going on leave without pay.

The maximum amount of paid and unpaid leave that may be used under this policy in a 12 month period is 12 weeks.

While on leave under this policy, the County shall continue to pay the employee's medical insurance premium at the same rate as if the employee had been actively at work.

The employee shall be required to pay for dependent coverage, and for any other insurance coverage for which the employee would normally pay, or the coverage will be discontinued.

Payment for coverage under this policy shall be made through regular payroll deduction while the employee is on leave with pay.

While on leave without pay, the employee shall be required to pay for premiums due to the County under this policy no later than 30 days after the due date which the County sets or the coverage shall be discontinued. In order to terminate the employee's coverage, the County must provide written notice to the employee that the payment has not been received.

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

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

All work time missed as the result of intermittent leave or a reduced work schedule under this policy shall be deducted from the employee's 12 week leave eligibility.

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

The employee should respond to the request within 15 calendar days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay unless it is not practical under the particular circumstances to do so despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts.

Certification of the serious health condition of the employee, spouse or eligible family member shall include:

- a. The date the condition began;
- b. Its expected duration;
- c. The diagnosis of the condition;
- d. A brief statement of the treatment; and
- e. A statement that the employee is unable to perform work of any kind or a statement that the employee is unable to perform the essential functions of the employee's job.

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

- a. The date the condition began;
- b. Its expected duration
- c. The diagnosis of the condition;
- d. A brief statement of treatment; and

- e. A statement that the patient requires assistance and that the employee's presence would be beneficial or desirable.

If the employee plans to take intermittent leave or work a reduced schedule, the certification shall also include dates and the duration of treatment and a statement of medical necessity for taking intermittent leave or working a reduced schedule.

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

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

Where practicable, an employee should give his or her immediate supervisor at least 30 days notice before beginning leave under this policy.

If an employee fails to provide 30 days notice for foreseeable leave, the leave request may be denied until at least 30 days from the date the County receives notice.

Employees returning from leave under this policy, and who have not exceeded the 12 week maximum allowed under this policy, shall be returned to the same job or a job equivalent to that the employee held prior to going on leave.

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

The County shall have no obligation to reinstate an employee who takes leave under this policy and who is unable to return to work after using the maximum 12 weeks of leave allowed under this policy, or who elects not to return to work after using the maximum leave.

J. Policy on Workers' Compensation

All Zapata County employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance while on duty for the County.

Workers' compensation insurance pays for medical bills resulting from injury or illness an employee incurs while carrying out the duties of his/her job.

Workers' compensation also pays a Temporary Income Benefit (TIBS) for time lost from work in excess of seven calendar days as the result of eligible work related injuries or illnesses.

All employees who are placed on Workers' compensation will fall under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Zapata County runs FMLA and Workers' Compensation concurrently.

Any employee who suffers a job related illness or injury, no matter how minor the injury may appear, shall be required to notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to report the injury to the Personnel Department immediately in order for proper documentation to be sent to the workers' compensation insurance carrier.

Failure to promptly report job related injuries or illnesses may affect an employee's eligibility for benefits or delay benefit payments which are due.

An employee who has lost time because of a work related accident or illness shall be required to provide a release from the attending physician before being allowed to return to work.

An employee's workers' compensation benefits may be adversely affected if the employee is injured while under the influence of alcohol or drugs or while the employee is engaging in horseplay.

Neither Zapata County nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries or illnesses that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by Zapata County.

K. Compensatory Time

Zapata County will provide compensatory time to all regular full-time and part-time employees, after having worked more than 40 hours a week. Any time accumulated after the 40 hours will be calculated at time and a half. Law enforcement personnel and EMT and fire personnel can accumulate a maximum of 480 hours. If an employee is paid overtime he/she cannot accumulate comp time. All other employees can accumulate a maximum of 240 hours.

APPENDIX A

ALCOHOL AND DRUG EFFECTS

Federal law mandates that all employees be provided with training material discussing the effects of alcohol and controlled substance use on an individual's health, work, and personal file.

This attachment is intended to help individuals understand the personal consequences of substance abuse.

ALCOHOL

Although used routinely as a beverage for enjoyment, alcohol can also have negative physical and mood altering effects when abused. These physical or mental alterations in a driver may have serious personal and public safety risks.

HEALTH EFFECTS

An average of three or more servings per day of beer (12 oz.), whiskey (1 oz.), or wine (6 oz.) over time, may result in the following health hazards:

- Dependency
- Fatal kidney disease
- Kidney disease
- Pancreatitis
- Ulcers
- Decreased sexual functions
- Increased cancers of the mouth, tongue, pharynx, esophagus, rectum, breast, and malignant melanoma
- Spontaneous abortion and neonatal mortality
- Birth defects

SOCIAL ISSUES

- People who drink prior to the crime commit 2/3 of all homicides.
- 2/3 of the driving population age legally drunk at any one time. This rate doubles at night and on weekends.
- 2/3 of all Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related vehicle crash during their lifetime.
- The separation and divorce rate in families with alcohol dependency problems is 7 times the average.
- 40% of family court cases are alcohol-related.
- Alcoholics are 15 times more likely to commit suicide.
- More than 60% of burns, 40% of falls, 69% of boating accidents, and 76% of private aircraft crashes are alcohol-related.
- Over 17,000 fatalities occurred in 1993 in highway crashes which were alcohol-related. This was 43% of all highway fatalities.
- 30,000 people will die each year from alcohol caused liver disease.
- 10,000 people will die each year due to alcohol-related brain disease or suicide.
- Up to 125,000 people die each year due to alcohol-related conditions, crashes, or accidents.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

- It takes one hour for the average person (150 pounds) to process one serving of alcohol from the body.
- Impairment can be measured with as little as two drinks in the body.
- A person who is legally intoxicated is 6 times more likely to have an accident than a sober person.

ALCOHOL'S TRIP THROUGH THE BODY

Mouth and Esophagus: Alcohol is an irritant to the delicate linings of the throat and food pipe. It burns as it goes down.

Stomach and Intestine: Alcohol has an irritating effect on the stomach's protective lining, resulting in gastric or duodenal ulcers. This condition, if it becomes acute, can cause peritonitis, or perforation of the stomach wall. In the small intestine, alcohol blocks absorption of such substances as thiamine, folic acid, vitamin B1, vitamin B12, amino acids.

Bloodstream: 95% of the alcohol taken into the body is absorbed into the bloodstream through the lining of the stomach and duodenum. Once in the bloodstream, alcohol quickly goes to every cell and tissue in the body. Alcohol causes red blood cells to clump together in sticky wads, slowing circulation and depriving tissues of oxygen. It also causes anemia by reduction of red blood cell production. Alcohol slows the ability of white cells to engulf and destroy bacteria and degenerates the clotting ability of blood platelets.

Pancreas: Alcohol irritates the cells of the pancreas, causing them to swell and block the tiny canal to the small intestine. This prevents bile from being filtered properly through the liver. Jaundice develops, turning the whites of the eyes and skin yellow. Each drink of alcohol increases the number of live cells destroyed, eventually causing cirrhosis of the liver. This disease is eight times more frequent among alcoholics than among non-alcoholics.

Heart: Alcohol causes inflammation of the heart muscle. It has a toxic effect on the heart and causes increased amount of fat to collect, thus, disrupting its normal metabolism.

Urinary Bladder and Kidneys: Alcohol inflames the lining of the urinary bladder making it unable to stretch properly. In the kidneys, alcohol causes increased loss of fluids through its irritating effect.

Sex Glands: Swelling of the prostate gland caused by alcohol interferes with the ability of the male to perform sexually. It also interferes with the ability to climax during intercourse.

Brains: The most dramatic and noticed effect of alcohol is on the brain. It depresses brain centers, producing progressive in coordination: confusion, disorientation, stupor, anesthesia, coma, and death. Alcohol kills brain cells and brain damage is permanent. Drinking over a period of time causes loss of memory, judgment and learning ability.

DRUGS

Marijuana

HEALTH EFFECTS

- Emphysema-like conditions
- One joint of marijuana contains cancer-causing substances equal to ½ pack of cigarettes.
- One joint causes the heart to race and be overworked. People with heart conditions are at risk.
- Marijuana is commonly contaminated with the fungus *Aspergillus*, which can cause serious respiratory tract and sinus infections.
- Marijuana lowers the body's immune system response, making users more susceptible to infection.

- Chronic smoking causes changes in brain cells and brain waves. The brain does not work as efficiently and effectively. Long-term brain damage may occur.
- Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and 60 other chemicals in marijuana concentrate in the ovaries and testes.
- Chronic smoking of marijuana in males causes a decrease in testosterone and an increase in estrogen, the female hormone. As a result, the sperm count is reduced, leading to temporary sterility.
- Chronic smoking of marijuana in females causes a decrease in fertility.
- A higher than normal incidence of stillborn births, early termination of pregnancy, and higher infant mortality rate during the first few days of life is common in pregnant marijuana smokers.
- THC causes birth defects including brain damage, spinal cord, forelimbs, liver, and water on the brain and spine in test animals.
- Prenatal exposure may cause underweight newborn babies.
- Fetal exposure may decrease visual functioning.
- User's mental function can display the following effects:
 - Delayed decision making
 - Diminished concentration
 - Impaired short-term memory
 - Impaired signal detection
 - Impaired tracking
 - Erratic cognitive function
 - Distortion of time estimation

WORKPLACE ISSUES

- THC is stored on body fat and slowly released.
- Marijuana smoking has long-term effects on performance.
- Increased THC potency in modern marijuana dramatically compounds the side effects.
- Combining alcohol or other depressant drugs with marijuana increases the impairing effects of both.

COCAINE

Used medically as local anesthetic. When abused, it becomes a powerful physical and mental stimulant. The entire nervous system is energized. Muscle tense, heart beats faster and stronger, and the body burns more energy. The brain experiences an exhilaration caused by a large release of neurohormones associated with mood elevation.

HEALTH EFFECTS

- Regular use may upset the chemical balance of the brain. As a result, it may speed up the aging process by causing damage to critical nerve cells. Parkinson's disease could also occur.
- Cocaine causes the heart to beat faster, harder, and rapidly increases blood pressure. It also causes spasms of blood vessels in the brain and heart. Both lead to ruptured vessels causing strokes and heart attacks.
- Strong dependency can occur with one "hit" of cocaine. Usually mental dependency occurs within days for "crack" or within several months for snorting coke. Cocaine causes the strongest mental dependency of all the drugs.
- Treatment success rates are lower than other chemical dependencies.

- Extremely dangerous when taken with other depressant drugs. Death due to overdose is rapid. Fatal effects are usually not reversible by medical intervention.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

- Extreme mood and energy swings create instability. Sudden noise causes a violent reaction.
- Lapses in attention and ignoring warning signals increases probability of accidents.
- High cost frequently leads to theft and/or dealing.
- Paranoia and withdrawal may create unpredictable or violent behavior.
- Performance is characterized by forgetfulness, absenteeism, tardiness, and missing assignments.

OPIATES

Narcotic drugs which alleviate pain and depress body functions and reactions.

HEALTH EFFECTS

- IV needle users have a high risk of contracting hepatitis or AIDS when sharing needles.
- Increase pain tolerance. As a result, a person may more severely injure him or herself and fail to seek medical attention as needed.
- Narcotic effects are multiplied when combined with other depressants causing an increased risk for overdose.
- Because of tolerance, there is an ever-increasing need for more.
- Strong mental and physical dependency occurs.
- With increased tolerance and dependency combined, there is serious financial burden for the users.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

- Side effects such as nausea, vomiting, dizziness, mental clouding and drowsiness place the user at high risk for an accident.
- Causes impairment of physical and mental functions.

AMPHETAMINES

Central Nervous system stimulant that speeds up the mind and body.

HEALTH EFFECTS

- Regular use causes strong psychological dependency and increased tolerance.
- High doses may cause toxic psychosis resembling schizophrenia.
- Intoxication may induce a heart attack or stroke due to increased blood pressure.
- Chronic use may cause heart attack or brain damage due to severe constriction of capillary blood vessels.
- Euphoric stimulation increases impulsive and risk taking behavior, including bizarre and violent acts.
- Withdrawal may result in severe physical and mental depression.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

- Since the drug alleviates the sensation of fatigue, it may be abused to increase alertness during periods of overtime or fatigue to get rest.
- With heavy use or increasing fatigue, the short-term mental or physical enhancement reverses and becomes an impairment.

PHENCYCLIDINE (PCP)

Often used as a large animal tranquilizer. Abused primarily for its mood altering effects. Low doses produce sedation and euphoric mood changes. Mood can rapidly change from sedation to excitation and agitation. Larger doses may produce a coma-like condition with muscle rigidity and blank stare. Sudden noises or physical shocks may cause a “freak out” in which the person has almost abnormal strength, violent behavior, and an inability to speak or comprehend.

HEALTH EFFECTS

- The potential for accidents and overdose emergencies is high due to the extreme mental effects combined with the anesthetic effect on the body.
- PCP, when combined with other depressants, including alcohol, increases the possibility of an overdose.
- If misdiagnosed as LSD induces, and treating with Thorazine, can be fatal.
- Irreversible memory loss, personality changes, and thought disorders may result.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

- Not common in workplace primarily because of the severe disorientation that occurs.
- There are four phases to PCP abuse:
 - Acute toxicity causing combativeness, catatonia, convulsions, and coma. Distortions of size, shape, and distorted perceptions are common.
 - Toxic psychosis with visual and auditory delusions, paranoia and agitation.
 - Drug induced schizophrenia.
 - Induced depression with may create suicidal tendencies and mental dysfunction

ZAPATA COUNTY TRAVEL CLAIM VOUCHER

Total Amt. _____
Line Item: _____

Purchase Order No. _____
Date Prepared: _____

Name: _____

S.S. # _____

Travel Description: _____

Contact Person: _____

Name: _____

Telephone # _____

This information contained in this form is true and correct.

Claimant Signature

Date

Department Head Approval: _____

Date & Time of Departure: _____

Date & Time of Return: _____

Number of County Employees attending this business function: _____

	Yes	No
Will a county vehicle be used in this travel?	_____	_____
Will a rental vehicle be used in this travel?	_____	_____

MILEAGE:

****Mileage will be based on current Federal Rates****

****Please provide a map from Zapata to destination**

Mileage at \$0.51 per mile (applies only to private vehicles)

Round trip from workplace to _____
Total round trip miles: _____ @ \$0.51/mile= _____

MEALS & INCIDENTAL EXPENSE FEDERAL RATE:

Meals & Incidental expenses shall be paid only if travel will be more than one day
First & last day will be paid at 75% of actual allowance

Number of days _____ @ _____ = _____

FEDERAL LODGING RATE:

Lodging will be provided at federal lodging rate only for actual overnight stays in commercial establishments. Actual costs in excess of \$70.00 will be paid only with supporting documentation, **(receipts)**.

Nights on trip _____ @ \$70.00 per night = _____

Hotel Rate _____ per night (with confirmation of hotel) = _____

TOTAL TRAVEL EXPENSES \$ _____

REVISED FEBRUARY 2011 - As approved through Regular Commissioners Court Meeting

Zapata County

Request for Leave Form

Employee Name: _____

Date: _____

LEAVE REQUESTED:

SICK _____

COMP TIME _____

VACATION _____

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY _____

FMLA _____

NUMBER OF HOURS REQUESTED: _____

DATE(S) REQUESTED: _____

REASON: _____

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE: _____

APPROVED BY: _____
ELECTED OFFICIAL/DEPARTMENT HEAD

DATE OF APPROVAL: _____

Zapata County

Compensatory Time Agreement Form

This agreement pertains to P.L. 99-150, the Fair Labor Standards Act. This agreement is between Zapata County and _____, an employee of Zapata County. Office holder and the Employee agree to the following:

1. That "Officeholder" will grant "Employee" compensatory time for hours worked at a rate of time and a half;
2. That "Employee" must have approval from a supervisor or "Officeholder" prior to working any compensatory time;
3. That compensatory time will not be granted if no prior approval is obtained (except in emergency situations where there is no time to obtain prior approval, "Employee" shall notify supervisor as soon as possible); and;
4. That overtime pay will be granted by "Officeholder" if "Employee" accumulates more than 480 hours of compensatory time.

This agreement becomes effective immediately and cannot be changed unless agreed to by "Officeholder" and "Employee" or unless changed by law.

This agreement is dated on the _____ day of _____, _____

Zapata County

Employee Signature

Date

Date