



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

January 1, 2026

Table of Contents

1.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS	10
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	10
1.2 GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY	10
1.3 STATUS OF EMPLOYEES	11
1.4 DEFINITIONS.....	11
2.0 COMPENSATION	15
2.1 APPLIED PRINCIPLES.....	15
2.2 JOB CLASSIFICATION/RE-CLASSIFICATION PROCESS.....	16
2.2.1 CLASSIFICATION PROCESS.....	16
2.2.2 RECLASSIFICATION PROCESS.....	16
2.2.3 APPEALS	17
2.3 OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME	17
2.3.1 AUTHORIZATION FOR OVERTIME	17
2.3.2 DEFINITION OF OVERTIME	17
2.3.3 COMPENSATORY TIME.....	18
2.4 HIRING PERS 1 RETIREES	18
2.5 OUT OF CLASS PAY	18
2.5.1 OUT OF CLASS INTERIM APPOINTMENT – EXEMPT POSITIONS	19
2.6 PROMOTION	19
2.7 MARKET ADJUSTMENT.....	19
2.8 DEMOTION	19
2.9 RECLASSIFICATION	19
2.10 GRADE PENETRATION	19
3.0 PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENTS	19
3.1 NATURE, PURPOSE AND DURATION	19
3.1.1 CONDITIONS PRELIMINARY TO REGULAR APPOINTMENTS.....	20
3.1.2 TRANSFER DURING PROBATION	20
3.2 EXTENSION OF PROBATION	20
3.2.1 DISMISSAL DURING PROBATION.....	20
3.3 TRIAL PERIODS	20
3.3.1 WITHIN THE SAME DEPARTMENT OR OFFICE.....	20
3.3.2 WITHIN A DIFFERENT DEPARTMENT OR OFFICE.....	20
3.4 ONE PERSON - MULTIPLE JOBS	21

4.0 CONDUCT, JOB PERFORMANCE, DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS	21
4.1 PERSONAL CONDUCT	21
4.1.1 MUNICIPAL OFFICER	21
4.2 JOB PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS	22
4.2.1 CONFIDENTIALITY.....	22
4.3 DISCIPLINE OF EMPLOYEES	22
4.3.1 DISCIPLINE	22
4.3.1.1 Investigations.....	22
4.3.2 APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE	22
4.3.4 TERMINATION FOR CAUSE HEARING	23
4.4 APPEAL OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION	23
4.4.1 APPLICATION	23
4.4.2 APPEAL PROCEDURE	23
4.4.3 HEARING PROCEDURE.....	24
4.5 NON-DISCIPLINARY APPEAL	24
4.5.1 DEFINITION OF NON-DISCIPLINARY APPEAL (GRIEVANCE).....	24
4.5.2 NON-DISCIPLINARY APPEAL PROCEDURE	24
4.5.3 HEARING APPEAL	25
4.5.4 FEDERAL GRANT APPEAL PROCESS	25
5.0 ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE PROVISIONS	25
5.1 ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY.....	25
5.1.1 HOURS WORKED	25
5.1.2 TIME RECORDS	26
5.2 MEALS AND REST PERIODS	26
5.2.1 MEALS	26
5.2.2 REST PERIODS.....	26
5.3 NON-MEDICAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE.....	26
5.3.1 ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE.....	26
5.3.2 AUTHORIZATION FOR LEAVE.....	26
5.3.3 NON-MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE	26
5.3.4 LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY	27
5.4 MEDICAL AND FAMILY LEAVES OF ABSENCE	28
5.4.1 MEDICAL LEAVES.....	28
5.4.2 FAMILY LEAVES	28
5.4.3 ELIGIBILITY.....	29

5.4.4 PROCEDURES.....	29
5.4.5 MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY (NON-FMLA).....	29
5.4.6 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE (FMLA).....	30
5.4.7 MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE PROVISION (FMLA)	32
5.4.8 WASHINGTON STATE PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE (PFML).....	33
5.4.9 PREGNANCY DISABILITY RCW 41.04.671/WAC 162-30-020	34
5.5 BREASTFEEDING	34
5.6 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE FOR VICTIMS AND FAMILY MEMBERS.....	34
5.7 INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSURES.....	34
5.7.1 EARLY CLOSURE OR LATE OPENING	35
5.7.2 FULL DAY CLOSURE PRIOR TO NORMAL START TIME	35
6.0 BENEFITS	36
6.1 HOLIDAYS OBSERVED.....	36
6.1.1. BY GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION	36
6.1.2 ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES	37
6.1.3 HOLIDAY PAY – Not Worked	37
6.1.4 PAY FOR WORK PERFORMED ON HOLIDAYS	37
6.1.5 UNPAID HOLIDAYS FOR REASONS OF FAITH OR CONSCIENCE	38
6.2 VACATION LEAVE	38
6.2.1 VACATION LEAVE ACCRUAL AND ELIGIBILITY	38
6.2.2 ACCRUAL RATES	39
6.2.3 CONTINUOUS SERVICE	40
6.2.4 MAXIMUM VACATION ACCRUAL NON-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES.....	40
6.2.5 LEAVE RIGHTS IN CASE OF LAYOFF OR SEPARATION	40
6.2.6 WORK DURING SCHEDULED LEAVE PERIOD	40
6.2.7 EXCESS VACATION LEAVE (ABOVE THE MAXIMUM).....	40
6.2.8 USE OF VACATION LEAVE UPON RETIREMENT	41
6.2.9 VACATION LEAVE SCHEDULE	41
6.2.10 EXTENDED LEAVE	41
6.2.11 TRANSFERRING VACATION LEAVE	41
6.3 SICK LEAVE	42
6.3.1 SICK LEAVE GENERAL	42
6.3.2 SICK LEAVE ACCRUAL	42
6.3.3 SICK LEAVE ELIGIBILITY.....	42
6.3.4 USE OF SICK LEAVE.....	42

6.3.5 ILLNESS DURING VACATION.....	43
6.3.6 SICK LEAVE PAY OFF	43
6.3.7 WASHINGTON STATE PAID SICK LEAVE.....	44
6.3.8 NO RETALIATION	44
6.3.9 EXTRA-HELP (CASUAL) TO REGULAR EMPLOYMENT STATUS CONVERSION	44
6.3.10 REGULAR EMPLOYMENT TO EXTRA-HELP (CASUAL) STATUS CONVERSION	44
6.3.11 ABUSE OF LEAVE	44
6.4 WORKERS' COMPENSATION (See Risk Management and Safety Policies)	45
6.4.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS	45
6.5 RETIREMENT	45
6.5.1 STATE RETIREMENT.....	45
6.5.2 RETIREMENT BENEFITS	45
6.5.3 EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION.....	45
6.5.4 COUNTY CONTRIBUTION	45
6.5.5 SOCIAL SECURITY.....	45
6.6 HEALTH INSURANCE.....	46
6.6.1 ELIGIBILITY.....	46
6.6.2 MEDICAL COVERAGE PLANS	46
6.6.3 TERMINATION OF COUNTY PAID COVERAGE	46
6.6.4 COBRA OPTION	46
6.6.5 COVERAGE CONVERSION.....	46
6.7 LIFE INSURANCE AND ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE.....	46
6.7.1 GROUP LIFE INSURANCE	46
6.8 DENTAL INSURANCE.....	46
6.8.1 MEMBERSHIP	47
6.8.2 COVERAGE DURING LEAVE OF ABSENCE	47
6.9 VISION	47
6.9.1 MEMBERSHIP	47
6.9.2 COVERAGE DURING LEAVE OF ABSENCE	47
6.10 MISCELLANEOUS.....	47
6.10.1 AUTHORIZED PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS	47
6.10.2 LONGEVITY PAY.....	47
6.11 TUITION REIMBURSEMENT.....	48
6.12 PERSONAL VEHICLE STIPEND	48
6.12.1 PURPOSE	48

6.12.2 APPROVALS & PAYMENT	49
6.12.3 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY	49
7.0 TRAINING AND TRAVEL	50
7.1 GENERAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES	50
7.2 AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AND CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE	50
7.2.1 OUT-OF-COUNTY TRAVEL AND EXPENSES	50
7.2.2 IN COUNTY TRAVEL AND EXPENSES	50
7.2.3 VEHICLE USE	50
7.3 MANDATED AND REQUIRED TRAINING	50
7.3.1 GENERAL PROVISION	51
7.3.2 TRAINING PROGRAM PURPOSE	51
7.3.3 ADMINISTRATION OF TRAINING PROGRAM	51
7.3.4 FORMAT OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING	51
7.3.5 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION	52
7.4 EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION & REFRESHER TRAINING PROGRAM	52
7.4.1 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	52
7.4.2 COUNTY TRAINING COURSES PROGRAM	52
7.5 MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	53
7.5.1 PROGRAM INTENT	53
7.5.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	53
7.5.3 LEADERSHIP TRAINING	53
7.6 LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PROGRAM CURRICULUM	54
7.7 EMPLOYEE TECHNICAL/JOB SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAM	54
7.8 DEPARTMENTAL ORIENTATION	54
8.0 REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES	55
8.1 TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT	55
8.1.1 INTENT	55
8.1.2 SPECIFICATIONS	55
8.2 TRAVEL TIME/HOURS WORKED	55
8.2.1 TRAVEL TIME	55
8.2.2 THIRD PARTY TRAVEL/ TRAVELING BY COMMERCIAL CARRIER	55
8.2.3 TRAVEL DELAYS	56
8.2.4 TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS	56
8.3 MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT FOR A PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE (POV)	56
8.3.1 INTENT	56

8.3.2 RATE	56
8.3.3 DISTANCE	57
8.4 MEAL AND LODGING EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT	58
8.4.1 INTENT.....	58
8.4.2 OUT-OF-COUNTY REIMBURSEMENT.....	58
8.4.3 IN-COUNTY REIMBURSEMENT	61
8.5 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND MEALS WITH MEETINGS.....	62
8.5.1 PURPOSE	62
8.5.2 INTRODUCTION.....	62
8.5.3 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS.....	62
8.5.4 MEALS	62
9.0 SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT.....	64
9.1 DISTRACTED DRIVING	64
10.0 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM	64
10.1 PURPOSE	64
10.2 RATING	64
10.3 PROCEDURE	64
10.3.1 ELECTED/DIRECTOR REVIEW.....	64
10.3.2 USE OF EVALUATION.....	65
11. POLITICAL ACTIVITY.....	65
11.1 POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON THE JOB	65
11.2 EMPLOYEES RUNNING FOR POLITICAL OFFICE	65
11.3 PRESS RELEASES - RELEASE OF INFORMATION.....	65
12.0 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT.....	65
12.1 COUNTY COMES FIRST	65
12.1.1 INCOMPATIBLE WORK	66
12.1.2 NOTIFICATION	66
12.1.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT	66
13.0 GIFTS, GRATUITIES, FEES.....	66
13.1 SOLICITATION OF GIFTS	66
13.2 ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.....	66
13.2 UNDUE INFLUENCE	67
13.3 NOMINAL VALUE ITEMS.....	67
14.0 REPORTING IMPROPER GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS –WHISTLEBLOWERS.....	67
14.1 DEFINITIONS.....	67

14.2 RETALIATORY ACTION AGAINST WHISTLEBLOWERS PROHIBITED	68
15.0 HARASSMENT.....	69
15.1 STATEMENT OF CONCERN	69
15.2 PURPOSE	69
15.3 REPORTING HARASSMENT.....	70
15.4 INVESTIGATION	70
15.5 CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS RELATING TO HARASSMENT.....	70
16.0 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE	70
16.1 PROCEDURES.....	70
16.2 POST VIOLENCE:	71
17.0 CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE, ETC.	71
17.1 PURPOSE AND NOTIFICATION	71
18.0 PERSONNEL FILES.....	71
18.1 MAINTAINING PERSONNEL FILES.....	71
18.1.1 MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL FILES.....	72
18.1.2 MEDICAL FILES	72
18.2 EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILE.....	72
18.2.1 POLICY	72
18.2.2. PROCEDURE	72
18.3 PUBLIC ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES.....	73
19.0 NEPOTISM	73
20.0 BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS (BBP) -STATEMENT OF CONCERN	73
21.0 DRESS AND GROOMING CODE.....	73
22.0 VOLUNTEERS.....	73
23.0 WORK AREAS.....	74
23.1 APPEARANCE.....	74
23.2 WORK AREA PRIVACY.....	74
24.0 PERSONAL PHONE CALLS & TEXT MESSAGING.....	74
25.0 SMOKING	75
26.0 FAIR EMPLOYMENT POLICIES.....	75
26.1 SEXUAL HARASSMENT	75
26.1.1 POLICY	76
26.2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY.....	76
26.2.1 PURPOSE:	77
26.2.2 REPORTING	77

26.3 HIV/AIDS: NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY	78
26.4 FAIR EMPLOYMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE	78
26.5 PARKING ACCOMMODATION	79
27.0 TECHNOLOGY POLICY.....	79
27.1 COUNTY EQUIPMENT.....	79
27.2 SOCIAL NETWORK AND BLOG POLICY.....	79
27.2.1 GUIDELINES	80
27.2.2 KNOW AND FOLLOW THE RULES	80
27.2.3 BE RESPECTFUL	80
27.2.4 BE HONEST AND ACCURATE	80
27.2.4 POST ONLY APPROPRIATE AND RESPECTFUL CONTENT	81
27.2.5 USING SOCIAL MEDIA AT WORK	81
27.2.6 RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED	81
27.2.7 MEDIA CONTACTS.....	82
27.3 USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES TO ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITIES.....	82
27.4 TIKTOK PROHIBITED	82
27.5 PERSONAL RECORDINGS	83
27.6 PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES.....	83
28.0 SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT	83
28.1 TERMINATION	83
28.2 RESIGNATIONS	83
28.3 LAYOFF & RETURNS.....	84
28.4 EXIT INTERVIEWS	84

1.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is important to begin by describing what this Employee Handbook is, as well as what it is not.

It . . .

IS a summary of our organization's employment policies and procedures. It revokes and supersedes any prior summaries or statements of employment policies and procedures and will control in case of any inconsistency with other written materials (except employment contracts, or collective bargaining agreements, or written practices.)

IS an evolving document, which we expect to revise and update from time to time. We will keep you advised of changes in policies and procedures covered in this Employee Handbook through notices on the bulletin board, employee meetings, county training, and/or circulation of revised pages or a later edition.

IS NOT your only source of information on employment-related issues. Although this Employee Handbook will probably always be the best place to start in finding answers to questions, you may, from time to time, have questions that it does not answer. In those situations, you should talk with your supervisor.

IS NOT an express or implied contract of employment. We hope that our employment relationship with you will be ongoing and rewarding for you and us. However, no one in Lewis County government has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for a specified period of time, or to make any other representations or agreement inconsistent with this policy, unless it is in writing and signed by the Board of County Commissioners, a Department Director, or Elected Official (hereinafter Elected/Director). If you are an employee of a department under the authority of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) your employer is the BOCC. If you are an employee of an independent elected official, your employer is that official.

This Handbook is subject to revision by the County unilaterally and without prior notice. Policy statements as written do not amount to promises of specific action or treatment. The same are merely general statements of County Policy.

To the extent, if any, that any of these policies and procedures are inconsistent with a specific provision of any applicable collective bargaining agreement, the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement shall control, provided that the requirements of Washington law shall be paramount.

1.2 GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide guidelines for a system of consistent personnel administration governing the appointment, tenure, transfer, layoff, removal and discipline of County employees. These policies will establish and maintain uniformity based upon the duties and responsibilities of the positions, provide an equal opportunity to enter County employment on the basis of demonstrated fitness, and develop a program of recruitment, training, advancement and tenure that will make a career in the County attractive to persons who possess qualities of ability, integrity, knowledge and professional understanding in their particular fields of endeavor. These policies and procedures are applicable to all employees of

Lewis County. They do not apply to independent contractors. To the extent the non-wage and benefit portions of these policies are adopted by Elected Officials, they shall apply within their departments.

1.3 STATUS OF EMPLOYEES

Wages or salary, benefits, and job duties are affected, in part, by employee classification and job title. The following are employee classifications:

Probationary Employee: An employee who is still within the probationary period of job performance evaluation.

Full-Time Employee: An employee who is hired to work at least 40 hours per week.

Part-Time Employee: An employee who is hired to work less than 40 hours per week.

Regular Employee: A full or part-time employee who has successfully completed his or her probationary period.

Extra-Help (Casual) Employee: An employee who is neither full-time or part-time and is employed to work on a temporary, intermittent, or as-needed (on-call) basis. Extra-help employees (formerly known as 'casual employees') are not to exceed 1,040 hours in any calendar year.

Project Employee: Project positions are contingent upon federal, state, or other grant funding for specific non-continuing projects. A person occupying a project position is a project employee. Project employees shall not be used to reduce or replace the number of regular employees..

Intern: An intern may be paid, volunteer, or partially paid. Internships are temporary and have an emphasis towards "on-the-job" training and/or working for school credit. If an intern is paid, they will be considered either extra help or project employees and must be under the supervision of a County employee who is qualified to conduct the internship.

Non-exempt Employee: An employee who is included in the minimum wage, overtime, and time card provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. Non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime for all overtime hours actually worked in accordance with applicable law.

Exempt Employee: An employee who is paid a fixed salary on a weekly basis rather than an hourly wage, and who meets the criteria for exclusion from wage and hour laws (for example, managerial, professional). An exempt employee does not receive overtime pay.

1.4 DEFINITIONS

"Abandonment of Position" means a voluntary resignation of employment with no notice given to the Employer.

"Adjusted Date of Hire" means the actual hire date with an adjustment made for any leave without pay, suspension without pay, or an interruption in service.

“Administrative Leave” is the placing of an employee on paid or unpaid leave due to a complaint, investigation, or other administrative needs as necessary.

“Administrative Time” is time-off for exempt employees working additional hours. Amount of time off is at the direction of the elected or director as outlined in Section 5.3.3.2(4).

“Anniversary Date” is the date of hire within the classification adjusted by any leaves without pay, time loss, suspension without pay, or adjusted due to or any interruption in service. For the purpose of step increases, employees hired the 1st-15th of the month shall be recognized on the 1st of the hiring month, and those employees hired the 16th through the last day of the month shall be recognized on the 16th of the month.

“Appointing Authority” means any Elected Official/Department Head or other person vested with authority to appoint to any County position.

“Appointment” means all methods of selection of a candidate for a position.

“At-will employment” means that the employee serves at the pleasure of the employer and may be terminated immediately and without cause.

“Board” means the Board of County Commissioners.

“Business Day” is defined as any Monday through Friday of the calendar year, with the exception of County adopted holidays.

“Call-back Employee” means an employee who is called back to work after their normal work shift and prior to the beginning of the next normal work shift.

“Cause” means a willful or wanton act or pattern of willful or wanton conduct in violation of the Employer's interest, the employee's duties, or the employee's expected standard of conduct. The act or conduct must be of a substantial nature and not merely inconsequential or technical. Cause may also include a substandard level of performance, which, while not willful or wanton, fails to meet the Employer's reasonable business expectations.

“Certified Hire List” means a list of individuals eligible to be employed for a specific position or job classification. Such list may be established at the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Director and is valid for a period of six months to one year from the date certified by the Elected/Director. Other Elected Officials and Department Directors may utilize a certified hire list established for positions of the same class. Recruitment, retention, or working conditions may extend the duration of such list.

“Cohabitation” means residing together in the same household, commonly understood in the context of a husband and wife or similar *de facto* relationship.

“County” means Lewis County, Washington.

“Date of Hire” means the actual date employee first renders paid service in a regular position.

“Days” means business days unless specifically noted otherwise (Monday through Friday).

“Demotion” means an appointment of an employee from a position in one classification to a position in another classification having a lower maximum salary rate, or a reduction in salary to a lower step in the same salary grade.

“Department Director/Administrator” means an appointed official vested with the authority to administer the functions of a County department. For purposes of this document, all appointed Department Directors are responsible to the Board of Lewis County Commissioners or their designee for implementation of the provisions of this Employee Handbook.

“Deputy” means any person appointed to a position in the County's service by an Elected Official pursuant to State law or constitution and who can act in the stead of the Elected Official and can exercise all of the Elected Official's authority.

“Disciplinary Action” means action taken to sanction the improper conduct or inadequate performance of an employee.

“Domestic Partner” means a "Washington State registered domestic partnership" where both persons share a common residence, and are capable of consenting to the domestic partnership. To be considered domestic partner, at least one of the partners is sixty-two years old or older and they have to be the opposite sex. Neither person can be a sibling, child, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew to the other person. Where not prohibited by law, this term will also apply when reading spouse.

“Elected Official” means an individual placed in a position of authority by a majority popular vote and subject to the provisions of the office as set out in the Revised Code of Washington, and the Washington Constitution.

“Employee” means a person performing identified tasks, functions, or services for Lewis County in return for compensation.

“Employer” refers to Lewis County, the Board of County Commissioners, Department Directors/Administrators, or Elected Officials, depending on the context.

“Family Member” means child, grandchild, grandparent, parent (including those who stood ‘in loco parentis’ when the employee was a minor child), sibling, or spouse (including in-law, step, foster, and adoptive relatives of the same kind of relationship)

“Household Member” is any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation of care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. It does not include a household member who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee cares for the individual.

“Independent Contractor” means a person who by a specific written agreement performs specified and described tasks, functions, or services for Lewis County in return for certain agreed upon compensation. Independent contractors are not County employees, do not receive the Lewis County benefit package, and must be retained under personal service agreements.

“Lay off” means a separation from the County service because of a shortage of funds or materials, abolishment of position or for other reasons not reflecting discredit on an employee and for reasons outside of the employee's control.

“Market adjustment” means an adjustment made to compensation to provide equity with comparable positions, or to be competitive with the labor market.

“Market position” means to pay at a level that matches the market average salary for a specific job.

“Municipal Officer” is a person who holds or occupies a municipal office.

“New Hire” means first time employment with Lewis County or reemployment with Lewis County after a break in service. In no case will the County waive this break without a resolution from the Board.

“Out-of-classification” means an assignment of an employee to perform duties of a classification at a different salary level than their existing position.

“Position” means a group of related duties and responsibilities assigned to an appointing authority requiring the full or part-time employment of one or more persons.

“Position Vacancy” means a position is unfilled.

“Progressive Discipline” means a penalty imposed upon an employee for an act of misconduct on the basis that the employee has received discipline for some prior act of misconduct, and/or the Employer imposes a level of discipline appropriate to the offense and the employee’s disciplinary history.

“Promotion” means a movement of an employee from a position in one class to a position in another class having a higher maximum salary rate.

“Reclassification” means the duties and responsibilities of an existing position have changed, or are suggested to be changed, so that the position should be allocated to another salary grade. Reclassified positions maintain the same anniversary date.

“Reinstatement” means the employee is appointed to a previous position following an approved leave of absence or when ordered by the Board of County Commissioners in accordance with the Personnel Resolution, or a court of competent jurisdiction in accordance with applicable law.

“Resignation” means a voluntary quit by an employee.

“Separation” means voluntary or involuntary termination of employment with the County.

“Suspension” means temporary, involuntary separation of an employee for a period or specific time for administrative or disciplinary purposes. Suspension may be with or without pay.

“Supervisor” means any person responsible for assigning tasks to and evaluating the performance of an employee.

“Termination” means to end employment.

“Transfer” means an employee is appointed to a position in the same or different class, which has the same salary grade.

“Work Day” means any day which an employee is employed in their duties as a County employee, regardless of the number of hours that day.

“Work Week” means 168 consecutive hours -seven (7) consecutive twenty-four (24) hour periods.

2.0 COMPENSATION

2.1 APPLIED PRINCIPLES

Lewis County has a uniform salary system. Only salary decisions with overriding mitigating circumstances will be made outside the system.

All positions in County offices and departments per RCW are subject to this system except elected officials, positions classified as executive, and positions classified as law enforcement.

Payday for all work performed the first pay period of the month (1st- 15th) will be the 25th of the month. Payday for all work performed the second pay period of the month (16th – end of month) will be the 10th of the following month. If the 10th or 25th falls on a non-workday, the pay day shall be the first workday preceding the 10th or 25th.

Each job classification will be assigned a pay range (grade) in which an employee will be placed at a step upon hire. An employee hired on/after January 1, 2026, will have their Step Increase Date set as their anniversary Service Date annually. Employees will move up the pay grade one step each year on their anniversary Service Date. Employees who have had their step increase date adjusted prior to January 1, 2026, due to a change in positions (such as a promotion) will retain the same Step Increase Date.

Recruitment and retention issues may change the normal outcome of a salary level but must be documented in the process. In order to ensure accurate documentation of retention issues the Human Resource Department shall conduct exit interviews of all willing employees who are leaving County employment.

The County will establish a standardized job description format and content. Only that format will be accepted for purposes of classifying or reclassifying positions under this policy and procedure.

A vacant position may be filled by an applicant that does not meet the minimum educational requirements, as long as there is not a legal violation and documented exceptions are approved by the Director/Elected Officials. The absence of the educational requirement request must be substituted with directly related experience, required to complete the essential functions of the job (as defined in the job description), and supported by verified reference checks or documented proof of experience. The process requires submitting the applicant’s hiring information, which justified the directly related experience, and the verification of such, through reference checks or other appropriate documentation. This option is not an encouragement to not hire those with degrees and experience, but simply to give an option when those with no degree have the necessary experience and skill to perform the essential functions.

Experience substitutes for education levels may be on a year-for-year basis, with the Employer retaining discretion regarding what type of experience may or may not be considered as equivalent.

A position requiring a minimum of an Associate's degree would require a minimum of an additional two (2) years' related experience. A position requiring a minimum of a Bachelor's degree would require a minimum of an additional four (4) years' related experience.

2.2 JOB CLASSIFICATION/RE-CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

Salary grades are assigned to positions based on job analysis. Salary grades are not a reflection of the capacities of the people in those jobs. Job analysis is a systematic process of analyzing a job, based on its activities, qualifications, skill requirements, and conditions under which it is performed.

2.2.1 CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

Situations can result in the creation of a new position, such as unanticipated revenue received for a new position, classification requests will be accepted at that time.

Classification requests will be submitted to the Human Resources Department and may be accompanied by supporting documentation if applicable.

The Human Resources Department will ensure the classification submittals are complete.

The Human Resources Department will communicate the classification results to the requesting Office/Department. The Human Resources Department will forward to the Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

2.2.2 RECLASSIFICATION PROCESS

The following factors may be considered as evidence of possible eligibility for reclassification:

A majority of job duties have changed to the extent they are more accurately reflected in another existing classification description;

A majority of job duties have changed to the extent the job entails a different skill set, which requires increased education or experience in order to perform essential job functions;

Market factors for *identified* market positions as designated by the BOCC.

The following circumstances are **NOT** factors to be considered reasons for reclassification:

Increased volume of the same level of work;

Added duties of a similar nature already covered by the current classification or requiring similar skills, education, or experience;

Duties within a current classification that have not been previously assigned;

Additional assigned duties in a higher classification unless those duties become a majority of the current position;

Enhanced technological tools to perform current duties;

Salary differences for similar jobs in other departments or desire for more monetary compensation;

Reclassifications which occur in other departments.

Reclassification requests will be submitted by the office/department to the Human Resources Department and may be accompanied by supporting documentation if applicable. The Human Resources Department will ensure the reclassification submittals are complete.

The Human Resources Department will communicate the reclassification results to the Department/Office, and the Department/Office will present to the Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

2.2.3 APPEALS

If the Elected Official or Department Director does not agree with a new position placement, an appeal may be submitted to the Human Resources Department.

Appeal requests will be submitted to the Human Resources Department and may be accompanied by supporting documentation if applicable.

The Human Resources Department will coordinate and/or meetings between and the Office/Department.

Approved appeals will be submitted on a Personnel Authorization Form (PAF) to the Human Resources Department and then to the Board of County Commissioners for final signature approval.

2.3 OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME

2.3.1 AUTHORIZATION FOR OVERTIME

All overtime shall be approved by the employee's supervisor in advance of being worked; however, in the case of emergency, the employee shall notify the supervisor as soon as possible of having worked the overtime and the reasons for the need to work overtime. Departments shall utilize standard forms for recording pre-approved and emergency overtime.

2.3.2 DEFINITION OF OVERTIME

Overtime shall be considered as time worked in excess of the number of hours in the workweek, provided however, in no event shall hours less than forty (40) in a workweek be considered as overtime. The workweek shall be established by the Elected/Director of each department and kept on file in the appropriate department or office. The workweek may be changed to accommodate the efficient operation of the department.

Overtime shall be paid in increments of fifteen (15) minutes. Any part of fifteen (15) minutes shall constitute a full fifteen (15) minutes for overtime purposes.

Part-time, extra-help, and project employees whose hours are set at less than the normal workweek shall not be eligible for overtime until the total workweek's hours exceed forty (40) hours. The overtime rate is one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for all hours actually worked over 40 hours in one workweek.

2.3.3 COMPENSATORY TIME

Employees classified as non-exempt are eligible to receive compensatory time for hours worked in excess of forty (40) in a given workweek.

Compensatory time shall be accrued in increments of fifteen (15) minutes. Any part of fifteen (15) minutes shall constitute a full fifteen (15) minutes for purposes of accruing compensatory time.

The use of compensatory time in lieu of cash overtime payment is governed by the following conditions: Being required to work overtime is a condition of employment and compensatory time off in lieu of cash overtime payment is at the discretion of the County. This means that the County can require the use of compensatory time rather than overtime. The County may mix any combination of compensatory time off and overtime payment in cash so long as the principle of "time and one-half" is maintained. Compensatory time may not be available to all employees.

Compensatory time accrued by the employee may be preserved, used, or cashed out consistent with conditions with this policy. An employee who has accrued compensatory time may request the use of the time. This request must be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is made if it does not unduly disrupt the operation of the department. An employee has a right to use the compensatory time earned and shall not be required to accept more compensatory time than the County can realistically, and in good faith, expect to be able to grant.

The maximum accrual for employees is 240 hours (160 hours of overtime work) unless the employee is involved in a public safety activity, emergency response activity, or seasonal activity. In that case the maximum accrual is 480 hours (320 hours of overtime work). Hours in excess of the maximum accrual shall be paid to the employee on the subsequent payroll cycle.

Any compensatory time granted to the employee must be used within a 90-day period from the date it is earned, unless the Elected/Director authorizes an extended period of up to 90 additional days in writing. If earned compensatory time off is not taken within the extended period, then such compensatory time shall be compensated for by monetary payment, payable at the end of the next ensuing pay period. Compensatory time off shall be scheduled with the approval of the employee's supervisor.

2.4 HIRING PERS 1 RETIREES

See the Department of Retirement Systems web page www.drs.wa.gov for current information.

2.5 OUT OF CLASS PAY

Any employee working out of job classification, in a higher paid job classification, by the direction of the Employer and/or designee for more than one week, shall be compensated for all such hours worked (beyond the initial week). The week must be consecutive working days. Breaks in working days will initiate a new initial week. Such compensation will be at the lowest rate of pay for the higher classification, which provides the employee with a minimum pay enhancement of five percent (5%) increase in salary. If the lower rate of pay of the higher paid classification does not provide the required minimum pay increase of five percent (5%), the employee shall be placed in the next higher step in the out of job classification position, until they have received the minimum five percent (5%) pay increase. The employee working

out of class shall not relinquish their position's duties. When working out of class, the employee will receive their regular rate of pay for holiday, sick, vacation, or compensatory time. A memorandum outlining out of class pay shall be submitted to payroll.

2.5.1 OUT OF CLASS INTERIM APPOINTMENT – EXEMPT POSITIONS

Employees who are appointed to an exempt position for a minimum of two (2) weeks shall receive out of class pay at the higher classification with a minimum of five percent (5%) increase in pay within the higher classification. Compensation shall be continuous during the interim appointment. Placement within the higher classification shall be at the discretion of the elected or director.

2.6 PROMOTION

An employee who changes, promotes, or is reclassified from one job classification to a higher range job classification shall be placed accordingly: If the promotion is a one (1) grade increase, the employee shall move to the next grade same step in the salary grid. If the promotion is greater than a one (1) grade increase, then the employee shall move to the step which will provide a minimum of a five (5%) increase in salary on the salary range of the job classification to which the employee is promoted. However, if the top step of the higher range is less than 5% then the top step shall be the rate of pay. Employees who receive a promotion will NOT have an adjustment in their anniversary date or impact the date of their next step increase.

2.7 MARKET ADJUSTMENT

Employees who are in market positions and receiving an adjustment in their salary shall be adjusted to the higher salary range and receive the same step without a change to their anniversary or step date.

2.8 DEMOTION

Employees that undergo a voluntary demotion (vacating their current position within the County to a lower grade classification) shall be placed on the grid in accordance with Applied Principles, Section 2.1.

Disciplinary demotions will result in a new anniversary date (the date of the demotion.) The demotion date shall be in accordance with the anniversary date provisions described in Definitions.

Employees that undergo a reduction-in-force demotion will retain his/her current anniversary date.

2.9 RECLASSIFICATION

Employees who are in positions that are reclassified shall maintain their current anniversary date.

2.10 GRADE PENETRATION

Employees who are in positions that receive grade penetration, shall receive a new anniversary date.

3.0 PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENTS

3.1 NATURE, PURPOSE AND DURATION

All original appointees to regular positions shall serve a probationary period of six (6) months unless otherwise noted. The probationary period shall be an essential part of the examination process, and shall be used for the training and orientation of new employees and to set a time limit for the termination of any probationary employee whose performance does not meet the required standards. A temporary appointment shall not reduce the probationary period.

3.1.1 CONDITIONS PRELIMINARY TO REGULAR APPOINTMENTS

Regular appointment of a probationary employee shall begin after the successful completion of the probationary period. An employee will receive notification of regular appointment in writing.

3.1.2 TRANSFER DURING PROBATION

An employee who is transferred or hired to another position prior to the completion of the probationary period shall complete the probationary period in the latter position by adding the service time in both positions together, unless the transfer is to a different classification, in which case a probationary service period of not less than six (6) months is required in the new classification. Employees in this situation may be granted use of their accrued vacation time after six (6) months of employment at the discretion of the Director or their designee.

3.2 EXTENSION OF PROBATION

At any time during the probationary period, an employee's probationary status may be extended due to performance or other work-related concerns.

3.2.1 DISMISSAL DURING PROBATION

At any time during the probationary period, an employee may be separated from County service without right of appeal or hearing. Unless a regular appointment is made at the close of a probationary period the services of the employee shall be automatically terminated, and no further salary or other compensation shall be payable to the employee.

3.3 TRIAL PERIODS

3.3.1 WITHIN THE SAME DEPARTMENT OR OFFICE

An employee who has satisfactorily completed a County probationary period and is not a re-hire, shall upon transfer or hire into a different classification within THE SAME Department or Office, serve a trial period of a minimum of forty (40) hours to a maximum of sixty (60) days. Upon failure to satisfactorily complete a trial period, an employee may be returned to their prior classification within that department/office provided they still remain qualified for their prior position and the position has remained open.

3.3.2 WITHIN A DIFFERENT DEPARTMENT OR OFFICE

An employee who has completed a County probationary period who transfers or is hired into any classification within a different department or office shall not have a right to return to their former position.

3.4 ONE PERSON - MULTIPLE JOBS

Employees may apply for jobs in other departments or offices, but must resign from their current position, giving a minimum of two weeks' notice prior to assuming their new position. However, an employee may hold more than one position (not to exceed 1.0 FTE) in their own Department or Office as long as the employee maintains identical representation status (same Union and CBA or non-represented status for both positions). Any disciplinary action will affect both positions.

4.0 CONDUCT, JOB PERFORMANCE, DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS

4.1 PERSONAL CONDUCT

Lewis County government employees are expected to accept certain responsibilities, adhere to acceptable principles in matters of personal conduct, and exhibit a high degree of personal integrity and performance at all times while on the job.

Employees of the County, regardless of whether public contacts are direct or indirect, are expected to be courteous, efficient, appropriately dressed and groomed, helpful in all of their work assignments, and to treat members of the public, as well as other County employees, with dignity and respect.

Lewis County employees shall also comply with laws, rules, policies, regulations, as well as in ethical standards. Lewis County has adopted the provision of Chapter 42.52, RCW, Ethics in Public Service, and Chapter 42.20 RCW: Misconduct of Public Officers, as mandatory standards for all Lewis County employees.

4.1.1 MUNICIPAL OFFICER

As a "municipal officer", employees are required to meet the standards stated in RCW Chapter 42.23, Code of Ethics for Municipal Officers. That chapter prohibits the following conduct:

1. No municipal officer may use his or her position to secure special privileges or exemptions for himself, herself, or others; and
2. No municipal officer may, directly or indirectly, give or receive or agree to receive any compensation, gift, reward, or gratuity from a source except the employing municipality, for a matter connected with or related to their services unless otherwise provided for by law; and
3. No municipal officer may accept employment or engage in business or professional activity that the officer might reasonably expect would require or induce him or her to disclose confidential information acquired by reason of his or her official position; and
4. No municipal officer may disclose confidential information gained by reason of the officer's position, nor may the officer otherwise use such information for his or her own personal gain or benefit; and
5. No municipal officer shall be beneficially interested directly or indirectly, in any contract which may be made by, through or under the supervision of such officer, in whole or in part, or which may be made

for the benefit of his/her office, or accept, contract from other person beneficially interested therein except as allowed pursuant to RCW 42.23.030 and RCW 42.23.040.

6. Employees (including departing, furloughed, laid off and temporary employees) may not access, copy or distribute Lewis County records for use outside of their county scope of work.

7. Employees (including furloughed, laid off and temporary employees) shall not remove County documents, or records from County premises without the written permission of the appropriate Elected Official or Department Directors.

8. Employees seeking documents unrelated to their scope of work shall do so in accordance with the Public Records Act request procedures.

9. Duty to Disclose: In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Board, Executive Committee, or other governing body.

4.2 JOB PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Job performance expectations are based on the employee's department, job classification, qualifications, and job assignment.

4.2.1 CONFIDENTIALITY

Some positions with the County are responsible for handling information that should be released only on a need-to-know basis. This requires confidentiality and privacy of the identity of individuals and other information prepared, reviewed, and handled by these employees. This includes, but is not limited to, telephone and personal contacts, facsimile transmittals, e-mails, social networking, employment application materials, medical information, draft and final written documents, and any other correspondence. A breach of confidentiality will be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

4.3 DISCIPLINE OF EMPLOYEES

4.3.1 DISCIPLINE

Employee effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, safety, and morale are directly related to employee conduct.

4.3.1.1 Investigations

Subject to applicable provisions of Washington labor laws, employees have an obligation to cooperate with any investigation conducted by the Employer. Failure to do so will be considered insubordination and may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

4.3.2 APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline for infractions may consist of, but not be limited to, the following:

Verbal warning or reprimand;
Written warning or reprimand;
Suspension (with or without pay);
Demotion; or
Discharge.

Any or all of these steps may be utilized, depending upon individual circumstances and the nature of the infraction. Exceptions or deviations from the normal procedure may occur. Progressive discipline shall not necessarily apply.

If the employee violates County policy, commits serious misconduct or fails to improve the level of performance, discharge may result. Immediate suspension or discharge may apply in cases of gross misconduct.

4.3.4 TERMINATION FOR CAUSE HEARING

An employee who is terminated for cause will be afforded a hearing, conducted by their Elected/Director Official, in accordance with state and federal law. This provision shall not apply to Civil Service employees, those represented by unions, or those hired as at-will employees including deputies, directors and managers, extra-help (casual) non-represented employees (whether full- or part-time), probationary and project employees. All employees who are not represented for purposes of collective bargaining by a labor union are at-will employees, and may be terminated at any time without any need for the County to show cause for such termination.

4.4 APPEAL OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The terms of this Section 4.4 and of Section 4.5 apply only to non-represented employees. Grievance and appeal procedures of a collective bargaining agreement shall supplant and not supplement the provisions of Sections 4.4 and 4.5.

4.4.1 APPLICATION

Any non-probationary, non-management, and non-at-will employee may appeal any demotion, suspension, or discharge when the action is believed to be unjustified by the employee.

4.4.2 APPEAL PROCEDURE

Elected/Director or their Designees:

Step 1: The appeal shall be presented in written form to the employee's Elected/Director or Designees ten (10) working days from the date of the action being appealed. The Elected/Director or Designees shall respond in writing within ten (10) working days after receiving the appeal – not to include the day of receipt. The Board may either hear the appeal of its employees or appoint a hearing officer to hear the appeal. Elected Officials may hear the appeal for their employees or appoint a hearing officer. The Board/Elected shall issue findings in writing within twenty (20) working days of the meeting.

Step 2: If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the employee, within ten (10) working days of the response, the appeal in written form shall be presented to the Board of County Commissioners or the respective Elective Official. The employee shall schedule an appeal hearing with the Board of County

Commissioners, the Elected Official, or a designated representative within ten (10) working days for resolution of the issue. The appeal hearing shall be heard within a reasonable time. The Board may either hear the appeal of its employees or appoint a hearing officer to hear the appeal. Elected Officials may hear the appeal for their employees or appoint a hearing officer. The Board/Elected shall issue findings in writing within twenty (20) working days of the meeting.

4.4.3 HEARING PROCEDURE

Hearings on appeals from disciplinary action shall be subject to the provisions of the RCW 34.05 Part IV, the Administrative Procedures Act.

The Board of Commissioners or Elected Officials shall be represented at the hearing by the Lewis County Prosecuting Attorney's office. The employee may self-represent or be represented by an attorney retained at the employee's expense.

The Board/Elected has powers to administer oaths, subpoena witnesses, and compel the production of books and papers pertinent to any investigation or hearing authorized by law.

4.5 NON-DISCIPLINARY APPEAL

4.5.1 DEFINITION OF NON-DISCIPLINARY APPEAL (GRIEVANCE)

This policy is only applicable to issues under the terms or scope of this Employee Handbook, the terms or scope of a County resolution dealing with personnel issues and passed by the Board, or the terms or scope of an issue which might be applicable to County employees in more than one Department or Office. This policy does not apply to compensation and salary determinations made pursuant to Chapter 2 of this Employee Handbook, and such determinations can be appealed only as provided in that Chapter. A non-disciplinary appeal is a grievance filed with the employer if an individual or group of County employees believes an injustice has occurred because of:

Lack of a County policy;

A County policy that is unfair;

Deviation from a County policy;

Discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, age, expunged juvenile record, association with anyone of a particular race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, age, veteran status, or religion, family relationship, mental or physical handicap, application of Workers' Compensation benefits, or retaliation for protected activities. All County employees may appeal an employment action they believe is based upon discrimination, i.e. this section shall apply to at-will employees.

4.5.2 NON-DISCIPLINARY APPEAL PROCEDURE

A request for appeal must be in writing.

The Elected/Director shall conduct a preliminary investigation to ascertain if the appeal falls under the terms of an interpretation of the Employee Handbook, an applicable County resolution, or is of countywide significance.

If the appeal falls under the terms of the Employee Handbook, an applicable County Resolution, or is of a countywide significance, the Elected/Director shall forward the information to the Board.

If the appeal does not fall under the terms of the Employee Handbook, an applicable County resolution, or is not of County wide significance, the Elected/Director shall handle the matter internally and according to the guidelines and policies within the specific department.

4.5.3 HEARING APPEAL

When an appeal of a non-disciplinary policy is directed to the Board for resolution, the Board or its designee shall investigate the matter and make a finding on the appeal. When hearings involve employees of another elected, said elected or their designees shall sit with the Board for investigations and findings.

Copies of the finding shall be forwarded to the employee filing the appeal and the affected elected/director.

If the finding recommends or implements a change in Lewis County policy, all employees shall be so advised.

The Board or its designee's finding shall be final.

4.5.4 FEDERAL GRANT APPEAL PROCESS

Federal Grant Appeals/Grievance will be in compliance to Resolution 92-561.

5.0 ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE PROVISIONS

5.1 ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Employees are hired to perform important duties to carry out the mission of the Employer, which requires reliable, punctual attendance at work with minimal use of unpaid leave (excluding unpaid leave that employees are entitled to under state and/or federal law). Employees are encouraged to manage and use their accrued vacation and personal holiday to achieve a work-life balance without the need to request unpaid leave, and to use sick leave only for approved reasons. Employees who demonstrate a pattern of using up their vacation and sick leave as soon as they accrue it should not expect to continue to receive approval of vacation requests or authorized unpaid leave. Unauthorized leave will be processed as unpaid leave and may be subject to corrective and/or disciplinary action.

5.1.1 HOURS WORKED

Pursuant to Resolution 14-046 and RCW 36.16.100:

Each elected official of Lewis County and director or administrator under the authority of the Board, when acting with the advice and consent of the Board, may from time to time, designate the days and hours during which his or her office (or any sub-unit thereof) shall be open for the transaction of business by members of the public, and may designate new days and/or hours as he or she deems appropriate.

The number of hours per workweek constituting full time employment shall be designated by the Board.

The days and hours on which each County location at which members of the public may transact County business shall be posted at such location.

The Elected/Director shall designate the commencement and end of the workweek for the department pursuant to the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Such workweek shall be fixed at 168 consecutive hours, seven (7) consecutive twenty-four (24) hour periods. (FLSA 29 C.F.R. Section 778.105)

5.1.2 TIME RECORDS

Each non-exempt employee is expected to record accurately on the provided time record the time spent working. Exempt employees shall not be required to provide time records for pay purposes. Exempt employees who are in positions that receive special project grant funding, may be required to provide time records for reimbursement purposes.

5.2 MEALS AND REST PERIODS

5.2.1 MEALS

All non-exempt employees shall be granted a non-compensated meal period of one-half or one hour as determined by the Elected/Director.

If an employee's supervisor determines that a non-exempt employee may not be completely relieved of all duties during the meal time or determines that the employee is not free to leave their duty post or work station during meal time, the meal time shall count as hours worked.

5.2.2 REST PERIODS

Each non-exempt employee shall be allowed a compensated fifteen (15) minute rest period, on Employer's time, for each four (4) hours of working time. Rest periods shall be scheduled as near as possible to the midpoint of the work period. An additional rest period shall be granted for each additional two-hour increment that an employee is required to work beyond the normal shift.

5.3 NON-MEDICAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE

5.3.1 ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE

No employee shall be absent from duty without proper permission. An employee absent for three (3) consecutive work days without authorization, except for an immediate health, or family emergency, shall be considered to have terminated employment as of the last day of active employment.

5.3.2 AUTHORIZATION FOR LEAVE

No employee shall receive compensation for a period of absence unless leave is authorized. No leave of absence with or without pay shall be granted unless the employee submits a written request and the request is approved in writing in accordance with these procedures. Requests for leave of absence without pay shall be submitted to the Elected/Director.

5.3.3 NON-MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

5.3.3.1 Leave of Absence with Pay

The Board of County Commissioners and Elected Officials may grant Leaves of Absence with Pay, for any reason deemed suitable and necessary to the operation of their offices. Additionally, the Board of County Commissioners and Elected Officials may require an employee to take a leave of absence with pay when the relevant elected official(s) deems it to be in the interest of Lewis County for the employee to take such leave. An employee placed on leave of absence involuntarily shall not be present upon County premises except (a) to conduct business with Lewis County, (b) to appear in a court of law, or (c) when instructed to attend an appointment with a County official.

5.3.3.2 Leaves of Absence with Pay without Board Approval

Leaves of absence with pay may be granted by Department Directors without Board approval for the following reasons:

1. Jury duty. Due to the administrative cost of reimbursement process for jury pay, the employee may retain any per diem jury pay from any court, to include Lewis County for mileage and/or expense reimbursements received. Employees released from jury duty during working hours will immediately return to work.
2. Appearance before a court, legislative committee, or judicial, or quasi-judicial body as a witness on behalf of Lewis County in response to a subpoena or other direction by proper authority, provided that any witness fee be paid over to the County.
3. Funeral Leave/Bereavement Leave - Up to three (3) days bereavement leave shall be granted without any leave debit in the case of a death of the employee's family member or household member, as defined in 1.4. The days do not need to be taken consecutively.

Employees who are permitted to attend the funeral or memorial service of a fellow department employee shall be allowed to take up to four (4) hours sick leave when such services are held during working hours.

Regular employees may request to use additional leave to exceed this three-day period. The County may, at its discretion, grant additional leave to be charged to accrued vacation, sick time and/or accumulated compensatory time, or may grant leave without pay as a last resort.

Administrative Time: Exempt, non-union employees who work an unusually large number of hours may be granted Administrative Time at the Employer's discretion. Administrative Time shall not be available for cash-out purposes, and shall not be frontloaded. In no case, shall more than ten (10) days be granted per year. Administrative time shall only be used in full day increments.

5.3.4 LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY

An unpaid leave of absence may be available to an employee for medical or personal reasons under the guidelines below. Unpaid leave may impact an employee's leave accruals. If the employee qualifies in more than one category listed below, the period of leave will be counted toward the total entitlement of every category of leave that may apply.

5.3.4.1 Non-Medical Leave - Absence without Pay

UNPAID LEAVE FOR PERSONAL REASONS. In the sole discretion of the County, employees may be given personal leaves of absence for a specified period of time. Requests for personal leave will be evaluated based on factors including but not limited to work record, Employer staffing needs, and the reason for requesting the leave. The circumstances will determine the length of the leave, but a personal leave of absence typically may not exceed 90 days. Employees returning from a personal leave are not guaranteed a return to their former job. If a position is available for which they are qualified, they may apply and compete for that opening.

MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE. Any employee who is a member of a military reserve force of the United States or of the State of Washington shall be entitled to and shall be granted military leave of absence from County employment, not to exceed twenty-one (21) working days during each October 1 through September 30. Such leave shall be granted in order that the person may take part in active training duty in such manner and at such time as he or she may be ordered to active training duty. Such military leave of absence shall be in addition to any vacation or sick leave to which the employee might otherwise be entitled, and shall not involve any loss of efficiency rating, privileges or pay (RCW 38.40.060.) During the period of military leave, the employee shall receive from the Employer his or her normal pay. Any additional leave will be considered under applicable federal law.

5.4 MEDICAL AND FAMILY LEAVES OF ABSENCE

The following is a summary of rights which County employees may have under various leave programs. Legislation and regulations governing these programs will determine actual leave entitlement in a given situation. Also, these laws and regulations may change from time to time. For further information, contact the Lewis County Human Resources Department.

Employees who are in need of extended leave, or leave under a program identified in this handbook, should meet with their Supervisor and/or Human Resources to develop a written plan. This plan should include: reason(s) for the leave, the beginning and end date of the leave, and the type of leave they intend to use for each day of the absence (i.e. unpaid leave, sick leave, vacation leave, comp time, etc.)

FMLA is a non-paid federal leave provision. Lewis County requires employees to use paid time off during any FMLA enrollment, this may also include time loss under Workers' Compensation. Lewis County uses a 12-month period measured forward from the first date an employee takes any FMLA-qualifying leave. Employees who are found to have misused, abused, or committed fraud using FMLA will be subject to discipline, including termination. FMLA may be accessed by the employee or the employee may be enrolled by the employer if the employee has had a qualified medical event.

5.4.1 MEDICAL LEAVES

A medical leave is granted or mandated for a serious health condition or pregnancy-related disability. Medical leave may require a healthcare provider's certificate identified as Form WH-380. Employees returning from a medical leave may be asked to provide a physician's release to return to work. Pregnancy related disability may result in longer periods of leave.

5.4.2 FAMILY LEAVES

Family leave is granted to provide assistance or care to certain designated family members. Types of family leave include:

- Unpaid family leave;
- Family medical leave of absence (FMLA);
- Military Family leave; and
- Washington State Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML).

5.4.3 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for all family and/or medical leave an employee must be employed by the County at least twelve (12) months and have worked at least 1,250 hours in the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the start of leave. The amount of leave an employee may be entitled to take may be limited by other leaves taken in the twelve (12) months prior to the date they request to start a medical leave.

Unpaid Family leave is granted for:

- A father's attendance at the birth of a child;
- A parent's care of a child after birth. (See [Pregnancy Disability](#) for more information);
- The placement of a child with an employee for adoption or foster care;
- A serious health condition of an employee's child (under 18 years, older if disabled);
- A serious health condition of employee's spouse or parent.

Lewis County will continue medical insurance benefits for employees during approved leave. Employees must continue to pay their portion of the insurance premium while on leave. Although employment benefits, such as vacation pay, and personal/sick pay will not accrue during unpaid leave, employment benefits previously accrued (up to the day that the leave begins) will not be lost. However, before being granted unpaid time, all employees must first exhaust available vacation (with the exception of forty (40.0) hours of vacation that can be reserved by the employee for childbirth), sick, and comp time. All paid time off will run concurrently with FMLA.

5.4.4 PROCEDURES

Written Notice of Leave. Any staff member wishing to take a leave of absence (FMLA or otherwise) should give written notice to the employee's Department Director/Elected Official and comply with the notice and certification requirements detailed in this policy and applicable regulations.

Employee Medical and Family Medical Leaves.

Lewis County may require medical certification to support a request for leave for an employee to care for the employee's own serious health condition or a seriously ill child, spouse or parent. For an Employee Medical Leave, the certification must include a statement that the employee is unable to perform the essential functions of his or her position. For Family Medical Leaves, the certification must include a statement that the employee is needed to care for a family member. In either case, the certification must include an estimate of the duration of leave.

5.4.5 MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY (NON-FMLA)

OVERVIEW - *A leave of absence for employees who have not worked for Lewis County for 12 months (are not eligible for FMLA):* Approval is at the discretion of the elected or director. Leave must be requested in writing and submitted to the Elected/Director 30 days prior to the date leave is to begin, or as soon as the need for such a leave is known. No benefits, such as vacation or sick leave, are earned while on unpaid leave.

Group health insurance coverage may terminate at the end of the month in which the unpaid leave of absence begins. In those circumstances COBRA coverage will be offered to the employee.

Failure to return from leave as agreed may be treated as a resignation of employment. If an employee has taken a leave during which the County has continued its contributions toward health premiums (as identified below) and the employee does not return at the end of the leave, the employee may be required to repay the County for its contributions to the cost of health insurance paid during leave. The circumstances will determine the length of the leave, but a medical leave of absence without pay (non-FMLA) may not exceed 30 calendar days.

Where the Family and Medical Leave Act or state law requires the leave, the policy will be administered according to that Act or applicable law.

5.4.6 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE (FMLA)

It is the policy of Lewis County to authorize leaves of absence to employees, by employee requestor or employer enrollment for qualifying medical circumstances, as specified in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and other relevant statutes and regulations. Administration of such leaves shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement will receive their FMLA leaves according to the terms of their union contracts wherever their contracts differ from this policy.

5.4.6.1 Definitions

All terms used in this policy will be defined by the regulations implementing the FMLA. The following definitions are specifically included for your convenience and are not all inclusive and may not reflect the most current changes in FMLA.

Child. A biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis; includes a child 18 years of age or older who is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.

Continuing Treatment. Includes: (a) treatment two or more times by or under the supervision of a health care provider or one treatment by a healthcare provider with a continuing regimen of treatment (e.g., prescription medication, physical therapy); (b) any period of incapacity related to pregnancy or for prenatal care; (c) any period of incapacity or treatment for a chronic serious health condition which continues over an extended period of time, requiring at least 2 (two) visits a year to a health care provider; (d) a period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective, only needs the supervision of a health care provider; or (e) multiple treatments for restorative surgery or a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than 3 (three) days if not treated. As defined in the Medical Leave Act, 29 C.F.R. 825.115.

Group Health Plan. Any plan of, or contributed to by, Lewis County to provide health care, including medical care, surgical care, hospital care, dental care, eye care, mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment.

Health Care Provider. A doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery by the state in which the doctor practices; podiatrists, dentists, clinical psychologist, optometrists and chiropractors (limited to treatment consisting of manual manipulation of the spine to correct a subluxation as demonstrated by x-ray to exist); nurse practitioners and nurse midwives performing within the scope of their practice as allowed by state law; Christian Science practitioners; or any other health care provider from whom the employer's group health plan will accept certification for benefits claims. As defined in the Medical Leave Act, 29 C.F.R. 825.125.

Serious Health Condition. Lewis County intends to rely on the FMLA's regulations for deciding whether an employee's condition is a serious health condition. Each case will be evaluated individually in compliance with the FMLA. A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider; as the aforementioned qualities are defined in the Family and Medical Leave Act, 29 C.F.R. 825.113.

Spouse. A husband or wife as defined or recognized under applicable federal law.

Parent. An employee's biological, adopted or foster parent. A person standing in loco parentis to the employee. It does not include an employee's mother-in-law or father-in-law.

5.4.2.2 Types of FMLA Leaves

NOTE: The actual length of an employee's FMLA entitlement during an Employee Medical Leave or Family Medical leave may be shorter than 12 work weeks due to other types of FMLA leave used during the 12-month period.

Employee Medical Leave.

An approved absence given to eligible employees for up to 12 work weeks of leave (combined paid and unpaid) in a rolling 12-month period due to an employee's serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her position. Employees on an FMLA leave due to their own serious health condition will be required to use their accrued vacation, holiday, compensatory time, or personal leave to the extent available during the leave. Employees on FMLA leave are also required to use their accrued sick leave to the extent available during such leave, but have the option to retain up to 40 hours of their accrued sick leave. If paid time is unavailable or exhausted, the leave is unpaid. The employee shall not accrue additional sick or vacation time during unpaid FMLA leave. Employee medical leaves may be extended beyond the FMLA entitlement period.

Family Medical Leave.

An approved absence given to eligible employees for up to 12 work weeks of leave (combined paid and unpaid) in a rolling 12-month period due the employee's need to care for a child, spouse or parent with a serious health condition. Family medical leave may be taken when the employee is needed to care for a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition. Employees on a FMLA leave due to a child's, spouse's, or parent's serious health condition will be required to use their accrued vacation, holiday, compensatory time, or personal leave to the extent available during the leave. Employees on Family

Medical leave are also required to use their accrued sick leave to the extent available during such leave, but have the option to retain up to 40 hours of their accrued sick leave. If paid time is unavailable or exhausted, the leave is unpaid. The employee shall not accrue additional sick or vacation time during unpaid FMLA leave.

Parental Leave.

An approved absence available to eligible employees for up to 12 work weeks of leave (combined paid and unpaid) in rolling 12-month period due the employee's need to care for a newborn child or a newly-adopted child or a newly-placed foster child. Employees on a Parental Leave will be required to use their accrued vacation, holiday, compensatory time, and personal leave to the extent available during such leave. Employees on Parental leave are also required to use their accrued sick leave to the extent available during such leave, but have the option to retain up to 40 hours of their accrued sick leave. If paid time is unavailable or exhausted, the leave is unpaid. The employee shall not accrue additional sick or vacation time during unpaid FMLA leave.

NOTE: Parental Leave falls under the FMLA, FLA, and Pregnancy Disability Leave guidelines.

5.4.6.3 Eligibility for Leave

Employees who have been employed 12 months and who have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the start date of the leave are eligible for leave under FMLA. Time that is paid for but not worked, like sick leave, vacation or holidays, is not counted toward the 1,250 hours.

NOTE: Employees who do not meet the FMLA eligibility requirements may nevertheless be granted an Employee Medical Leave due to personal illness, injury or disability as a reasonable accommodation or as required by state law. Such employees should contact the Lewis County Human Resources Department for assistance. Such leave may be granted on different terms and conditions than FMLA leave. Generally, employees ineligible for FMLA leave will need to continue insurance, covering the full premium, at their own cost, and the duration of the leave as well as reinstatement rights will be determined under principles of reasonable accommodation and Lewis County Policy.

5.4.7 MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE PROVISION (FMLA)

The Military leave provision has the same time worked requirements as medical FMLA. Military leave may require the certification of Military Orders and completion of WH-384.

Military Caregiver Leave: A spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin may take up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave to care for a "member of the Armed Forces," including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness. If employee and spouse both work for the County, they will together be entitled to a total of twelve weeks or 26 weeks for military care leave under this section.

Qualifying Exigency Leave: up to twelve (12) weeks, may be taken for any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a covered military member is on active duty or call to active duty status for a Contingency Operation. The FMLA leave is to address the most common issues that arise when a covered military

member is deployed, such as attending military-sponsored functions, making appropriate financial and legal arrangements, and arranging for alternative childcare.

5.4.8 WASHINGTON STATE PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE (PFML)

The Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program is administered by the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD). Qualifying reasons for taking PFML are outlined at www.paidleave.wa.gov. Employees must notify their Employer at least 30 days before they plan to take leave (if the event is foreseeable). When an employee is approved for PFML, they will submit unpaid leave to the Employer for the hours associated with their PFML approval, and file weekly claims to receive payment from ESD. If an employee chooses to apply for PFML and is approved for a condition that also qualifies for FMLA, then both PFML and FMLA will run concurrently.

5.4.8.1 Taxation

The Employer shall comply with requirements relating to Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave in accordance with state law. The employee and employer shares of the PFML tax shall reflect the amount prescribed by the State. The employee share of the premiums will be withheld by the Employer and forwarded to the State in accordance with state law.

5.4.8.2 Benefits

Paid Family and Medical Leave provides paid time off for you when a serious health condition prevents you from working or when you need to time away from work to care for a family member or a new child, or certain military-related events.

5.4.8.3 12 Weeks

In general, Washington workers are eligible for up to 12 weeks of Paid Family and Medical Leave per year. For people taking leave to recover from a serious illness or injury or to take care of a family member with a serious medical condition, the amount of Paid Leave they can take is determined by their healthcare provider and based on the amount of time that is medically necessary. People taking leave to bond with a new baby or child qualify for 12 weeks of Paid Leave.

5.4.8.4 16 Weeks

Workers may qualify for up to 16 weeks of Paid Leave if they have more than one qualifying event—like giving birth to a baby and taking leave to bond with their new child— or if they have a personal medical event and a family caregiving event in the same year—like recovering from surgery and caring for an ill family member.

5.4.8.5 18 Weeks

If someone experiences a condition in pregnancy or birth that results in incapacity, they may be eligible for up to 18 weeks of Paid Leave.

5.4.8.6 Eligibility

Nearly every Washington worker can receive paid leave as long as they have worked a minimum of 820 hours in Washington during the qualifying period, (the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters or the last four completed calendar quarter immediately preceding the application for leave.) The 820 hours can be at one job or combined from multiple jobs.

5.4.8.5 Notice

Employees need to provide written notice at least 30 days in advance to their employer or if the leave is unexpected, as soon as possible.

For eligibility or to enroll, please visit: <https://paidleave.wa.gov/>.

5.4.9 PREGNANCY DISABILITY RCW 41.04.671/WAC 162-30-020

Pregnancy Disability allows an employee to access disability leave due to pregnancy for the period of time before and after childbirth as determined by the health care provider. There is no minimum employment requirement. The health care provider determines when employee can no longer work. After childbirth, the leave is typically 6-8 weeks, but is based on the individual employee's condition. Leave for disability due to pregnancy or childbirth is **in addition to** twelve (12) weeks (if qualified) under either FMLA and/or state FLA. When the employee returns from leave, they will be reinstated to their former position or an equivalent position with equivalent pay and benefits, unless the position would have been eliminated if they had not been on leave.

5.5 BREASTFEEDING

Lewis County is designated as “workplace breastfeeding policy - infant friendly designation” and complies with RCW 43.70.640.

5.6 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE FOR VICTIMS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

Employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking can take reasonable leave from work for legal or law-enforcement assistance, medical treatment or counseling. Employees who are family members may also take reasonable leave to help a victim obtain needed treatment or services. Leave is with or without pay. A family member includes: child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person the employee is dating. There are no eligibility requirements. An employee must give advance notice whenever possible.

5.7 INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSURES

In the event of a BOCC declared inclement weather event, or emergency closure, Directors and Elected Offices will consider the following guidance. It is BOCC's prerogative to keep all or some governmental functions open and operational during inclement weather or emergency closure events.

Elected Offices and Directors are encouraged to offer telework/remote work options, where applicable, during periods of inclement weather where travel to and from work may be unsafe.

In the case that a quorum of the BOCC cannot be met to declare a state of emergency or implement portions of this policy, the County Manager will be delegated this authority.

As the safety of our employees is paramount, Directors and Elected Offices will make decisions within the intent of this policy to ensure both official, routine business is conducted while ensuring employee safety.

Non-essential employees must be defined by each Elected or Director.

5.7.1 EARLY CLOSURE OR LATE OPENING

In the event of a late opening, employees will make every effort, within the bounds of safety, to arrive the time prescribed by their supervisor. Time between normal start time and actual start time will be considered Admin Time at the discretion of the Elected or Director. If an employee will arrive late due to inclement weather conditions, they will notify their supervisor of the situation as soon as practical. Employees will make every effort to arrive at work on time. Monitoring travel conditions, weather forecasts, etc. may require the employee to alter normal routines to ensure timely arrival.

In the event of an early closure, employees who were at work when the closure decision was implemented will be paid for the remainder of their entire scheduled shift and will not be required to use leave. If an employee leaves prior to the closure, the employee shall use accrued annual leave or earned compensatory time from the time of departure to the end of regular shift.

5.7.2 FULL DAY CLOSURE PRIOR TO NORMAL START TIME

In the event of BOCC declared inclement weather or emergency full day closures prior to the normal report to work time, non-exempt, non-essential employees not in a leave status will be paid for their entire scheduled work day and will not be required to use leave. This time will be coded as Admin Time in the payroll system. This closure will not count as time worked for purposes of overtime calculation for the week.

Employees who are already in a leave status (vacation, compensatory time, sick leave, leave without pay, etc.) when the delayed early closure is implemented will not be allowed to change their leave status.

Additional information regarding closures may be obtained from a pre-recorded message by calling the Inclement Weather Hotline at 360-740-3350.

6.0 BENEFITS

Benefits are granted to employees as integral to a full compensation plan. Benefits include all non-wage/non-salary compensation.

6.1 HOLIDAYS OBSERVED

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King's Birthday	3rd Monday of January
President's Day	3rd Monday of February
Memorial Day	Last Monday of May
Juneteenth	June 19th
Independence Day	July 4th
Labor Day	1st Monday of September
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	4th Thursday of November
Native American Heritage Day	Friday immediately following Thanksgiving
Christmas	December 25
Personal Holiday	1 shift

Unless stipulated in bargaining unit agreements, each regular full-time employee shall be credited with one (1) Personal Holiday worth one (1) shift, on January 1st of each year (or the date of hire for new employees). The number of hours associated with the personal holiday for a full-time employee will be equal to the number of hours they are scheduled to work on the day the Personal Holiday is approved. A regular part-time employee's personal holiday will be pro-rated. The personal holiday expires December 31st of each year and is not compensable upon separation. An employee's unused personal holiday transfers with them to other positions in the County, provided they do not have a break in continuous County service.

Employees shall have the courthouse-recognized holidays off. Should the recognized holiday fall on the employee's regularly scheduled day off, the employee shall be given the adjacent day off or, with mutual agreement of the Employer, another day within the work week.

A non-exempt employee who works on a designated holiday (the actual holiday) and does not take an alternate day off during the workweek shall be compensated for all hours worked on such holiday at 1½ times the employee's regular hourly rate, in addition to their regular salary.

For the purpose of this policy, a holiday day is equivalent to the total number of hours associated with an employee's normally scheduled workday.

6.1.1. BY GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION

Any day designated as a legal holiday by public proclamation by the Governor of the State.

Weekend Holidays

Whenever a holiday falls on a Sunday, the succeeding Monday shall be observed as a paid holiday and whenever a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be observed as a paid holiday.

6.1.2 ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

Regular full-time employees shall be eligible to be paid for observed holidays if they have at least 80 compensable non-overtime hours during the month of the holiday OR are compensated for the entire scheduled work shift the day before the holiday, AND are still employed on the day of the holiday. If a holiday falls on a full-time employee's day off, the employee shall receive an alternate day off with pay, on the next workday adjacent to the employee's next normal days off, unless otherwise agreed upon. There is no proration of holidays for full-time employees who do not meet the eligibility requirements.

Regular part-time employees, regardless of their daily schedule, shall be eligible to receive prorated holiday pay based on their budgeted part time percentage; (i.e. if an employee is budgeted at a .75 FTE (full-time employee), then the employee shall receive .75 times 8 hours of holiday pay, or 6 hours of holiday pay.) If no budgeted part-time percentage is provided, then the proration shall be based upon the employee's most recent weekly hours worked.

Employees with no budgeted part-time percentage shall be reviewed on an annual basis to determine an average percentage for the use of percentage-based holiday pay for the subsequent year.

If the holiday falls on a day the employee is scheduled to work, the eligible part time employee shall have the day off and be paid the prorated holiday pay. If the holiday or observed day under 6.1.2 above falls on a day the employee is not scheduled to work, the employee shall only be paid the pro-rated holiday pay.

Should an employee resign or terminate employment before the recognized holiday, the employee will not be entitled to receive the holiday pay.

Extra-help (casual) employees are not eligible for paid holiday time off or holiday premium pay.

6.1.3 HOLIDAY PAY – Not Worked

An eligible employee shall receive pay for his/her regular scheduled hours for each of the holidays listed above which falls on a regularly scheduled workday.

6.1.4 PAY FOR WORK PERFORMED ON HOLIDAYS

If a regular non-exempt employee, at the direction of their supervisor, works on any of the holidays listed above, they will receive "double time-and-a-half," meaning, their regular pay for the hours worked, and an additional premium at the rate of one and one-half times for each hour worked.

6.1.5 UNPAID HOLIDAYS FOR REASONS OF FAITH OR CONSCIENCE

Employees are entitled to two unpaid holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience or an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. The two unpaid holidays allowed by this section must be taken during the calendar year, if at all; they do not carry over from one year to the next.

The employee may select the days on which he or she desires to take the two unpaid holidays after consultation with his or her supervisor. If an employee prefers to take the two unpaid holidays on specific days, then the employee will be allowed to take the unpaid holidays on the days he or she has selected unless the absence would unduly disrupt operations, impose an undue hardship as defined by law, or the employee is necessary to maintain public safety.

If possible, an employee should submit a written request for an unpaid holiday provided for by this section to the employee's supervisor a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the requested day. Approval of the unpaid holiday shall not be deemed approved unless it has been authorized in writing by the employee's supervisor.

6.2 VACATION LEAVE

6.2.1 VACATION LEAVE ACCRUAL AND ELIGIBILITY

Vacation leave may be accumulated to a maximum of 240 hours each calendar year. Regular part-time employees shall accrue vacation leave in proportion to the budgeted percentage or, if a budgeted percentage is not available, then based on the time normally scheduled to work factored against full-time employment. Each department/office shall assume the responsibility for maintaining accurate vacation leave records for their employees. Each department/office shall provide a report to the Auditor's Office as required.

6.2.2 ACCRUAL RATES

A regular full-time employee shall accrue vacation leave in accordance with the following schedule if they are compensated for at least eighty (80) non-overtime hours in the month and are employed for the full month*. Full-time employees who do not have at least eighty (80) non-overtime compensated hours in the month will not receive vacation accruals for that month. Actual accrual may be made on a semi-monthly basis. The increased accrual rates start at the beginning of the new year of service.

MONTHS OF COUNTY SERVICE	YEARS OF CONTINUOUS COUNTY SERVICE (IN BENEFITS ELIGIBLE POSITION)	VACATION ACCRUAL RATE HOURS PER MONTH	VACATION ACCRUAL RATE HOURS PER YEAR
0-12	0-1	8.50	102
13-24	1-2	9.00	108
25-36	2-3	9.50	114
37-48	3-4	10.00	120
49-60	4-5	11.00	132
61-72	5-6	11.00	132
73-84	6-7	11.50	138
85-96	7-8	12.00	144
97-108	8-9	12.50	150
109-120	9-10	13.00	156
121-132	10-11	13.00	156
133-144	11-12	13.50	162
145-156	12-13	13.50	162
157-168	13-14	14.00	168
169-180	14-15	14.50	174
181-192	15-16	15.00	180
193-204	16-17	15.50	186
205-216	17-18	16.00	192
217-228	18-19	16.50	198
229+	19+	17.00	204

*Payroll Processing Note: For both vacation and sick leave: An employee must be *employed* during the pay period in order to receive the accruals associated with that pay period. For example, an employee hired on the 16th of the month who does not use unpaid leave in that pay period, will receive a half-month of accruals for the 16th to the end of the month. They are not eligible to receive a half-month of accruals for the 1st through the 15th because they were not employed during that pay period.

Conversely, an employee who is employed for only part of a pay period (for example, they are hired on the 10th of the month, or resign on the 20th), will receive a proration of leave accruals since they did not work the full pay period because they were not hired yet, or resigned prior to the last day of the pay period.

6.2.3 CONTINUOUS SERVICE

Continuous service determining the accumulation rate for vacation leave credit shall be service unbroken by separation from County service (excluding service in a non-benefits eligible position, such as extra-help/casual).

6.2.4 MAXIMUM VACATION ACCRUAL NON-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES

Vacation leave time shall be limited to a maximum of 240 hours' accumulation. At no time, except under the provisions of 6.2.7, or at the discretion of the elected or director, shall an employee accrue beyond the maximum limit of 240 hours. Vacation leave allowed in excess of this limit, if any, can be carried until the end of the year, at which time, any accumulated leave, if not taken, will revert to the maximum accrual of 240 hours. If an employee leaves employment before the end of the year and has an accumulated balance which exceeds 240 hours, then the hours shall revert to a maximum accrual of 240 hours.

6.2.5 LEAVE RIGHTS IN CASE OF LAYOFF OR SEPARATION

A non-probationary employee who is laid off, discharged, retired or separated from the service of the County for any reason prior to taking their leave shall be compensated for all earned or unused vacation accumulated to the date of separation. This shall not apply to employees who are laid off, discharged, retired or separated from the service of the County prior to the completion of their six (6) month probationary period.

6.2.6 WORK DURING SCHEDULED LEAVE PERIOD

Non-exempt employees who are called back to work during any scheduled leave period shall be compensated for hours worked at time and one-half the normal hourly rate with a guaranteed two (2) hour minimum.

Non-exempt employees are prohibited from performing work for the benefit of Lewis County while on any type of leave. Employees who are exempt from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act may perform work for the benefit of Lewis County only if permitted to do so by their respective supervisors.

6.2.7 EXCESS VACATION LEAVE (ABOVE THE MAXIMUM)

If an Elected/Director is not able to allow an employee to use their vacation leave due to work necessity, the employee may accrue vacation leave beyond the 240-hour limit in an amount determined by the Elected/Director; provided that such excess over the 240 hour limit shall be used as soon as possible within the next calendar year (considering that the employee will continue to accrue vacation leave during that year). Failure to use the excess within the agreed upon time limit will result in forfeiture, absent a reasonable written request for a waiver of this provision by the employee to the Elected/Director, which is subsequently approved. Alternatively, subject to budgetary resources available, the Elected/Director may approve a request to cash out the excess vacation leave the employee was not allowed to take.

The employee may reschedule a canceled leave to a future date, and such schedule shall be given priority by the Elected/Director, provided it does not cause a conflict with other scheduled vacations. Cancellation of leave shall not be done in a capricious or arbitrary manner. Upon request by an employee, the

Elected/Director shall provide a written reason for the cancellation or restriction from taking vacation leave.

6.2.8 USE OF VACATION LEAVE UPON RETIREMENT

At the discretion of the Employer, an employee who is retiring from the County's service may request to use vacation leave to complete the month of service in which retirement occurs.

6.2.9 VACATION LEAVE SCHEDULE

Employees shall make a request in writing for vacation leave in advance to their supervisor. Employees must receive approval to take vacation leave from their supervisor or designee. Conflicts in scheduling shall be resolved by the Elected/Director.

6.2.10 EXTENDED LEAVE

An employee who intends to use extended vacation (a period which exceeds three (3) weeks) is required to make a request for vacation leave in writing to the Elected/Director a minimum of three (3) months in advance of the anticipated departure time for the purposes of proper scheduling and workload distribution.

6.2.11 TRANSFERRING VACATION LEAVE

Any regular full-time or part-time employee with more than one (1) year of completed service in an established and budgeted position may transfer a portion of their accrued vacation leave to another regular full-time or part-time employee with more than one (1) year of completed service in an established and budgeted position. This transfer is contingent upon approval by the Employer for both the employee authorizing and the employee receiving the transfer. The transfer is further restricted for the purposes of catastrophic or extended illness that is covered and enrolled into FMLA.

No employee may transfer vacation leave time to another if such transfer would leave the transferring employee less than forty (40) hours of credited vacation leave. The receiving employee shall be limited to a maximum receipt of four hundred eighty (480) hours annually from all leave donors.

The employee transferring the vacation leave time shall authorize the transfer in writing. Copies of the written authorization shall be provided to the Employer and the Auditor's Office for payroll purposes. This voluntary transfer of leave time, once authorized, is final, provided that should the receiving employee not use the transferred vacation leave due to death, illness recovery, or separation from employment, the transferred leave time shall revert back to the transferring employee. Vacation leave time transferred by qualifying employees shall be transferred in quarter-hour (0.25) increments. The hours transferred shall be converted to dollars at the rate of pay for the transferring employee. Once transferred, they shall be reconverted to hours based on the receiving employee's hourly rate of pay. This process shall be reversed in cases of reversion of time.

The transfer of vacation leave time shall only occur if the receiving employee is suffering from a catastrophic illness or extended illness or injury preventing the employee's return to work and the receiving employee has exhausted all of their accumulated vacation leave time, sick leave time, compensatory leave time, and other leave with pay to which that employee is entitled.

Transfer of leave time may also be used for any employee whose spouse or child suffers from a catastrophic or extended illness or injury requiring the employee's presence, provided the receiving employee has exhausted all of their accumulated vacation leave time, sick leave time, compensatory leave time, and other leave with pay to which that employee is entitled.

Any transferred vacation leave is excluded from termination vacation leave pay-off provisions.

6.3 SICK LEAVE

(Benefits described are for non-represented Lewis County employees or for those covered under a CBA where not otherwise specified.)

6.3.1 SICK LEAVE GENERAL

All employees are eligible to accrue sick leave.

A regular full-time employee will accrue eight (8) hours of paid sick leave each month, if they have been in pay status for at least eighty (80) non-overtime hours in the month. Regular full-time employees in non-exempt positions who are in pay status for less than 80 non-overtime hours in a calendar month and regular part-time employees shall accrue sick leave in proportion to the percentage of time normally scheduled to work factored against full-time employment, up to a maximum of eight (8) hours in a month. Extra-help and other part-time employees shall receive one (1) hour of sick leave per every 40 hours worked.

6.3.2 SICK LEAVE ACCRUAL

When an employee has accrued sick leave in excess of one thousand three hundred twenty (1320) hours at the end of the calendar year, the employee's accrued sick leave shall revert to one thousand three hundred twenty (1320) hours as of the first (1st) day of January of each calendar year. Part-time employees shall accrue monthly sick leave in the same manner as set forth above, except that a part-time employee's monthly accrual of sick leave shall be reduced in proportion to the number of hours worked by the part-time employee compared to the number of hours worked by a full-time employee. By way of example only, a part-time employee who works one hundred thirty (130) hours in a given month would accrue six (6) hours sick leave. If an employee is budgeted at a .75 FTE (full-time employee), then the employee shall receive .75 sick accrual.

6.3.3 SICK LEAVE ELIGIBILITY

Regular full-time and part-time employees may use their sick leave after the employee has earned leave from date of hire. For extra-help (casual) or temporary employees, please refer to the Washington State Paid Sick Leave provision of this policy.

6.3.4 USE OF SICK LEAVE

Sick leave shall be allowed as protected under Federal, State or County policy, following RCW 49.46.210. Sick leave may be charged in quarter-hour (15 minute) increments and may be used for the following reasons:

- a) When an employee is incapacitated for work due to a personal illness, injury, disability or health condition

- b) When an employee has a health care appointment or need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of an illness, injury, disability or health condition, or preventative care appointments
- c) When the employee has been exposed to a contagious disease and their presence at work would jeopardize the health of others
- d) When the employee's family or household member requires care due to their illness, injury, disability or health condition, or preventative care appointments
- e) When the employee's place of business or child's school or place of care has been closed by order of a public official for any health-related reason (health-related reason does not include inclement weather)
- f) For domestic violence leave (chapter 49.76 RCW)
- g) For bereavement, up to three shifts
- h) To prepare for or participate in any judicial or administrative immigration proceeding involving the employee or their family member.

The definition of family member and household member for sick leave use is outlined in 1.4.

Employees must give reasonable notice to their supervisor or designee to use sick leave. If the employee's absence is foreseeable, the employee must provide at least 10 days' notice, or as much notice as possible before the first day of sick leave use. If an employee's absence is unforeseeable, the employee must follow call-in procedures no later than one (1) hour before the employee's required start time (or as soon as practicable), or at such time they need to leave work earlier than the end of their shift.

The Employer may require an employee to produce a letter from a medical provider showing necessity of attendance or absence for more than three (3) consecutive work days of sick leave. Verification may not result in an unreasonable burden or expense on the employee in accordance with WAC 296-128-660. For a predictable temporary disability or extended period of time using sick leave, the employee may be requested to provide the Elected/Director sufficient notice to plan for staffing during the employee's absence and the employee may be asked to provide the Elected/Director with a written statement from the licensed health care provider estimating the date the leave is to begin, the estimated length of the disability leave, and the expected date the employee will be available to return to work. The Elected/Director may request periodic updates from the employee for business planning purposes. The employee shall notify the Elected/Director as soon as the licensed health care provider releases the employee to return to work.

6.3.5 ILLNESS DURING VACATION

Should an employee become ill while on vacation, the time ill may be charged to accumulated sick leave. The Director/Elected may require the employee to furnish documentation issued by a licensed physician or practitioner after the third consecutive day of sick leave used.

6.3.6 SICK LEAVE PAY OFF

At the time of separation from service for any reason, a non-probationary eligible employee, or, in the case of death, the employee's designated beneficiary or estate, shall receive remuneration at a rate equal to one (1) hour's current monetary compensation of the employee for each two (2) hours of accrued sick leave to a maximum of three hundred sixty (360) hours of pay.

Each department shall assume the responsibility for maintaining accurate sick leave records for their employees and shall provide a report to the Auditor's Office as required.

6.3.7 WASHINGTON STATE PAID SICK LEAVE

Extra-help (casual) or temporary employees are eligible to receive one (1) hour of paid sick for every forty (40) hours worked. Employees are eligible to use accrued paid sick leave ninety (90) days after starting their employment. There is no cap on the number of paid sick leave hours that may be accrued in a year. At the end of the paid sick leave accrual year, unused paid sick leave balances of forty (40) hours or less will carry over to the following year. Sick leave balances of forty (40) hours or more shall only carry over forty (40) hours. If the employee separates from employment, there will not be a financial or other reimbursement to the employee for accrued, unused paid sick leave at the time of separation. If an employee leaves employment and is rehired within twelve (12) months of separation, any accrued paid sick leave will be reinstated to the employees paid sick leave balance. If the employee is rehired within twelve (12) months of separation, the employee will not be required to wait another ninety (90) days to use the accrued paid sick leave if the employee met that requirement during the previous period of employment. If an employee did not meet the ninety (90)-day requirement for the use of paid sick leave prior to separation, the previous period of time the employee worked for Lewis County will count towards the ninety (90) days for purposes of determining the eligibility to use paid sick leave.

For purposes of the Paid Sick Leave Policy, the accrual year shall be identified as January 01-December 31 each calendar year.

Regular full-time and part-time employees who have exceeded a total of thirteen hundred and twenty (1320) hours will continue to accrue Washington State Paid Sick Leave. At the end of the accrual year, the employee will roll over a maximum of thirteen hundred and twenty (1320) hours into the subsequent year. Regular full-time or part-time employees who leave employment during the accrual year shall receive compensation as set forth in the "Sick Leave Pay Off" provision of the Lewis County Employee Handbook.

6.3.8 NO RETALIATION

No employee shall be discriminated or retaliated against for using their sick leave benefit in accordance with the provisions of this Handbook.

6.3.9 EXTRA-HELP (CASUAL) TO REGULAR EMPLOYMENT STATUS CONVERSION

Employees hired from extra-help (casual) status to regular full or part time status shall carry over their Washington State Paid Sick Leave into their regular full or part time position. After the conversion to regular employment status, the leave shall be eligible to be cashed out in accordance with policy if the employee leave employment with the County.

6.3.10 REGULAR EMPLOYMENT TO EXTRA-HELP (CASUAL) STATUS CONVERSION

Employees hired from regular or part time status into an extra-help (casual) status shall have all applicable hours restored as outlined in 6.3.8. All Washington State Paid Sick Leave hours in excess of 40 after a year shall not carry over into the subsequent year. Extra-help (casual) employees will receive one (1) hour for every forty (40) hours worked in accordance with this policy and Washington State law.

6.3.11 ABUSE OF LEAVE

Abuse of leave may affect the employee's performance review or lead to disciplinary action. Should the Employer determine that the employee is using leave in an inappropriate manner, the employer shall so counsel the employee. The initial, verbal counseling session shall not be considered disciplinary. If the employer determines that the employee is abusing leave, subsequent action may be considered disciplinary.

6.4 WORKERS' COMPENSATION (See Risk Management and Safety Policies)

6.4.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Lewis County is a self-insured employer covered under Workers' Compensation Laws. All Workers' Compensation benefits are administered in accordance with Washington State Department of Labor and Industry regulations for self-insured employers. Any county employee who suffers an industrial injury or an industrial disease while acting in their course of employment or service and who applies within the legal timeframe is eligible to apply for benefits. Applying for benefits does not guarantee acceptance of claim. **An employee must file a self-insured claim form (SIF) available from the Risk Management Department, and not a State claim from provided by the doctor.**

6.5 RETIREMENT

6.5.1 STATE RETIREMENT

Eligible Lewis County employees are covered under the Washington State Public Employees Retirement System. The County contribution will be paid as mandated by the State Retirement System in accordance with the rates provided on a year-to-year basis.

6.5.2 RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Eligible positions will be offered Membership in Public Employees Retirement System, Public Safety Employees Retirement System, and Law Enforcement Officers & Fire Fighters Retirement System.

As of September 1, 1990, an eligible position in PERS is one that normally requires five (5) or more months of creditable service in a year. The definition of service is outlined by PERS. Membership in PERS and LEOFF is required by all employees at the completion of the probation/qualification period. Employees who are already covered by the retirement system at the time of appointment must commence making retirement contributions immediately.

6.5.3 EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION

The employee contribution to retirement and retirement benefits are set by the State Department of Retirement Systems. Retirement benefits also are determined solely by the State Department of Retirement Systems.

6.5.4 COUNTY CONTRIBUTION

The County contribution to retirement is set by the State Department of Retirement Systems.

6.5.5 SOCIAL SECURITY

All County employees are covered by the Federal Social Security Act. Retirement benefits also are determined solely by the State Department of Retirement Systems.

6.6 HEALTH INSURANCE

6.6.1 ELIGIBILITY

All regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for health insurance programs.

All regular part-time employees shall be eligible to receive the County's contribution of pay towards their benefits in proportion to the percentage of time normally scheduled to work factored against full-time employment.

6.6.2 MEDICAL COVERAGE PLANS

The County offers various medical coverage plans for employees and their families. The costs associated with each plan will be listed on the yearly resolution providing for medical coverage. Information regarding Medical plans may be available and/or requested from the Human Resources Department. Availability of plans, plan contents, premiums, and premium division as between the employer and the employee may vary from time to time, at the discretion of the insurers and of the County.

Employees may select the plan of their choice during the open enrollment or a special enrollment period. Different plans may be available to different categories of County employees.

6.6.3 TERMINATION OF COUNTY PAID COVERAGE

An enrolled employee's coverage will terminate at the end of the calendar month in which the employee becomes ineligible for benefits due to termination or an unpaid leave of absence in which benefits-eligibility is not covered. Dependent coverage terminates at the same time the employee's coverage terminates.

6.6.4 COBRA OPTION

Employees and their families are eligible to continue insurance under the provisions of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA) by self-paying the premiums plus an additional 2% for administrative fees. Other options may vary depending on the employee's CBA benefits provider.

6.6.5 COVERAGE CONVERSION

Employees who have exhausted their COBRA option may have the right to convert to individual policies of coverage and should contact the carrier directly.

6.7 LIFE INSURANCE AND ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE

6.7.1 GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

A group life insurance policy is provided for each eligible employee.

6.8 DENTAL INSURANCE

6.8.1 MEMBERSHIP

The County currently makes available dental coverage for eligible employees and their dependents and currently pays a contribution toward that coverage as identified in the yearly benefits resolution.

6.8.2 COVERAGE DURING LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The guidelines described in 6.6.4 and 6.6.5 are the same for the dental insurance program.

6.9 VISION

6.9.1 MEMBERSHIP

The County currently makes available vision coverage for eligible employees and their dependents and currently pays a contribution toward that coverage as identified in the yearly benefits rate sheets.

6.9.2 COVERAGE DURING LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The guidelines described in 6.6.4 and 6.6.5 are the same for the vision insurance program.

6.10 MISCELLANEOUS

6.10.1 AUTHORIZED PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Lewis County currently provides several options whereby employees can utilize payroll deductions as a mechanism for certain financial transactions. The Board must authorize programs available for payroll deduction with advice from the Payroll department of the Auditor's Office. Examples of available programs include, but are not limited to: Deferred Compensation - Supplemental Insurance - Fitness Center – United Way.

6.10.2 LONGEVITY PAY

Employees shall receive longevity pay for each year of continuous service as defined in paragraph 6.3.3 of this Employee Handbook beginning with the eighty-fifth (85th) month with Lewis County as measured from the employee's seniority date. Longevity pay will be paid based on the following table:

After Seven (7) years	\$50.00 per month
After Eight (8) years	\$60.00 per month
After Nine (9) years	\$80.00 per month
After Ten (10) years	\$100.00 per month
Each year after Ten (10) years	An additional \$10.00 per month

For the purposes of longevity pay, the eighty-fifth month begins the first day of the employee's anniversary hire month. If an employee is considered regular part-time, then a prorated rate of pay commensurate to a full-time status shall be calculated based on the budgeted part-time percentage or based on the hours worked in the most recent pay cycle if the budgeted part-time percentage is not provided. **Employees shall receive their full complement of longevity pay in accordance with their FTE**

status for any compensable hours paid in the month. Note: Longevity pay will be used in determining the hourly rate associated with base pay.

6.11 TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Lewis County is desirous of having employees participate in college courses and training opportunities to enhance their skills and enable them to improve their performance in and retain their current position and advance to other positions. Accordingly, Lewis County may assist full-time, regular employees by offering a tuition reimbursement program for satisfactory completion of courses or training at regionally accredited colleges and universities similar to Centralia College accreditation.

To qualify for tuition reimbursement, the employee must make application to, and receive prior approval from their Elected/Director or his or her designee. Such approval shall be at the sole discretion of the Elected/Director.

An employee requesting tuition reimbursement must submit a written application showing: a) the course(s) curriculum description; b) dates and times of classes; c) duration of the course(s); d) narrative statement of how the course(s) will benefit Lewis County as well as the employee.

If an employee's application is approved, the reimbursement will be for tuition only if and when: a) the course(s) is completed within six (6) months of approval; and b) the course(s) is completed with a "pass" in a pass/fail grading system or a grade of "C" or better. The maximum tuition reimbursement per credit will be the cost of a single credit equivalent to the associate's program at Centralia College. Only actual tuition shall be eligible for reimbursement or if "tuition" is not charged, the fee for taking the course. All other expenses, such as travel, lab fees, other expense, and books, shall be borne by the employee. At no time shall the reimbursement exceed the cost of total tuition.

Credit conversion from quarter to semester programs will be prorated.

An employee who receives tuition reimbursement agrees not to resign from their work for Lewis County for twelve (12) months following the completion of the course; if the employee resigns or separates within the twelve (12) months, the reimbursement will be pro-rated and the employee authorizes reimbursement to Lewis County from the last pay check issued. An employee who is unable to remain in Lewis County's employment due to circumstances beyond the employee's control shall not be required to reimburse Lewis County if the twelve (12) month period is not met.

6.12 PERSONAL VEHICLE STIPEND

6.12.1 PURPOSE

A monthly vehicle stipend allowance is provided to County Officials and executive-level employees. The vehicle allowance is intended to partially reimburse the County Official or executive-level employee for travel as part of official business within Lewis, Thurston, and Cowlitz County. Unless otherwise provided by an employment contract, the monthly vehicle allowance amount shall be set at \$200.00 or \$400.00 per month depending on travel frequency and/or business necessity and shall be reevaluated annually as part of the budget adoption process.

Recipients of the vehicle stipend may also be eligible to receive mileage reimbursement for official business travel beyond the counties listed above. Please refer to Section 8.3 Mileage Reimbursement for a Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) which outlines the guidelines for mileage reimbursement.

Vehicle stipends may be requested on a temporary or ongoing basis. For example, a County official or executive-level employee may request a vehicle stipend during a special event which requires a high volume of travel for a few months of time.

6.12.2 APPROVALS & PAYMENT

Vehicle allowance will be authorized in accordance with this policy. A justification memo from the requesting office or department shall be provided to the BOCC for budget consideration and approval. A copy of the approved justification and the meeting minutes approving the budget shall be provided to the Auditor's office. The vehicle stipend shall be processed with payroll.

6.12.3 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

County Officials and executive-level employees who receive a personal vehicle stipend shall be responsible for maintaining vehicle insurance coverage. Employees involved in a collision during a work-related time will be required to report the incident to the Risk Department. Financial liability may be covered under certain circumstances in accordance of the Memorandum of Liability Coverage through the Washington Counties Risk Pool Self-Insurance Liability Program.

Expense Authority: RCW 36.17.031 and 42.24.090

7.0 TRAINING AND TRAVEL

7.1 GENERAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

In the interest of effective public service, the County shall encourage and promote training opportunities for employees.

7.2 AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AND CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

All travel and conference attendance must be approved in advance by the Elected/Director. For non-exempt employees, hours worked will consist of the combination of travel time to and from the training activity/conference and the actual time of the training activity/conference. Normally, all such training will be on the County employee's work time; however, in the event that the training cannot be offered during the employee's normal work shift, the employee shall be compensated at the appropriate rate pursuant to the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Food, lodging and travel expenses shall be paid by the County to an employee according to County policy. (See Section 8.0 Reimbursement for Expenses.)

7.2.1 OUT-OF-COUNTY TRAVEL AND EXPENSES

All out-of-county travel and expenses must be authorized by the Elected/Director.

7.2.2 IN COUNTY TRAVEL AND EXPENSES

Such expenses shall not be reimbursed except by prior written request to and authorization by the Elected/Director.

7.2.3 VEHICLE USE

All out-of-county travel which involves transportation by automobile shall follow the County Risk Management Policy 4.300 (Vehicle Use).

7.3 MANDATED AND REQUIRED TRAINING

New employees may be required to attend in-house training in some or all areas listed below. If required, all classes as indicated will be required on a three year cycle with the exception of employees who are required to have a First Aid-CPR card, who will be on a two year cycle or as designated. Some positions may be exempt from a course requirement when those issues do not impact their area of work. Lewis County training classes include:

- County Government 101
- Cyber Security
- Defensive Driving
- Employee Handbook/Workplace Violence/Active Shooter
- Ethics
- First Aid
- Outlook
- Safety Orientation

Sexual Harassment/Diversity

Lewis County shall also provide specialized training to managers and supervisors, in addition to any training offered by individual offices, departments or divisions, in human resources and personnel management, customer service and communications skills and methods.

7.3.1 GENERAL PROVISION

The leadership of Lewis County is committed to improving employee skills through training to provide quality public service. It is the policy of Lewis County to provide the Employee Training & Development Program to be consistent with the Lewis County Strategic Plan and its vision, mission, and values.

7.3.2 TRAINING PROGRAM PURPOSE

To establish and provide high quality, well trained staff for administering and operating the affairs of the County for its citizens through effective employee training and development.

7.3.3 ADMINISTRATION OF TRAINING PROGRAM

Employee Orientation & Refresher Training Program will be overseen by Human Resources. Human Resources will maintain a list of classes offered, course curriculum, arrange for classrooms and instructors, maintain a master list of County employees and the classes they have completed, and compile training audits for the Departments/Offices.

Leadership Academy will be overseen by Human Resources. Human Resources will maintain course curriculum, arrange for classes, provide for their instruction, and maintain the master list of County employees who have completed the leadership class.

Professional Development will be overseen by the Elected Officials and/or Director for individuals of their Departments or Offices.

Employee Technical/Job Specific Training & Development will be overseen by the Elected Officials and Directors for individual Departments or Offices.

Departmental Orientation will be administered by the individual Department or Office.

7.3.4 FORMAT OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING

The courses for the Employee Training Program are provided in several different formats including:

In-house training – courses offered by the County using county or professional trainers.

On-the-job-training – supervisor and/or co-worker instruction or demonstration.

Off-the-job training – colleges, universities, or other agencies.

Internet training – on-line courses offered by the County or by colleges and universities, or private businesses and professional organizations.

7.3.5 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The Employee Training and Development Program should be interrelated with the Annual Performance Evaluation. The need for employee training should be determined, monitored by their supervisor, and then recapped in the employee's Annual Performance Evaluation. (Employee Handbook, Sec. 10.0)

7.4 EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION & REFRESHER TRAINING PROGRAM

7.4.1 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Employee Training and Development Program seeks to improve the County's workforce through both mandatory and voluntary courses. Employees will benefit from knowing the history, nature of local government, its operations, and its processes to ensure quality services are delivered both internally and externally, and at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayer.

Course schedules and sign-up sheets can be found on the T:/ drive. Departmental training designees listed on the monthly sign-up sheets can be contacted to register employees. Some positions may be exempt from a required course when it does not impact their area of work.

7.4.2 COUNTY TRAINING COURSES PROGRAM

Defensive Driving

Required for employees who will drive a county vehicle. This is an on-line course offered through Washington Counties Risk Pool and requires renewal every three (3) years. Contact Human Resources to enroll.

(Policies related to County owned vehicles can be found in Risk Management Policies.)

First Aid – CPR

Required for new employees and for primary and alternate designees in each office and all Road, Engineer, Survey crews, Sheriffs, Animal Shelter employees, and outlying Solid Waste crews on a two (2) year renewal cycle. This is a four-hour course.

Employee Handbook/Workplace Violence

Required for new employees with a three (3) year renewal cycle

Lewis County Employee Handbook

Workplace Violence

Active Shooter

Safety Orientation

Required for new employees with a three (3) year renewal cycle

Computer Outlook

Available on the Y:/ drive at Y:/Video Training/Technology/Outlook Training

County Government 101

Required for new employees

History of Lewis County

Organizational Structure, Responsibilities, Revenue & Special Programs

Ethics and Emerging Issues

Required for new employees with a three (3) year renewal cycle
Workplace ethics and principles
Human relations and behaviors

Customer Service

Required for new employees with a three (3) year renewal cycle

Sexual Harassment/Diversity

Required for new employees with a three (3) year renewal cycle

7.5 MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**7.5.1 PROGRAM INTENT**

It is the intent of the County to develop motivated, productive managers and supervisors who perform and make decisions consistent with the vision, mission, values, management philosophy, and guiding principles of the County. The County is committed to enhancing the leadership and professional development of its managers and supervisors to effectively lead employees and to be accountable in that leadership.

7.5.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

From informal learning opportunities and mentoring programs to structured coursework, seminars and conferences, Lewis County encourages professional development to ensure employees maintain and improve their professional proficiency, enhance career progression, and keep abreast of new technologies and practices.

7.5.3 LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The Employee Training and Development Program includes a leadership program entitled, Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy provides County managers and supervisors specialized professional training. Developing leadership can provide the opportunity for County staff to become more effective managers and supervisors, and potential leaders in the community.

7.5.3.1 Leadership Academy Participants

Although the Leadership Academy is voluntary for the Elected Offices, it is highly encouraged for all current managers & supervisors, those being considered for hire, or current employees wanting to be considered for advancement to attend the Leadership Academy. Consideration is given first to managers and supervisors, and second to potential managers and supervisors.

7.5.3.2 Certificate of Completion/Advancing Employees

A Certificate of Completion is given to each manager, supervisor, or other County employee who completes the Leadership Academy. Having received a Certificate of Completion does not guarantee automatic position advancement.

7.6 LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PROGRAM CURRICULUM

LEADERSHIP

Leadership Concepts, Styles, Team Building, Motivation, Human Behavior

COMMUNICATIONS

Consensus Building, Communications Methods, Motivation, Identifying Character and Traits, Writing For Business, County Correspondence

SUPERVISION

Personnel, Policies, Employee Hiring Procedures, Progressive Discipline, Labor Laws

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Workforce Planning, Organizational Development

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Resource Management, Time, Materials, Financing, Staffing, Performance Management and Measurement for Leaders

TIME MANAGEMENT

Conducting Orderly and Effective Meetings, Desk Habits

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

Supervising in a Multi-Generational Workplace

BUDGET

Governmental Budgeting Process

7.7 EMPLOYEE TECHNICAL/JOB SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAM

County Departments and Offices are encouraged to maintain an Annual Employee Training and Development Program in coordination with the County's overall Employee Training Program. Employee Technical/Job Specific Training is managed at the Office/Department level as required, and is dependent upon job specifications, educational requirements, and certification/recertification requirements.

7.8 DEPARTMENTAL ORIENTATION

County Departments and Offices will conduct employee orientation to assist new employees in adjusting to their jobs and work environment.

8.0 REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES

8.1 TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT

8.1.1 INTENT

To establish compensation for travel while on county-related business.

8.1.2 SPECIFICATIONS

For the purpose of this policy, “county-related business” is defined as business that has been approved by the Elected Official, Department Director, or designee. “Travel status” is defined as the time spent traveling to/from county-related business.

Note: Those with travel issues not specifically addressed or fall silent in this policy shall be referred to Chapter 10 of the Washington State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) for guidance.

8.2 TRAVEL TIME/HOURS WORKED

8.2.1 TRAVEL TIME

Time spent traveling for county-related business will be compensated at the employee’s normal hourly rate of pay. Travel hours will be counted as hours worked as defined under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), RCW 49.12 and WAC 296-126. Commute time from an employee’s home to the employee’s regular workstation does not count as hours worked, unless specified by state or federal law or collective bargaining agreement. At the discretion of the employer, employees may have their work schedule adjusted for the purpose of attending training, conferences, or meetings.

Example 1: An employee lives in Olympia and is required to report to a temporary work site in Seattle, a 60-minute commute. The employee’s normal work site is located in Chehalis, a 30-minute commute. The employee is eligible to receive travel time pay for the roundtrip difference of time it takes to drive to/from the employee’s normal work station (Chehalis) and the time it takes to drive to/from the temporary work site (Seattle). The employee is eligible to receive 60 minutes travel time pay.

Example 2: An employee lives in Tacoma and is required to report to a temporary work site in Toledo. The employee’s normal work site is located in Chehalis. The employee would be eligible for travel time pay for the time it takes to drive between Chehalis and Toledo only.

Example 3: An employee lives in Longview and is required to report to a temporary work site in Winlock. The employee’s normal work site is located in Chehalis. The employee is not eligible for travel time pay.

8.2.2 THIRD PARTY TRAVEL/ TRAVELING BY COMMERCIAL CARRIER

When traveling by commercial carrier (e.g., airplane, bus, or train), the pay status will be as follows:

Air travel will be considered as automobile travel and will follow the FLSA guidelines for time worked during travel, and will comply with the Travel Time stated in the above section. Time traveling to and from the terminal will be treated as above.

Generally, travel by train or bus will take considerably longer than air travel or automobile travel. The hours spent on the train or bus that are part of the employee's scheduled work hours will be covered as compensable hours. Those hours outside of their scheduled work hours will not be considered compensable time.

8.2.3 TRAVEL DELAYS

When an employee is delayed for any minor delay, the delay time will comply with the FLSA travel guidelines. While the employee is in travel status and actually spends time traveling (e.g. flying on board the aircraft,) they will be paid for their travel time. However, during the delay portion, the employee will only be paid for their scheduled work hours. Any hours outside of the employee's scheduled work hours, whether it is in the airport, hotel, or in combination, will not be compensable time.

In the event of a major flight delay (e.g. extreme weather, national flight grounding event), an employee will be given per diem rates for those meals missed, hotel costs reimbursed at a single occupancy rate. Compensatory time may also be accrued for the delay, upon review and at the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Director.

Example: An employee is traveling by car between Chehalis and Spokane. Their regular work schedule is 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Due to inclement weather, the highway is closed at 4:00 p.m. The employee is parked in a rest area until 6:00 a.m. the next day. The time from 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. is compensable. The hours from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. are not compensable.

If the employee does not travel until 8:00 a.m., the time from 5:00 p.m. the previous day until 8:00 a.m. the next day is not compensable. If the employee did not start to travel until 10:00 a.m., the time from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. would be compensable time.

8.2.4 TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS

Employees who purchase air, train, or other means of transportation using their own credit card, will be reimbursed after the travel has occurred.

8.3 MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT FOR A PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE (POV)

8.3.1 INTENT

To establish guidelines for the use and reimbursement of an employee's Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) for county-related business. Approved use of an employee's POV for county-related business will be granted if it is more advantageous to the county than using a county owned vehicle.

8.3.2 RATE

Authorized use of a POV in accordance with County Vehicle Use Policy 4.300 for county-related business will be at the rate specified in the current governing resolution for mileage reimbursement. Employees will be paid for all eligible travel time when driving their POV as long as the travel time is consistent with the Mileage Reimbursement Policy for Privately Owned Vehicles.

8.3.3 DISTANCE

Mileage will be determined by the distances shown on the website or odometer readings. Online mapping should be used for single destination meetings, conferences, or trainings. Odometer readings may be used in lieu of online maps for county-related business at multiple locations within the same day. If an employee chooses odometer readings, then the odometer start point and end point must be provided. All mileage reimbursement for POV requests should be pre-approved by the Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee.

8.3.3.1 Temporary Workstations to and from Home

Employees will be reimbursed for all mileage driven to attend county-related business at a temporary work station when traveling to that work station from their home, unless the temporary work station is lesser in distance than their normal work station. The employee will only be reimbursed the mileage from their normal workstation to the temporary workstation and returning from the temporary workstation.

Example 1: An employee lives in Olympia and is required to report to a temporary workstation in Seattle. The employee's normal workstation is located in Chehalis. The employee is eligible to receive mileage reimbursement for the difference of miles it takes to drive to/from the employee's normal work station (Chehalis) and the miles it takes to drive to/from the temporary work site (Seattle).

Example 2: An employee who lives in Tacoma is required to report to a temporary workstation in Toledo. The employee's normal workstation is located in Chehalis. The employee would be eligible for mileage reimbursement for all miles driven between Chehalis and Toledo only.

Example 3: An employee who lives in Longview is required to report to a temporary workstation in Winlock. The employee's normal workstation is located in Chehalis. The employee is not eligible to receive mileage reimbursement.

8.3.3.2 Temporary Workstations to and from Normal Work Station

Employees will be reimbursed for mileage driven to attend county-related business located at a temporary workstation when traveling to and from their normal workstation.

Example: An employee reports to their regular workstation located in Chehalis. They attend a meeting in Centralia during the morning and report back to their normal workstation to complete their workday. The employee is eligible to receive mileage reimbursement for all miles driven to and from the temporary workstation.

8.3.3.3 Temporary Workstations and Travel in Personal Vehicles (POV)

It is at the discretion of the Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee to assign an employee to a temporary workstation. It is also at the discretion of the Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee to require an employee to use a county vehicle to report to the temporary workstation. If an employee is required to use a county vehicle but chooses to use their POV instead, they will not be eligible for mileage reimbursement. However, if an Elected Official, Department Director, or

assigned designee **approves** the use of a POV, even if a county vehicle is available, the employee will be eligible for mileage reimbursement.

Example 1: An employee is directed to report to a temporary workstation in Yakima. Their normal workstation is in Chehalis. The Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee requires the employee use a county vehicle for the trip. The employee declines to take the county vehicle and requests to drive their POV. The employee will not be eligible for mileage reimbursement.

Example 2: An employee is directed to report to a temporary workstation in Yakima. Their normal workstation is in Chehalis. The Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee offers the employee a county vehicle for the trip. The employee declines the offer and requests to drive their POV. The Elected Official or Department Director approves the request. The employee will be eligible for mileage reimbursement.

8.3.3.4 Mileage Reimbursement, Personal Vehicles, and Non-Employee Accompaniment

Employees on county-related business who want to have a family member or friend accompany them will need prior written approval from the Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee. If the request is approved, the employee will be required to drive their POV and will be eligible for mileage reimbursement. If the request is denied, the employee will have the option to either (a) drive a county vehicle without the passenger(s), or (b) drive their POV. This policy shall be as described in the Risk & Safety – County Vehicle Use Policy. If the employee chooses to drive their POV, the mileage will not be reimbursed. For more information on the requirements of driving a POV, please refer to the County Vehicle Use Policy-

8.4 MEAL AND LODGING EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

8.4.1 INTENT

To establish reimbursement for meals and expenses while traveling both in and out of the county to conduct county-related business. When an employee is invited to attend any function where they are representing Lewis County in their official capacity and it is in the best interest of the county for them to attend, their meal expenses will be reimbursed. Approved reimbursement requests must be submitted in a timely manner to the Auditor's Office.

8.4.2 OUT-OF-COUNTY REIMBURSEMENT

If meals are included in conference fees, employees will not be reimbursed for those meals. If meals are an option at an additional cost and the employee chooses not to attend the meal session, then the employee would be eligible for reimbursement.

8.4.2.1 Rate:

Reimbursement for meal expenses while traveling on approved county-related business will be reimbursed at the **per diem rate** as established in Chapter 10 of the Washington State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM), found on their website. Employees may purchase their meals using the

county or government credit card. Employees using the county or government card may charge the card up to the maximum per diem rate allowed for each meal. If employees using the county or government credit card that charge meals that exceed the per diem rate, the employee will be required to reimburse the county for the excess expense.

8.4.2.2 Ten-Hour Rule (Full Day Reimbursement)

An employee will be eligible for a full day meal expense reimbursement when all meals are encompassed in a combination full day out-of-county and travel status for more than 10 hours in a work day. The 10 plus hours will not include the time it takes to stop and eat the meals.

8.4.2.3 Breakfast Expense Reimbursement

Breakfast reimbursement will only occur if the employee is in travel status the night before, or their reimbursement is qualified by the Ten-Hour Rule.

Continental Breakfast: It is at the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Director to determine per diem eligibility for continental breakfasts offered by hotels.

8.4.2.4 Lunch Expense Reimbursement

Employees attending approved county-related business not located within Lewis County that encompasses their normally scheduled lunch break will be eligible for a lunch expense reimbursement. This includes travel time to/from the out-of-county location.

Example 1: An employee attends an approved training seminar in Olympia that starts at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 1:00 p.m. The employee's scheduled lunch is from Noon – 1:00 p.m. Therefore, the employee would be eligible for a meal expense reimbursement. If the employee has a scheduled lunch time, a scheduled meal time shift change may be considered by the Elected Official or Department Director according to policy and CBA.

Example 2: An employee attends an approved training seminar or meeting in Olympia that starts at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 11:00 a.m. The employee's scheduled lunch is from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. therefore, the employee would not be eligible for meal expense reimbursement.

8.4.2.5 Dinner Expense Reimbursement

At the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Director, employees attending approved county-related business not located within Lewis County will be eligible for a dinner expense reimbursement if the employee's hours exceed 2 hours beyond the normal courthouse hours. This includes travel time to/from the out-of-county location. This does not include the time to stop and eat the meal. This provision does not negate the Ten-Hour Rule.

*Per Diem for in-state travel will be reimbursed at the rate designated by SAAM (State Administrative & Accounting Manual) guidelines at the Office of Financial Management's website showing the color travel map.

*Per Diem for out-of-state travel will be reimbursed using the GSA (US General Services Administration) guidelines located at their website by selecting the appropriate state and city.

Note: the 75% rule (first/last day of travel) does not apply to Lewis County employee reimbursement. Each employee will be reimbursed per diem per meal or in accordance with the Ten Hour Rule at the full rate established by SAAM **Overnight Travel**

An employee required to stay overnight while on county-related business is eligible to receive a meal expense reimbursement for dinner for each night they are away from home as well as a meal expense reimbursement for breakfast for every morning after a night away from home. The lunch meal would be reimbursable for the day of travel to the conference, training, etc. providing the travel is encompassing the lunch meal. The employee will be eligible for a meal expense reimbursement for dinner after the seminar only if the travel time home meets the **Dinner Expense Reimbursement requirement**.

Example: An employee attends a seminar in Yakima and receives approval from the Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee to stay the night before. The employee is eligible for a meal expense reimbursement for dinner for that night and a meal expense reimbursement for breakfast the next morning. If the seminar encompasses their normal lunch break, they will also be eligible for a meal expense reimbursement for lunch. The employee leaves the seminar at 4:30 p.m. and arrives back to work or home, whichever is closest, at 7:30 p.m., after stopping for 30 minutes to eat dinner. The employee will be eligible for a meal expense reimbursement for dinner.

8.4.2.6 Hotel Expenses

Employees traveling on approved county-related business will have hotel cost reimbursed at a single occupancy rate. Employees who receive approval from the Elected Official, Department Director, or assigned designee, to travel with a family member and/or friend will be responsible for paying the difference between the single occupancy hotel rate and the rate for the family member and/or friend.

8.4.2.7 Incidentals

An allowance for incidental expenses, as defined by the Office of Financial Management (OFM) is included within the daily per diem rates associated with the area of travel.

8.4.2.8 Extended Stay

It is the intent of this policy to have the employees of Lewis County travel in the most convenient and economical way possible. When a convention, conference or meeting has concluded, employees will have booked the most economical next available flight, unless a safety concern (e.g., the flight arrives at 2:00 a.m. and the drive home will put the employee at risk) becomes prevalent. In that event, the employee

is to return the next day on the most economical next available flight. Hours worked will be calculated as stated above in Section 8.2. Travel Time/Hours Worked.

8.4.2.9 Voluntary Extended Stay

Employees who want to extend their stay at the conference city by taking vacation or personal leave, and is not on behalf or for the betterment of the county, must request authorization in writing from their Elected Official or Department Director prior to the conference. If the request is approved, the vacation or personal leave will begin as soon as the conference has concluded. The county will not incur any additional expense above and beyond the business necessity of travel. All additional expenses for a voluntary extended stay will be at the expense of the employee. Any expenses incurred while on an extended stay shall not be reimbursed by the county, including, but not limited to, mileage, meal/hotel per diem, rental car, taxis, airport commuters, charges for luggage storage, changes to airline tickets, increased cost of round trip airfare from the original ticket, airline luggage fees, or incidentals costs. If the employee wishes to retain the rental vehicle for their own personal use after the conference, a separate rental agreement/contract must be completed under the employee's name. If the round trip airfare for the extended stay costs less than the original airfare, the employee shall not be compensated for the difference.

8.4.3 IN-COUNTY REIMBURSEMENT

In-county meals may be incurred for necessary and reasonable county purposes. Such meal is considered necessary when circumstances dictate this is the only reasonable time and place for the meeting or business. To receive reimbursement, pre-approval is required by the Elected Official or Department Director. Reimbursement of in-county meals will be processed in accordance with the **established per diem rate on the OFM website**.

8.4.3.1 Conference and Travel Related Meals

If meals are included in conference fees, employees will not be reimbursed for those meals. If meals are an option at an additional cost and the employee chooses not to attend the meal session, then the employee would be eligible for reimbursement.

Conference meal rates are not subject to the per diem schedule. It is recognized that conference meal rates may be higher than normal per diem rates due to additional costs. Thus, the employee choosing to attend a conference meal, i.e. dinner, will have the full rate reimbursed.

Example 1: An employee has paid a conference fee which includes the lunch meal. The employee chooses to go out to lunch instead. The employee is not eligible for meal reimbursement for the lunch meal.

Example 2: An employee is attending a conference in which there is a dinner meal, but the price is separate from the conference fee. The employee chooses not to attend the dinner. The employee would be eligible for dinner meal reimbursement.

Continental Breakfast: According to Section 10.40.20d outlined in SAAM (State Administrative and Accounting Manual) it is at the discretion of the employer to determine per diem eligibility for continental breakfasts offered by hotels.

8.5 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND MEALS WITH MEETINGS

8.5.1 PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for eligibility and payment of expenditures for light refreshments, meals, snacks and incidental expenses for county meetings, recognitions, retirements, and trainings in direct relation to county business.

8.5.2 INTRODUCTION

This policy is based on Washington State Attorney General informal article, see Eating and Drinking at Public Expense, which states, in part: "The consumption of nourishment is perhaps the classic example of what is ordinarily to be regarded as a private, personal and not public activity." And, "Thus, to pay for food and drink with public money is very much the exception rather than the rule."

This policy does not supersede applicable RCW's.

This policy does not obligate the County to provide meals under any circumstances.

8.5.3 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

Light refreshments are defined as "beverages and snacks that may be served between meals, for example: coffee, tea, juice, donuts, sweet rolls, cake, cookies, and pieces of fruit or cheese." Light refreshments may be provided at County expense for business meetings and formal training sessions. The BOCC will authorize department directors to approve the purchase of light refreshments up to one hundred dollars (\$100.00). An amount exceeding \$100.00 would need the pre-approval of the BOCC.

8.5.4 MEALS

Payment may be authorized for the actual cost of meals for elected and appointed officials and County employees, regardless of travel status, for business meetings or training sessions where attendance is advantageous to the County and meals provided per person must not exceed the authorized per diem amount for the location, and where ALL of the following requirements are met:

The purpose of the meeting is to conduct official County business or to provide training to County employees or County officials; AND

The meals are an integral part of the business meeting or training session. Integral is defined as "essential to completeness; part of the curriculum; formed as a unit with another part." AND

The meeting or training is a special situation or occasion outside of the normal daily business of County employees. County funds may not be used to provide meals for staff parties, routine staff meetings, routine departmental meetings, or any event deemed to be social in nature; AND

Approval is obtained prior to the meeting, as documented by a properly completed Request for Approval – Meals with Meetings form signed by the department Director or Elected official; AND

The amount paid for each individual meal, including tax and gratuity, does not exceed the applicable meal allowance for the location of the meeting as provided under “per diem” on the General Services Administration web site at <http://www.gsa.gov>; AND

Any added tip may not exceed 15% of the cost of the food, excluding tax; AND

The County obtains an itemized receipt for the actual cost of the meals.

Exceptions to these guidelines must be pre-approved by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).

Note: Under no circumstances may alcohol be provided at County expense.

The following are examples of when a meal MAY be provided using County funds:

Cookies, coffee and tea may be provided for citizens and staff at BOCC Meetings, the Mayors Meetings, the annual Legislative Round Table and the annual flood preparedness meeting.

An advisory committee meets quarterly for two hours. The committee is comprised of an Elected Official, county staff, community business leaders and citizens. Cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers and beverages may be provided.

County recognition and accomplishments and or retirement of employees, the County will only pay the cost of such items as cookies or cake, fruit, cheese and crackers, and beverages.

An employee attends a meeting of a local professional organization that meets once monthly for a seminar at a local restaurant. A registration fee is paid to the professional organization, which includes a meal. An office or department must work all day to complete essential work that is an integral part of county business, and due to difficulties, several hours of work remain before they are done. There is little time available in the coming week that allows for completion of the work. The Director or Elected official offers to have dinner delivered if staff remains to work through the evening in order to complete the work.

A natural disaster occurs which results in activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Staff are required to be at the center around-the-clock. Meals are brought in to the EOC for those on duty.

Other events, including annual employee recognitions or prolonged trainings may be approved by the County Manager on a case by case basis.

The following are examples of when meals MAY NOT be provided using County funds:

A department has a meeting from 11:30 – 1:00 on the first Tuesday of every month. Pizza is provided to encourage all staff to attend.

A staff member who has been with the County for 30 years is retiring and a dinner party is held in their honor.

A Director or Elected official takes an employee to lunch at a local restaurant in order to discuss recent developments in the department and develop a plan on how to handle added responsibilities.

A department has a staff meeting the morning of the second Thursday of each month. Donuts, fruit and juice are provided.

9.0 SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

See the Lewis County Safety and Risk Management Policy Manual. The County's Safety and Risk Management policy is found on the Lewis County Intranet.

9.1 DISTRACTED DRIVING

On-duty county employees are prohibited while driving to engage in phone calls, texting, or other distracted activities. Violations of this provision may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

10.0 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM

10.1 PURPOSE

Evaluation of an employee's performance is a regular and ongoing activity. Providing regular feedback and coaching to employees is paramount to the success of each employee and the organization.

The performance evaluation may include: A rating of the employee's quality and quantity of work, a review of problems which occurred during the previous year, establishment of a goal for career development and job enrichment, a review of the areas which need improvement, and setting goals for the employee for the ensuing year.

In the case of new hire employees who are serving probation, a written performance evaluation is recommended within the first thirty (30) days of employment. Offices, departments and divisions should continue to have informal sessions with new employees to counsel them on their progress and to provide support and direction on job performance.

In addition, thirty (30) days prior to the completion of the probationary period, a written performance evaluation is recommended. In addition to evaluating job performance, this evaluation also serves the purpose of making a recommendation documenting that the new employee has or has not satisfactorily completed their probationary period of employment.

10.2 RATING

An Elected/Director shall establish and make effective a system of rating designed to give a documented evaluation of the work performed. Such rating shall be prepared and recorded for all employees annually.

10.3 PROCEDURE

10.3.1 ELECTED/DIRECTOR REVIEW

The Elected/Director shall review all rating forms and when necessary shall meet with the employee or supervisor to discuss problems in the rating. Any comment made by the Elected/Director shall be made a part of the form and supplied to the supervisor and employee.

10.3.2 USE OF EVALUATION

The evaluation form shall be a part of the employee's personnel file and may be used as a factor in determining promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, salary increase, disciplinary action, satisfactory completion of probation, and continued employment.

11. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

11.1 POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON THE JOB

Employees of the County shall not solicit any money, influence, service or other things of value, or otherwise aid or promote any political committee or the nomination or election of any person to public office during work hours. Further, employees shall abide by the terms of RCW 42.17A.555.

11.2 EMPLOYEES RUNNING FOR POLITICAL OFFICE

The County encourages its employees to be active in community affairs and as such, an employee may seek or accept nomination, election or appointment to a political office; provided, such nomination, election or appointment does not in any way create a conflict of interest or interfere with the employee's regular duties with the County. In the event of such conflict of interest or interference with official duties, and upon the employee's request, the employee may be placed on an approved leave of absence without pay for up to 180 days during the campaign. If the employee does not request such leave, and in the event of allegations by the public or County employees of such conflict of interest and/or interference with work performance, the Employer shall request an independent investigation of the allegations, with the results reported to the Employer. Should the investigation substantiate such conflict/interference, the Employer may direct that the employee be placed on an approved leave of absence without pay for up to 180 days. Note: If the employee's position is federally funded, they may be covered by the Hatch Act. The Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 1501 – 1508) restricts the political activity of individuals principally employed by state, county, or municipal executive agencies in connection with programs financed in whole or in part by loans or grants made by the United States or a federal agency. An employee covered by the Act may not be a candidate for public office in a partisan election, i.e., an election in which any candidate represents, for example, the Republican or Democratic Party.

11.3 PRESS RELEASES - RELEASE OF INFORMATION

County Press Releases shall be issued by the BOCC or other Elected Officials of the County, or their designee. No County employee may release any information or respond to questions from the news media on behalf of Lewis County unless designated by the BOCC or other Elected Official.

Information, to include confidential information may be subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act. Any request from members of the public for public records should be directed to your designated public records officer.

12.0 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

12.1 COUNTY COMES FIRST

When an individual accepts employment with the County it is understood that the County has first call upon the services of its employees, regardless of any impact upon secondary employment.

12.1.1 INCOMPATIBLE WORK

Employees shall not engage in outside employment that is incompatible with County employment, will detract from the efficiency of work performance, or is in conflict with the interests of the County. The County will hold all employees to the same standards of performance and scheduling demands and will not make exceptions for employees who hold outside jobs.

12.1.2 NOTIFICATION

Employees shall notify the Elected/Director, in writing and in advance of taking an outside job, of all employment outside the scope of their employment with the County.

12.1.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees are expected to avoid situations that might cause their personal interests to conflict with the interests of the County or to compromise its reputation or integrity. A conflict of interest, or the appearance of one, occurs when employees or a member of their immediate family or relative use the employee's position with the County for personal benefit through an investment, association, or business relationship that interferes with the ability to exercise independent judgment on the County's behalf. Examples are: Having a financial interest in or moonlighting for any person or organization that is a vendor or contractor for the County, regulated or subject to regulation by the County, or engaged in litigation against the County.

Full-time employees are discouraged from accepting second jobs, whether self-employment or otherwise. All employees holding or considering second jobs must obtain permission from their Elected/Director in order to ensure that the job will not create a conflict of interest or interfere with the proper performance of their duties.

Employees shall not accept meals or other gifts from salespeople, vendors, suppliers, or any other solicitors which may cause an undue or the appearance of an undue influence or in exchange of county services.

13.0 GIFTS, GRATUITIES, FEES

The purpose of this policy is to give guidance to employees as to their responsibilities relating to gifts and gratuities.

13.1 SOLICITATION OF GIFTS

County personnel shall not, under any circumstances, solicit any gift, gratuity, loan, or fee where there is any relationship between the solicitation and the employees' employment with Lewis County.

13.2 ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

County personnel shall not accept either directly or indirectly any gift, gratuity, loan, or fee where there is any direct relationship between the acceptance and the employees' employment with Lewis County.

13.2 UNDUE INFLUENCE

County personnel shall not accept either directly or indirectly any gift, gratuity, loan or fee, or any other thing of value, the acceptance of which might influence or appear to influence directly or indirectly the actions of the employee or those employees supervised by the employee.

13.3 NOMINAL VALUE ITEMS

Items with a nominal value, less than fifty dollars (\$50.00), and distributed in a general manner by businesses, vendors and, consultants as their routine policy of conducting business and advertising, shall be considered social amenities and not subject to this policy. Examples would be an occasional cup of coffee, desk and wall calendars, pens, pencils, note pads, coffee mugs, baseball caps, etc.

14.0 REPORTING IMPROPER GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS –WHISTLEBLOWERS

14.1 DEFINITIONS

"Improper governmental action" means any action taken by a County government officer or employee that is (a) undertaken in the performance of the officer's or employee's official duties, whether or not the action is within the scope of the employee's employment; and (b) that is in violation of any federal, state, or local law or rule, is an abuse of authority, is of substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety, or is a gross waste of public funds. Improper governmental action does not include non-discriminatory personnel actions.

"Whistleblower" means an employee who in good faith reports alleged improper governmental action to County officials pursuant to this policy. It also means an employee who cooperates and provides information to County officials investigating improper governmental actions in accordance with this section.

"Retaliatory action" means any adverse change in an employee's employment status or the terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to, denial of adequate staff to perform duties, frequent staff changes, frequent and undesirable office changes, or refusal to assign meaningful work. Retaliatory action also means unwarranted and unsubstantiated letters of reprimand, demotion, transfer, reassignment, reduction in pay, denial of promotion, suspension, dismissal, unsatisfactory performance evaluations, and any other disciplinary action.

Whistleblowers are not free to disclose matters that would affect a person's right to legally protected confidential communications.

Except in the case of an emergency (defined as a circumstance that if not immediately changed may cause damage to persons or property), employees who believe that the County or a County employee is engaged or involved in an improper governmental action are required to submit a report of the improper conduct to one of the below listed County Officials and permit sufficient time for a County report prior to submission to any outside entities.

Employees may report the improper governmental action to one of the following:

- a) The employee's Department Director/Elected
- b) The Board of County Commissioners
- c) The County Sheriff
- d) The County Prosecuting Attorney

Within five days upon receipt of the report, the receiving County official shall acknowledge receipt of the report to the Whistleblower.

A preliminary investigation shall be conducted and if, after such investigation, it appears that the matter is so unsubstantiated that no further investigation, prosecution, or action is necessary, the Whistleblower shall be advised in writing containing a summary of the information received, a summary of the results of the preliminary investigation, and the preliminary determination made.

The identity of the Whistleblower shall remain confidential to the extent possible under law, unless the employee authorizes the disclosure of his/her identity in writing or unless the preliminary investigation determines that the information has been provided other than in good faith.

If, after preliminary investigation, further investigation is warranted, the Whistleblower shall be advised and the County official assigned the information from the Whistleblower shall either conduct further investigations or issue a report as to the findings of the preliminary investigation. Within sixty (60) days, the County official shall complete any investigation and report findings unless written justification for the delay is furnished to the Whistleblower. In all such cases, the report of the investigation and findings shall be provided to the Whistleblower within one year.

14.2 RETALIATORY ACTION AGAINST WHISTLEBLOWERS PROHIBITED

The County, including its managers or supervisors, shall not take any retaliatory action against a Whistleblower as a result of information provided by that employee in good faith in accordance with this policy.

(a) Employees who provide information not in good faith or not in accordance with this policy are subject to disciplinary action.

(b) An employee who believes that retaliatory action was taken by the County shall provide to the Board of County Commissioners a written notice that specifies the alleged retaliatory action and specifies the relief requested. The written notice must be filed with the Board no later than thirty (30) days after the occurrence of the alleged retaliatory action. If the person is employed by another Elected Official, the report shall be made to that Elected.

(c) The Board/Elected has thirty (30) days to respond to the charge of retaliatory action and request for relief.

(d) Upon receipt of the response of the Board/Elected, but in no case longer than the thirty (30) days from the date the written notice was filed with the Board/Elected, the employee has fifteen (15) days to request a hearing to establish that a retaliatory action occurred and to obtain appropriate relief.

(e) Within five (5) working days of the receipt of the request for a hearing, the Board/Elected shall apply to the state office of administrative hearings for an adjudicative proceeding before an administrative law judge. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with RCW 34.05.410 through 34.05.598.

f) The employee, as the initiating party, must prove his/her claim by a preponderance of the evidence. The administrative law judge shall issue a final decision consisting of findings of fact, conclusions of law, and judgment no later than forty-five (45) days after the date the request for hearing was delivered to the County. The administrative law judge may grant specific extensions of time beyond this period of time for rendering a decision upon the request of either party upon a showing of good cause, or upon his/her own motion.

(g) The relief that may be granted by the administrative law judge consists of reinstatement with or without back pay, and such injunctive relief as may be found to be necessary in order to return the employee to the position he or she ~~had~~ held before the retaliatory action and to prevent any recurrence of retaliatory action. The administrative law judge may award costs and reasonable attorneys' fees to the prevailing party.

(h) If a determination is made that retaliatory action has been taken against the employee, the administrative law judge may, in addition to any other remedy, impose a civil penalty personally upon the retaliator of up to three thousand dollars (\$3,000) payable by each person found to have retaliated against the employee and recommend to the County that any person found to have retaliated against the employee be suspended with or without pay or dismissed. All penalties recovered shall be paid to the local government administrative hearings account.

(i) The final decision of the administrative law judge is subject to judicial review under the arbitrary and capricious standard. Relief ordered by the administrative law judge may be enforced by petition to superior court.

15.0 HARASSMENT

15.1 STATEMENT OF CONCERN

The County seeks to eliminate and prevent harassment, as well as to alleviate any effects such harassment may have on the working condition of an employee. Harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are highly offensive to a reasonable person and in derogation of gender, sexual orientation, race ethnic background, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, or to any protected class, including those with physical or mental disabilities, or basing personnel decisions on an employee's response to such harassment. All such harassment is forbidden. The County regards job related harassment as a serious violation.

15.2 PURPOSE

The Policy of the County is that every employee has a fundamental right to be free of such harassment. In response to formal reports of harassment, the County will seek to protect all parties involved from retaliation, false accusations, or future harassment, and where indicated, will take prompt and adequate remedial measures.

Should an issue of harassment be raised, all related matters will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible throughout the investigation, counseling and disciplinary stages. Any Elected/Director receiving notice of harassment shall initiate or request an investigation and insure that the charge is resolved appropriately, with a report submitted by Directors to the Board or his/her designee.

15.3 REPORTING HARASSMENT

Any employee who feels harassed or is aware of harassment of another employee is urged to report this to an immediate supervisor, Elected/Director, Human Resources Department, County Manager, or the Board.

The report may be informal or formal. A formal report shall include a written statement.

15.4 INVESTIGATION

A thorough investigation will be conducted with appropriate action taken.

15.5 CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS RELATING TO HARASSMENT

Records relating to harassment, including written reports regarding alleged harassment, memos between County employees concerning investigation of such allegations, and County recommendations in response to allegations shall be kept as confidential as possible within the rules and regulations of the Public Records Act. This procedure shall apply to the investigation of violations of all County policies.

16.0 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Lewis County is committed to working with employees who are victims of violence to prevent abuse and intimidation from occurring in the workplace. No employee will be penalized or disciplined solely for being a victim of intimidation in the workplace.

Lewis County will not tolerate domestic, or any other type of violence including intimidation of any employee or visitor while in county offices, facilities, work sites, vehicles, or while conducting county business. This includes the display of any violent or threatening behavior (verbal or physical) that may result in physical or emotional injury or otherwise places one's safety and productivity at risk.

Any employee who threatens, intimidates, or abuses someone at the workplace or from the workplace using any county resources such as work time, workplace phones, FAX machines, mail, e-mail, or other means may be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee who feels threatened or is aware of threatening or violent behavior is urged to report this to an immediate supervisor, Elected/Director, Human Resources/Risk Management Department, or the Board of County Commissioners. The report may be informal or formal. A formal report shall include a written statement.

16.1 PROCEDURES

It is important for all employees to know the best response to violence in the workplace. Each situation requires that the individuals involved assess the circumstances and act accordingly. The following,

guidelines have been developed to assist County employees when threats or acts of violence occur in the workplace.

- Stay calm and polite.
- Listen with empathy and respect for others.
- Focus on the problem not the person.
- A violent or threatening person is more likely to de-escalate if someone approaches him or her calmly, without anger or defensiveness.
- Never challenge or bargain with a threatening person.
- If a person stays angry, get help.
- If you become aware someone is in danger of a violent situation, get help immediately.
- When aggressive behavior is taking or has taken place, call 911.
- If you believe using the phone will escalate the situation, ask the first staff person you see for assistance.
- When there is a clear threat of an impending aggressive act call 911.

16.2 POST VIOLENCE:

- Contact the Elected/Director and report the incident.

Violence in the workplace can be devastating. Participation in conflict management and workplace violence training will help you to be better prepared for these situations. See the Human Resources Department for more information on workplace violence and training workshops.

17.0 CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE, ETC.

17.1 PURPOSE AND NOTIFICATION

The County is committed to maintaining accurate personnel files. The employee or supervisor shall notify the Elected/Director or their designee, Human Resources and Payroll, should any of the following change:

Name
Address
Telephone Number

18.0 PERSONNEL FILES

18.1 MAINTAINING PERSONNEL FILES

Departments and Elected Officials shall maintain personnel files on all full-time, part-time, probationary, project, and extra-help (casual) employees. The Office/Department shall maintain separate medical and Workers' Compensation files. Both Personnel Files and Medical files are the property of Lewis County and such files are confidential and should be treated as such.

18.1.1 MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL FILES

Personnel files on all employees in departments under control of the Board of Commissioners shall be maintained in a secure manner in the respective Department. Elected Officials should maintain their files pursuant to office policy.

Items Included in Personnel Files may include the following:

- a. A completed application for employment.
- b. A completed Employee Emergency Data Sheet.
- c. A copy of the individual's appointment letter.
- d. A copy of the Washington State Department of Licensing driving status and driving record of the employee.
- e. Copies of certifications, licenses, education, or verification of training required of the position.
- f. All completed training forms documenting training received by the employee including copies of certifications under the equipment training program (Public Works).
- g. Documents and letters showing changes in job assignments.
- h. Performance and promotional records, letters, and evaluations.
- i. Letters and memoranda of recognition, commendation, and thank you.
- j. Letters of warning, caution, and reprimand.
- k. Documentation outlining disciplinary action taken by the department.
- l. Documentation showing date and circumstances under which the working relationship was terminated with the employee.
- m. Exit Interviews.
- n. Any other material deemed appropriate by the Elected/Director.

18.1.2 MEDICAL FILES

Any correspondence pertaining to medical condition, work restriction, or performance analysis under the Lewis County self-insurance program.

18.2 EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILE

Lewis County employees may examine their personnel records in accordance with Chapter 42 of the Revised Code of Washington. This policy and procedure applies to all Lewis County employees.

18.2.1 POLICY

Employees may inspect his or her personnel file upon request. If the employee believes documentation found in the file is inaccurate or irrelevant, he or she may request removal of the document and/or may provide written rebutting information to be placed in his or her file if the Employer refuses to remove the information.

18.2.2. PROCEDURE

- a. Employees wishing to inspect/review their personnel file shall make an appointment in advance with the Elected/Director or his/her designee.

b. Employees may be required to submit adequate proof of identification.

c. Employees requesting an inspection by or release of records directly to unions, other employers, attorneys, etc., may be requested to sign a waiver for submission by the party seeking the records on the employee's behalf.

18.3 PUBLIC ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES

Personnel files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act and may be disclosed in accordance with the Public Records Act.

19.0 NEPOTISM

Immediate family relatives and cohabitation partners will not be employed in full-time, part-time, project, or extra-help (casual) positions, or as independent contractors, where:

One immediate family relative or cohabitation partner would have the authority to supervise, appoint, remove, discipline, or evaluate the performance of the other.

One immediate family relative or cohabitation partner would be responsible for auditing, verifying, reconciling, or certifying the work of the other.

Employees who marry or begin cohabitation after employment shall be treated in accordance with this policy.

20.0 BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS (BBP) -STATEMENT OF CONCERN

The spread of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and AIDS Related Complex (ARC) through propagation of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and the potential for spread of Hepatitis B through propagation of the Hepatitis B virus (HBv), warrant the establishment of County policies to address the various aspects of these conditions as they relate to County employees and the County's interaction with the public. HIV and HBv policies are integrated into the broader program of Bloodborne Pathogen (BBP) control as mandated by WISHA Standard WAC 296-823. See Risk Management and Safety Policies.

21.0 DRESS AND GROOMING CODE

Each employee is expected to dress and groom appropriately for the job. The Elected/Director will offer guidance as to proper attire and grooming standards. Special requirements for reasons of safety may also be established. Failing to observe established standards for dress and grooming can be cause for disciplinary action.

22.0 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are not normally employees of the County. However, volunteers may be deemed employees for all purposes relating to medical aid benefits under Chapter 51.36 RCW, at the option of Lewis County, and only when done through written agreements.

The definition of a "volunteer", as found in Chapter 51.12.035, RCW "...shall mean a person who performs any assigned or authorized duties for the state or any agency thereof, except emergency services workers as described by Chapter 38.52 RCW, brought about by one's own free choice, receives no wages, and is registered and accepted as a volunteer by the state or any agency thereof..." Furthermore, "Provided, that such person shall be deemed to be a volunteer although he or she may be granted maintenance and reimbursement for actual expenses necessarily incurred in performing his/her assigned or authorized duties".

Once registered and accepted, volunteers are subject to the County's rules and policies governing employee conduct. Any volunteer may have their registration and official acceptance withdrawn at the discretion of the Elected/Director.

23.0 WORK AREAS

23.1 APPEARANCE

The County's objective is to provide and maintain clean, safe and healthy work conditions. It is the responsibility of each employee to maintain a safe, neat work area and ensure that all working documents, desks, and cabinets are secured at the close of the workday.

County vehicles are considered a work area when an employee is assigned a county vehicle.

23.2 WORK AREA PRIVACY

Except in areas and under conditions where employees are expressly permitted to provide their own locks and security devices, employees shall have no expectation of privacy in County provided work areas. Any exceptions shall be granted in writing only by the Board or independent Elected Official. County equipment, including, but not limited to, desks, computers (including but not limited to central processing units, network electronic mail files, disk drives, CD's, USB Drives, etc.), voice mail repository files, facsimile machines, file cabinets, lockers, and other storage facilities are subject to inspection by the Elected/Director or their designee at any time and without the employee's approval or knowledge, or notice given.

24.0 PERSONAL PHONE CALLS & TEXT MESSAGING

County phones or electronic transmission devices are to be used for County purposes. Under no circumstances shall an employee charge a personal long distance call to the County unless authorized by his or her elected or director. Telephone calls or electronic transmissions of a personal nature (incoming or outgoing) should be kept to an absolute minimum (even with the employees own device) and made during breaks or lunch periods whenever possible. Using County devices while at work or during working hours shall comply with all Lewis County policies and procedures as well as WAC requirements.

County cell phones are to be used for County purpose. In the event of an emergency or necessity, an employee may use a County cell phone for personal use. The usage must be reported. Employees will reimburse the Employer if applicable.

25.0 SMOKING

The County's smoking policy is set forth through Lewis County Code Title 2.05 Smoking in County Buildings. All employees and the public shall refrain from smoking within public places or any place of employment or within a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet from entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes of said places. Smoking shall include e-cigarettes or vapes.

26.0 FAIR EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

26.1 SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is an "unlawful employment practice" under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct constitute sexual harassment when:

Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of an individual's employment;

Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual;

Submission to such conduct either explicitly or implicitly is a term or condition of service delivery to a client or a contract award; or

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment is defined as deliberate or repeated behavior of a sexual nature which is unwelcome. It can include verbal behavior such as unwanted sexual comments, suggestions, jokes or pressure for sexual favors; non-verbal behavior such as suggestive looks and leering; and physical behavior such as pats or squeezes, or repeatedly brushing against someone's body.

Lewis County will not tolerate sexual harassment and/or inappropriate sexual conduct. Sexual conduct is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This is especially so when:

Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment; or

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and businesslike manner at all times. Inappropriate sexual conduct that could lead to a claim of sexual harassment is expressly prohibited by this policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, sexually implicit or explicit communication whether in:

Written form, such as: cartoons, posters, calendars, notes, letters, e-mail, etc.

Verbal form, such as: comments, jokes, foul or obscene language of a sexual nature, gossiping or questions about another person's sex life, or repeated unwanted requests for dates.

Physical gestures or other nonverbal behavior, such as: unwelcome touching, grabbing, fondling, kissing, massaging, and/or brushing up against another person's body.

Any employee who feels harassed or is aware of harassment of another employee is urged to report this to an immediate supervisor, Elected/Director, Human Resource Department, the Board, or the Risk Management Department. The report may be informal or formal. A formal report shall include a written statement.

26.1.1 POLICY

Lewis County will take all precautions to discourage sexual harassment from occurring. It is the employee's responsibility to bring all concerns of sexual harassment to the attention of management. This includes employees who think they are the recipient of sexual harassment as well as those who believe they have witnessed another employee being harassed. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as is permitted by law.

Sexual harassment negatively affects morale, motivation, and job performance. It results in increased absenteeism, turnover, inefficiency, and loss of productivity. It is inappropriate, offensive and illegal, and it will not be tolerated in Lewis County government.

Any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment is in violation of this policy and shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employees proven to have filed an intentionally false complaint may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

No employee will be retaliated against for complaining about harassment. An employee who restrains, interferes with, coerces, discriminates or engages in retaliation against any employee filing a complaint, seeking resolution, or witnessing sexual harassment, shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

The Board of Lewis County Commissioners firmly believes the employees of Lewis County to be capable of exercising good judgment and common sense in their working relationships and to treat one another in a fair and courteous manner. Such behavior helps protect the County and its employees from legal or disciplinary actions.

26.2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Lewis County is an equal opportunity employer that provides access, free from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, or any other basis protected by law, in employment or provisions of services. Lewis County strives to eliminate any barriers that may prevent access to County facilities and services.

It is the policy of Lewis County to provide equal opportunity to all its employees and applicants for employment. This policy shall be given the highest priority in the day-to-day operations of Lewis County personnel activities.

26.2.1 PURPOSE:

To assure a work environment free from discrimination and harassment against any persons on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability, genetic information, or any other basis protected by law in all areas employment or provision of services. This Equal Opportunity policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Title 6 and Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Equal Employment Act of 1972, Presidential Executive Order #11246 (as amended by Presidential Executive Order #11375), and Chapter 60 of Title 41 CFR, Part 60-2.
- Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration's Equal Employment Opportunity Program Guidelines for Grant Recipients contained in Circular "UMTA C 4704.1" and the implementing regulation of UMT Act of 1964, as amended, 49 U.S.C. 1601, Section 19.
- The U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Civil Rights 28 CFR 42.301 governing requirements for grant recipients to establish and maintain an EEO Plan which includes race/gender workforce analysis, hiring and implementation plan components.
- Washington Administrative Codes governing employment regulations (Chapter 162-12, 16, 18, 20, 22 & 30), Revised Code of Washington Chapter 49.60 – Washington State Law Against Discrimination, as amended by Initiative 200.

26.2.2 REPORTING

The Affirmative Action Officer is responsible for the development of the Affirmative Action Program, including implementation and maintenance of systems which monitor the effectiveness of the Affirmative Action Policy and related Fair Employment Policies, as defined by RCW 49.60.400. The Affirmative Action Officer is responsible for compiling data, preparing, and submitting the biennial EEO-4 report.

Any person applying for employment, a current employee, or an individual wanting to participate in a County sponsored program or activity, or their representative, may make a request for reasonable accommodation by contacting the ADA Coordinator (HR Dept.) at (360)740-1408 or (360) 740-1480 TTY.

Lewis County reserves the right to create and implement bona fide occupational qualifications for any position within Lewis County government. Administration of this policy does not imply a contract of employment or revoke the County's At-Will employment policy.

Anyone having questions or complaints regarding Affirmative Action or Equal Employment Opportunities in Lewis County government is asked to contact the Affirmative Action Officer at (360) 740-1408 or (360)

740-1480 TTY. The Affirmative Action Officer is responsible for reporting to the Lewis County Board of Commissioners regarding these matters.

26.3 HIV/AIDS: NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Lewis County recognizes persons who have or are perceived by others to have Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and those who have tested positive for the HIV antibodies or who are members of one of the high risk groups, are related to or live with someone who has HIV/AIDS are protected by federal, state, and local laws prohibiting discrimination in employment. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is a medical condition considered to be a disability under the Washington State Law Against Discrimination (WLAD), RCW 49.60. Every Lewis County employee has the right to be free from discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, national origin, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical handicap, or any other basis protected by law.

26.4 FAIR EMPLOYMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Anyone having complaints regarding affirmative action or equal employment opportunities in Lewis County government is asked to contact the Affirmative Action Officer at (360) 740-1408 or (360) 740-1480 TTY, or can be mailed to:

Affirmative Action Officer
Lewis County
351 NW North Street
Chehalis, WA 98532

All employees, candidates, clients, and applicants of Lewis County government agencies are encouraged to use this complaint procedure when it is believed discrimination has occurred in employment or services within Lewis County government or by its contractors. Complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible, and all records of the complaint and investigation will be maintained in a secure manner. Assistance will be provided to anyone requesting assistance in filing a complaint.

A complaint should be filed in accordance with the law, and have sufficient information for the Affirmative Action Officer to determine the substance of the complaint. If an informal investigation is warranted, the complainant and their representatives will be given an opportunity to submit additional information relevant to the investigation.

The Affirmative Action Officer will determine the complaint's validity and issue a written judgment resolving the complaint. The complainant will be notified of the decision and/or resolution. A request for reconsideration can be made within ten (10) calendar days of the decision to:

Board of County Commissioners
351 NW North St.
Chehalis, WA 98532-1900

The Board of County Commissioners may refer the reconsideration for further investigation, and after further investigation issue a decision on the complaint. The complainant shall be notified of the decision. The decision of the Board of County Commissioners is final within Lewis County.

A complaint may also be filed as per Washington State Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 RCW or Title VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Office of Equal Opportunity, Washington State Human Rights Commission, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of Civil Rights, or any other appropriate civil rights enforcement entity.

26.5 PARKING ACCOMMODATION

Employees may request special accommodation in respect of parking. Employees may request their needs with the HR Department. Each case will be evaluated individually and may be granted based upon availability of space and on a temporary basis.

27.0 TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Any and all electronic transmissions across Lewis County systems are subject to monitoring. Occasional but limited use as defined by WAC 292-110-010 is permitted. Such as, use of personal email during breaks, wishing a “happy birthday” or advising of an “agency” social event over messaging, using the internet to retrieve general information during non-working time (i.e.: reading an online newspaper). Social networking sites (like Facebook and Twitter) and video sharing websites (like YouTube) must comply with the internet usage policy. Use beyond de minimis usage may result in disciplinary action. Other usage that may lead to discipline are; accessing pornography or other sexually explicit material, suggestive, offensive, demeaning, insulting, harassing or disparaging of others, gambling, use for personal business, downloading software, posting information that is confidential and/or proprietary, distributing information about Lewis County or its employees, or any other usage that would violate Lewis County Policy or law. Furthermore, usage of these technologies must be approved by the Elected/Director.

27.1 COUNTY EQUIPMENT

All County equipment is the property of Lewis County as described in Section 26 Work Area Privacy. Only where written permission is provided by the Elected, the employee shall have no expectation of privacy using County provided computer/electronic equipment. Review or search of such equipment for any reason may occur along with random searches.

27.2 SOCIAL NETWORK AND BLOG POLICY

Employees may access personal blogs/social networking sites on work premises for their own use, provided that this is outside of working hours and is not excessive (agreed for each division, department, and/or individual). Employees must ensure they are compliant with any rules in the policy outlined below, Personal Conduct (Section 4.1), and Work Area Privacy (Section 26.2).

At Lewis County, we understand 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.

27.2.1 GUIDELINES

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with Lewis County, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

Applying the basic principles and guidelines to your activities online will be helpful. 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 associates or otherwise adversely affects members, customers, suppliers, people who work on behalf of Lewis County or Lewis County's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

27.2.2 KNOW AND FOLLOW THE RULES

Carefully read these guidelines, the Lewis County Statement of Ethics Policy, the Lewis County Technology Policy and the Discrimination & Harassment Policies, Workplace Violence Policy and ensure your postings are consistent with these 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.

27.2.3 BE RESPECTFUL

Always be fair and courteous to fellow associates, customers, members, suppliers or people who work on behalf of Lewis County. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing our Open Door Policy 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 customers, members, associates or suppliers, 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 company policy.

27.2.4 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 posts 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 Lewis County, fellow associates, members, customers, suppliers, or people working on behalf of Lewis County or other municipalities.

27.2.4 POST ONLY APPROPRIATE AND RESPECTFUL CONTENT

Maintain the confidentiality of Lewis County trade secrets and private or confidential information. Trades secrets may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, know-how and technology.

Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communications.

Respect financial disclosure laws. It is illegal to communicate or give a “tip” on inside information to others so that they may have a financial gain.

Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to a Lewis County website without identifying yourself as a Lewis County Lewis County.

Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for Lewis County. If Lewis County is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are a Lewis County employee and make it clear that your views do not represent those of Lewis County, fellow Lewis County employees, elected officials, customers, suppliers or people working on behalf of Lewis County.

If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects associated with Lewis County, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of Lewis 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 Lewis County.”

27.2.5 USING SOCIAL MEDIA AT WORK

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment we provide, unless it is work-related as authorized by your manager or consistent with the Technology and Equipment Policy.

Do not use Lewis County email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

27.2.6 RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED

Lewis County prohibits taking negative action against any Lewis County 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.

27.2.7 MEDIA CONTACTS

Employees should not speak to the media on Lewis County's behalf without approval by the elected official or designee. All media inquiries should be directed to them.

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact your elected official, director, or the Human Resource Department.

Employees are advised not to write about their work or make reference to the County on external web pages, i.e. in blogs or on social networking sites.

When an employee chooses to do so, they should make it clear that the views expressed are his/hers only and do not reflect the views of the County. Failure to adhere to these rules may be considered misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action under the County's Disciplinary Procedures (Section 4.3).

Employees must not:

- Disclose any information that is confidential to the County or any third party, or disclose personal data or information about any individual, co-worker, or service user, which could be in a breach of the Data Protection Act;

- Disclose any information which is not yet in the public arena; post illegal material, e.g. images of child abuse or material that incites racial hatred;

- Link their own blogs/personal web pages to the County's website;

- Include any information, sourced from the County, which breaches copyright;

- Make defamatory remarks about the County, co-workers, or service users;

- Misrepresent the County by posting false or inaccurate statements about the County.

27.3 USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES TO ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITIES

Some County employees need to communicate and engage with the public as part of their work. Social networking sites represent an opportunity for such engagement. However, there are risks associated with using these sites. Employees wishing to use this method of communication should consult with their supervisor who will conduct ongoing assessments.

This policy relies on employees acting responsibly and in accordance with the above rules. When employees have concerns that co-workers are acting in breach of the above rules, they are encouraged to report it under the County's Whistleblower procedure. Where concerns are raised, an investigation may be warranted.

27.4 TIKTOK PROHIBITED

This policy applies to users, whether employees, volunteers, or guests on systems and/or networks owned, leased, rented, or otherwise under the responsibility of Lewis County. It covers Information

Technology management decisions only. Following applicable office and/or department policies and applicable laws is assumed.

1. Users will not install TikTok on County Owned Devices Users will not install TikTok or TikTok-owned applications on devices owned, leased, rented, or otherwise under responsibility of Lewis County. Users will work with Lewis County IT to remove TikTok or TikTok-owned software where it is in violation of this policy.
2. Users will not access TikTok on County Operated Networks Users will not access TikTok or TikTok-owned services while connected to networks owned or operated by Lewis County.
3. Lewis County Information Technology will block domains owned by TikTok Lewis County IT will use firewalls and/or DNS block lists to deny access to domains owned or operated by TikTok in order to disrupt any attempt to use TikTok on networks owned or operated by Lewis County.

27.5 PERSONAL RECORDINGS

Washington Law, RCW 9.73.030, requires that any person intercepting, recording, or divulging private communication obtain consent. Lewis County believes in the privacy of its workers and citizens. Any person seeking to film or record employees outside of Open Public Meetings, must first receive consent.

27.6 PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal computer devices may be used at work in accordance with Lewis County policies and office or department protocols. Such usage should be kept to an absolute minimum and made during breaks or lunch periods whenever possible. Devices should be silenced during working hours. Usage should not be disruptive or intrusive in the workplace.

28.0 SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT

28.1 TERMINATION

Deputies, Department Directors and Managers, probationary, extra-help (casual), and project employees may be separated from County service without rights of appeal or hearing; these employees are deemed to serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority that may revoke such appointments at will. All other regular full-time and part-time employees who have completed probation may be terminated only for cause with rights of hearing and appeal pursuant to Section 4 of this Handbook.

28.2 RESIGNATIONS

Any employee may resign by presenting a resignation in writing, specifying the last day to be worked, to his/her employer.

All accumulated leave (including sick leave at a rate of one (1) hour's compensation for each two (2) hours accrued sick leave to a maximum of 360 hours of pay) may be paid in cash, as provided in these policies, or may be used prior to the effective date, subject to Elected/Director approval.

Once tendered, a resignation may only be revoked with approval of the appointing authority, and permission to work until the final scheduled day shall be conditioned upon the elected or directors discretion.

28.3 LAYOFF & RETURNS

Employees who are laid-off due to economic or budgetary reasons, who later return to the same classification under the layoff status shall receive credit for time worked. This will ensure that their vacation and longevity accrual rates do not change upon return. When an employee returns from layoff status there is no probationary status since they have already completed such status.

28.4 EXIT INTERVIEWS

An exit interview may be conducted at the time of each employment separation. Exit interviews are strongly encouraged, but are not mandatory, as they can provide important information on employee's reasons for leaving.

Exit interviews are intended to provide employees with an opportunity to comment on County operations, job requirements, working conditions, and any other information the employee considers beneficial to County awareness.

Employees are encouraged to schedule an exit interview with his or her elected/director or the Human Resources Department prior to their departure from employment. The employee may choose to complete an Exit Interview Questionnaire, with or without disclosing their name, and forward the completed form to the Human Resources Department. When reporting the outcomes of exit interviews, the Human Resources Department shall make every effort to protect the confidentiality of individual interviews.