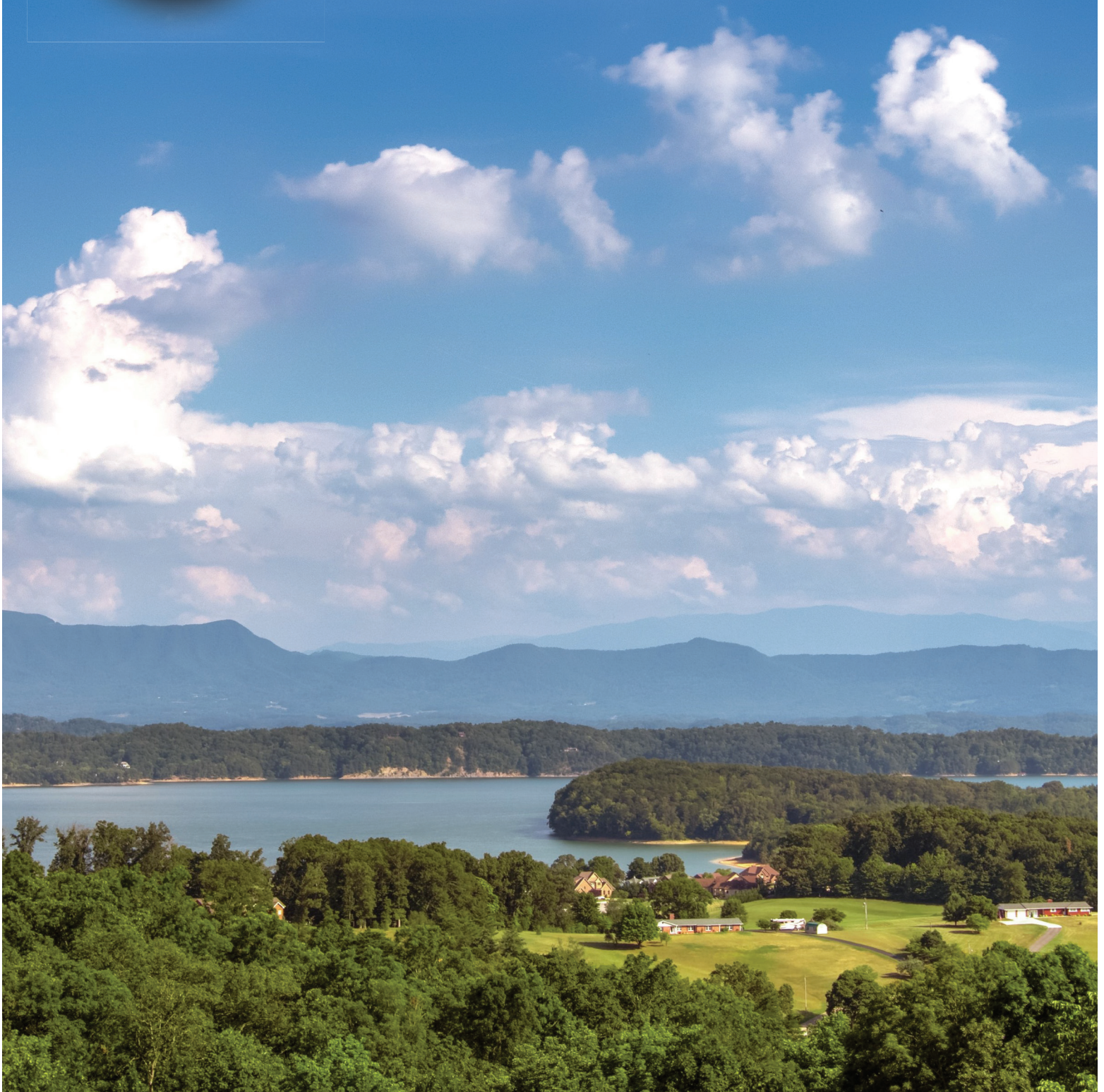




Jefferson County Employee Handbook





Jefferson County Government Employee Handbook

**A GUIDE TO PERSONNEL POLICIES
AND
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

**Mark Potts
COUNTY MAYOR**

THIS HANDBOOK WAS APPROVED BY:

JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSION

On

June 29, 2020



Jefferson County Office of the Mayor

Mark Potts
County Mayor

P. O. Box 710 • Dandridge, Tennessee 37725 • mpotts@jeffersoncountyttn.gov

Dear Jefferson County Employee,

Thank you for choosing to work for Jefferson County! We are excited for you to be a part of our team! You are an ambassador of Jefferson County!

Jefferson County employees and their families are our greatest assets. You represent each of us with your daily public contact. You exemplify our hospitality, friendliness, and dedication to service.

Our sustained operation as a county is approaching a milestone few counties can claim, Jefferson County will be 230 years old on June 11, 2022, 4 years older than the state of Tennessee, You are becoming one of our direct connections with the people we serve. We welcome you to that transition and look forward to your service as we together invest in Jefferson County.

This document is a wealth of knowledge designed to empower you to do your best work. You will find personnel policies, employee benefits, and your rights as a Jefferson County employee. Whether you are a new employee or have been here for many years, we want to enrich your tenure as a Jefferson County employee.

I wish you great success and fulfillment!

Sincerely,
Sincerely,

Mark Potts

Jefferson County Mayor

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Introduction

We are pleased to introduce the Jefferson County employee handbook. This handbook outlines and summarizes basic personnel policies, employee benefits, employee responsibilities and employee rights. This handbook is intended to be useful for all Jefferson County employees.

Jefferson County is committed to providing a quality workplace for employees. It is our goal to:

- Provide management that is skilled, fair and concerned about the welfare of our employees;
- Equitably compensate each employee in accordance with our classification and compensation plan;
- Discuss willingly and frankly any problems, complaints or questions on County personnel policies;
- Keep employees informed of any changes that may affect them or their families, and
- Promote and encourage healthy lifestyles for our employees and their families.

The foundation of this handbook is the Base Personnel Policies that were approved by the Jefferson County Commission. This handbook revokes and supersedes all prior handbooks, amendments, policies or communications related to the employee handbook.

This handbook was developed to provide general guidelines about Jefferson County policies and procedures for employees; however, it does not contain promises to any employee about how any particular situation will be handled. It is a guide to assist employees in becoming familiar with some of the benefits and obligations of employment, including our policy of at-will employment. None of the guidelines in this handbook are intended to give rise to contractual rights or obligations and are not a guarantee of employment for any specific period of time or any specific type of work. These guidelines, except the policy of employment at-will, are subject to modification, amendment or revocation by Jefferson County at any time, without advance notice. It is the intention of Jefferson County to adhere to all State and Federal laws. Any personnel policy found to be in conflict with a State or Federal law will be changed to ensure compliance with the law.

Amendments may be made periodically by the following process:

- Approved by the County Mayor;
- Reviewed by the Law Department;
- Approved by the County Commission (if required);
- Communicated to all Jefferson County employees; and
- Filed in the Jefferson County Clerk's Office.

It is your responsibility to ensure you have the most up-to-date version of the Handbook. All questions pertaining to information found in this Handbook should be referred to the County Mayor or appropriate elected office.

Policies for Employees of Elected Officials

Elected officials have the jurisdiction to create, maintain and administer separate personnel policies and procedures. In these cases, the elected officials will provide the handbook and policies for their employees. A copy of these documents is on file in the Jefferson County Clerk's Office. T.C.A. § 5-23-103(a) outlines the initial procedure for elected officials to adopt base personnel policies and procedures separate from a county's base personnel policies.

State and Federal Policies

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of Jefferson County to provide equal employment opportunities to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age disability, status as Vietnam-era veteran or especial disabled veteran, or status in any group protected by law. This policy extends to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training. It is the policy of Jefferson County to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in undue hardship. Employees or applicants with questions or concerns about any type of discriminations in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor or department head or any county official with whom the employee feels comfortable. It shall be the responsibility of the employee to bring any claim of unlawful harassment to the immediate attention of the County. Employees may raise concerns and make complaints without fear of reprisal and with the assurance of protection from harassment or retaliation. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Retaliation Strictly Prohibited

Retaliation occurs when an employee is punished for engaging in legally protected activity as described in the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy. Retaliation may include any negative job action, such as demotion, discipline, firing, salary reduction or job or shift reassignment. Also, an employee is protected from retaliation for having made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under Title VII, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Equal Pay Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.

Jefferson County employees who exercise their rights under the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, or assist others in exercising their rights, are protected from retaliation.

Jefferson County believes that retaliation against an employee is a serious violation of policy and a report/complaint of retaliation will be investigated promptly. If retaliation is found to have occurred, disciplinary action will be taken and may include termination.

Equal Employment Opportunity Grievance Procedures

It is the policy of Jefferson County to establish a procedure for employees to follow in order to bring grievances of discrimination, harassment or retaliation to the attention of management. Title I of the ADA prohibits private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies, and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

Procedure:

1. If there is a question or complaint regarding employment practices that you are unable to resolve with your immediate supervisor, you are encouraged to make that question or complaint known to the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer. You will be asked to state in writing the nature and detail of the complaint. **See Appendix A for Complaint Form.** Supervisors who receive a complaint not in writing must report the complaint immediately to the County Mayor. Any employee filing a complaint will not be subject to retaliation. Retaliation against an employee for reporting/complaining about an employment practice is strictly prohibited.
2. The EEO Officer will investigate the complaint with your director or department head and any other person with knowledge of the situation.
3. You will be advised of the results of the investigation and Jefferson County's decision regarding the complaint.
4. A record of the complaint and findings will become a part of the complaint investigation record, and the file will be maintained separately from your personnel file.

Workplace Harassment

It is the policy of Jefferson County to maintain a respectful work and public service environment. Jefferson County prohibits and will not tolerate any form of unlawful harassment by or towards any employee or official on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, status as an Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran or status in any other group protected by law. An employee or official who engages in such behavior is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

One particular kind of harassing behavior is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment, which can consist of a wide range of unwanted and unwelcome sexually directed behavior, is defined as:

1. Submitting to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or of obtaining public services, or
2. Submitting to or rejecting the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting an individual's employment or public services, or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or result of unreasonable interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Neither sexual harassment nor any other form of unlawful harassment will be tolerated in the workplace. Such conduct has the purpose of effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Employees are urged to report alleged incidents of unlawful harassment.

Discrimination/Harassment Complain Procedure

Discrimination, including harassment, in the workplace on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran, or status in any other group protected by law is illegal. If an employee believes that he/she has been subjected to illegal discrimination or harassment related to employment with Jefferson County, they should report the incident promptly to the county official or department head under whose direction the employee works. If the problem is not resolved within a reasonable time, or if for any reason the employee feels uncomfortable reporting the problem to the county official or department head, then the problem should be reported to the Chairman of the County Commission. The Chairman of the County Commission may act as a mediator between the affected employee and the county official or department head under whose direction the employee works to assist them in reaching an acceptable resolution of the problem. However, the Chairman of the County Commission has no legal authorization to make employment decisions on behalf of the county official or department head. No adverse personnel action will be taken against an employee for reporting a bona fide incident of discrimination or harassment or for assisting in the investigation of a complaint. Disciplinary action may be taken, however, against any individual providing false information in connection with a complaint.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

If you have a disability and need an accommodation to perform your job duties or to receive any regular benefit or condition of employment, you should make the request to your supervisor verbally or in written memo. Any other person may assist in making this request.

Jefferson County complies with the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336 (ADA)* which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. It is Jefferson County policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities regarding application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

Jefferson County is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities so that they may perform the essential job duties of their positions unless it would impose an undue hardship on the employer. An alcoholic is a person with a disability under the ADA and may be entitled to consideration of accommodation if s/he is qualified to perform the essential functions of a job. However, an employer may discipline, discharge or deny employment to an alcoholic whose use of alcohol adversely affects job performance or conduct to the extent that s/he is not "qualified". Persons addicted to drugs, but who are no longer using drugs illegally and are receiving treatment for drug addiction or who have been rehabilitated successfully, are protected by the ADA from discrimination on the basis of past drug addiction. Current illegal drug use is not protected under ADA.

Reasonable accommodation is any change to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that allows an individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job functions, or enjoy equal access to benefits available to other individuals in the workplace.

If you have a disability, you may request a reasonable accommodation at any time during the application process or during your period of employment. You, your health professional, or any other representative acting on your behalf may request an accommodation. This may be done verbally or by completing a reasonable accommodation request form. This form may be obtained from your supervisor or the Finance Office or on Jefferson County's website.

Reasonable documentation from an appropriate healthcare or rehabilitation professional will be required to establish that you have an ADA disability and that the disability necessitates a reasonable accommodation. The ADA Coordinator and/or the County Mayor shall initiate an interactive process in which the employee, health care provider and employer each share information about the nature of the disability and the limitations that may affect the employee's ability to perform the essential job duties. The purpose of the discussion is to determine what, if any, accommodations may be needed that are reasonable. If needed, an employee or applicant may follow Jefferson County's ADA grievance procedure which is available in the Finance Office and on Jefferson County's website.

A reasonable accommodation may also include the use of a service animal. Service animals are used for a variety of reasons, so each accommodation request and modification may be different. Service animals have been individually trained to do work or a task or tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. It is the individual training that distinguishes a service animal from other animals under ADA.

In general, the accommodation request may be granted if: 1) the employee's disability and the service animal's function are related; 2) the service animal will improve the employee's ability to perform their job; 3) the animal has had sufficient training to not be a disruptive presence in the workplace; and 4) the accommodation does not cause an undue hardship. The employee and the employer are required to discuss the details of how the service animal will be monitored and cared for during the workday prior to initiating the accommodation.

Each Jefferson County department should integrate service animal guidance into their Department-specific standard operating procedures. In doing so, this policy and procedure should be customized to fit each Department's situations and provide guidance as to when a service animal is an effective, reasonable accommodation or modification.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Jefferson County complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This act requires that agencies receiving federal money develop and implement plans to ensure that no one receiving benefits under a federally funded program is discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

To report any complaints or to receive additional information about Title VI, contact the Compliance Coordinator at (865) 397-3800.

Veterans' Preference

Veterans' preference is observed for veterans who served full-time in the United States Armed Forces. Any person claiming preference under this section shall submit satisfactory proof of service and honorable discharge with the employment application. The preferences established by this section shall be applicable to recruitment, hiring for employment or advancement in employment classifications managed and maintained by the related department. Candidates who have the minimum qualifications will be invited to interview.

Background Checks for Job Applications

If you are selected for employment with Jefferson County, a background check may be conducted. The County follows the policy guidelines of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) when conducting background checks and fully complies with the law under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

- A background check will only be conducted on an applicant who has received a conditional offer of employment.
- Information sought in a background check will only be job-related.
- Applicants must sign a written acknowledgment form granting the County permission to do a background check.
- Information obtained during a background check will be kept confidential.

Types of background checks:

- Criminal Background Checks—Criminal background checks will be conducted on all applicants once they are selected for employment.
- Vehicle Driving Records—Vehicle driving records are checked if your job duties require you to drive a vehicle on County business.
- Credit History Background Checks—A credit history background will only be conducted if your primary job duties will include handling money, finances or auditing.
- Verification of Education and Professional Credentials—Some County departments may verify educational or professional certification of all selected job applicants in that department.
- DOT Background Check—Commercial truck drivers who are selected for a County job driving a truck will have a DOT background check from the applicant's previous employers.

The County Mayor will be responsible for evaluating applicant background checks and complying with all laws and regulations pertaining to background checks.

HIPAA and Protected Health Information

Jefferson County complies with the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)*, including the *Privacy Rule* enacted in 2000 and as amended in 2002, which follows guidelines involving the protected health information (PHI) of employees, dependents and patients.

The HIPAA Privacy Rule establishes national standards to protect individuals' medical records and other personal health information and applies to health plans, health care clearinghouses, and those health care providers that conduct certain health care transactions electronically. The Rule requires appropriate safeguards to protect the privacy of personal health information and sets limits and conditions on the uses and disclosures that may be made of such information without patient authorization.

The Rule also gives patients' rights over their health information, including rights to examine and obtain a copy of their health records, and to request corrections. If you have questions, want additional information or need to report a problem regarding your protected health information, please contact the Jefferson County Privacy Officer at (865) 397-3800 or email: mpotts@jeffersoncountyttn.gov.

Authorization to Sign County Contracts

The County Financial Management Act of 81, paragraph 5-21-118 (b), (1), (3), (4), and (5) states that all contracts for the county are the responsibility of the County Finance Director. Since most contracts obligate the County financially, the Jefferson County Finance Committee requires that the following procedures be followed:

- a. The County Finance Director shall review the contract with the Department Head or Project Manager to assure all services are provided that should be for the cost of the project and that the Department Head or Manager agrees with the terms.
- b. Contracts for large purchases or projects such as building construction, land purchase, equipment, leasing contracts, etc. shall be reviewed by the County Attorney and/or the Board of Education Attorney. Any contract concerning Debt Issuance shall be approved by the Financial Advisor to assure no stipulation or special requirements exist and if necessary confirm with Bond Counsel.
- c. The County Finance Director shall have documentation on file that all contracts have been reviewed as stated above.

Code of Ethics

It is the policy of Jefferson County to uphold, promote and demand the highest standards of ethics from all employees and officials, whether elected or appointed. Accordingly, all County employees should maintain the utmost standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fairness in carrying out their public duties; avoid any improprieties in their roles as public servants; and never use their County position or powers for improper personal gain.

Ethical Conduct

You are required to maintain the highest ethical standards in the conduct of your official duties. This also applies to non-work situations when you identify yourself as a County employee (i.e., wearing a County identification badge, distributing a County business card, wearing a County uniform, driving a County vehicle, etc.). In order to fulfill this requirement, the following points are made:

- Personal characteristics such as honesty, courtesy, dependability, sobriety, industry and use of sound judgment are required for all employees in all classes of work in the County;
- There shall be no activity which is in conflict with the interest of your official duties; and
- You cannot use your position with the County for private interest.

Duty to Report

If you have direct or indirect knowledge of any suspected illegal, improper, wasteful or fraudulent activity involving an employee with Jefferson County, you must immediately report such activities to your supervisor, department head, or the County Mayor. Failure to report such activity may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Conflict of Interest

Employment with Jefferson County is a public trust. You must not have any financial interest in, or receive any financial benefit from, any acquisition or expenditure related to County activities that interferes or conflicts with the full discharge of your duties. For further information, see Jefferson County's webpage for a copy of the Code of Ethics Policy 6.7.

Jefferson County Hotline

Tennessee law requires that Jefferson County establish a confidential way for employees and the general public to report illegal, improper, wasteful or fraudulent activity in the County. If you observe any employee engaging in activity which you consider illegal, improper, wasteful or fraudulent in Jefferson County, please report via email to: fraud@jeffersoncountyttn.gov

Reports can be made anonymously and confidentially.

Political Activity

You may join or affiliate with civic organizations of a partisan or a political nature, may attend political meetings and may advocate and support the principles or policies of civic or political organizations in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the State of Tennessee and in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America.

However, you may not:

- Engage in any political activity while on duty;
- Use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office;
- Be required as a duty of employment or as a condition of employment, promotion or tenure of office to contribute funds for political or partisan purposes;
- Coerce or compel contributions for political or partisan purposes from another employee of the County; or
- Use any supplies or equipment of the County for political or partisan purposes.

Secondary Employment

Employment with Jefferson County Government is a public trust. Employees must not engage in any activity which interferes or conflicts with the full discharge of their duties. Full-time employees of the county are discouraged from holding outside jobs. Outside work will not be permitted if a possible conflict of interest exists. Any employee finding it necessary to seek outside work shall consult with the supervisor/department head.

Nepotism

You are not permitted to directly supervise a relative. Direct or immediate supervision includes, but is not limited to, any participation in the hiring decision, promotional decision, work assignment decision, shift assignment decision, disciplinary decision or the evaluation process of another employee.

Violations occurring as a result of marriage, living arrangement, promotion or reorganization shall be resolved by transfer to another department or resignation/termination to eliminate the violation.

For the purpose of this policy, “relative” means parent, stepparent, foster parent, parent-in-law, child, spouse, brother, brother-in-law, foster brother, stepbrother, sister, sister-in-law, foster sister, stepsister, grandparent, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandchild, or another person who resides in the same household. A court-appointed legal guardian or an individual who has acted as a parent substitute is also included within this definition.

For the purpose of this policy, “department” means the major departments of Jefferson County as created by the County Mayor and approved by resolution of the Jefferson County Commission.

County Equipment

County equipment, materials, vehicles, and/or other resources assigned to you shall be used with care and economy and shall be used only for County purposes. Waste or misuse of County resources may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Gifts and Contributions

You may not solicit or accept, either directly or indirectly, for yourself or for any member of your household, any gift, gratuity, service, favor, entertainment, lodging, transportation, loan, loan guarantee or anything of monetary value from any person who:

- Has, or is seeking to obtain, contractual or other business or financial relations with the department or agency of Jefferson County by which you are employed;
- Conducts operations or activities that are regulated by the department of Jefferson County by which you are employed; or
- Has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of your official duties.

Exceptions

The prohibitions on accepting gifts, entertainment and favors do not apply to:

- Meals and entertainment: Food, beverage and entertainment provided as part of a meal or other event if the value of such items does not exceed \$50 per occasion, with the limit of two meals per day.
- Family members or friends of long standing: There is no prohibition if the circumstances make it clear that it is the relationship, rather than the business or the persons concerned, which is the motivating factor and where the value of the gift, entertainment or favor is appropriate to the circumstance and consistent with the long-standing relationship. If such a gift, entertainment, or favor exceeds \$100 in value, you must disclose the nature and value of the gift, entertainment or favor in a letter to the County Mayor.
- Ordinary loans: There is no prohibition if the loan is from an established financial institution made in the course of business on usual and customary terms. However, there can be no guarantees or collateral provided by any person described in the first paragraph of this section on Gifts and Contributions.
- Unsolicited advertising material: You may keep and use gift items with advertising (calendars, pens, key chains, etc.) as long as you did not request the items and they are of nominal value.

Classification and Compensation

Employment At-Will

Jefferson County is an at-will employer and as such there is no specific length or guarantee of continued employment. Either you or the County may terminate your employment at-will, without cause or prior notice, at any time. None of the County's policies may be construed to create a contract of employment or any other legal obligation, express or implied, and any policy may be amended, revised, supplemented, rescinded or otherwise altered, in whole or in part, at any time, at the sole and absolute discretion of Jefferson County.

New Employees

The initial evaluation will be conducted upon completion of your first 90 days of employment. Your supervisor may evaluate your performance more often if necessary.

Physical Examinations

We may require you to take a physical and/or psychological examination to assure you are not placed in a position for which you are unable to satisfactorily perform the essential duties. Any physical examination may include screening for drug and alcohol usage. You may be required to take a physical examination at any time we feel your job assignment or your performance creates a need for an examination.

Temporary and Seasonal Employees

You are considered a temporary employee when hired for a stated or specific term of employment of less than one year.

Part-Time Employees

You are a part-time employee if hired to work less than 30 hours per week on a regular basis.

Full-Time Employees

You are a full-time employee if hired to work more than 30 hours per week on a regular basis.

Job Classification

All job classifications are based on an analysis of the duties and responsibilities of each position and include minimum requirements of education, training, experience, skills, knowledge and abilities necessary for the job. When you begin a new position, you should receive a copy of your job description.

Compensation Plan

The compensation plan intends to provide equal compensation for work of equivalent responsibility, pay according to work performance and/or outstanding service and establish pay rates which are comparable with those of regional governmental employers. Each position is rated according to experience, knowledge, training, duty complexity, leadership, effect of errors, communication, problem solving, physical demands, potential work hazards, stewardship/responsibility and education.

Employees are generally hired at the first step of the position's pay grade but may receive a higher salary depending on experience and skill level.

Pay Periods

County employees are paid on a monthly basis. The pay date will be the 30th unless that falls on a weekend in which case it will be the Friday before the normal payday. Landfill-Sanitation and Highway employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis. The pay date will be every other Thursday. Some pay dates may occur earlier due to holidays.

Work Hours and Time Records

The normal work week consists of 37.5 hours or 40 hours depending on the job classification and work location. Core business hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Some jobs may require other hours of service. In such cases, the immediate supervisor will inform you of your work hours.

You are required to properly record your hours to assure you are paid the correct amount. You are required to record your hours of work daily. Your timecard must be maintained neatly, accurately and must be signed by both you and your supervisor at the end of the payroll period. Your timecard is the official document of your work record and is the only document used to chart your earned leave.

Anyone who willfully falsifies a time record will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Exempt and Non-exempt Employees

If you are a non-exempt employee, you are covered by the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. You will receive time-and-a-half in compensatory time for any time actually worked beyond 40 hours in one week. Time off such as holidays, annual leave, or sick leave does not count as time worked.

If you are an exempt employee, you are not covered by the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. There are several categories of exempt employees, including those in bona fide executive, administrative and professional positions. Exempt employees do not receive compensatory time regardless of time worked.

Classifying a position as "exempt" is made on the basis of comparing actual job duties with criteria established by the Department of Labor. A job title, for example, is not sufficient data to classify a job as exempt from overtime status. The responsibility for classifying Jefferson County positions as exempt or non-exempt lies with the County Mayor.

With few exceptions, to be exempt an employee must (a) be paid a minimum annual amount as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor current Fair Labor Standards Act, and (b) be paid on a salary basis, and also (c) perform exempt job duties; regularly supervises two or more employees, and also has management as the primary duty of the position, and also, has some genuine input into the job status of other employees (such as hiring, firing, promotions, or assignments).

Overtime Compensation/Compensatory Time

In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, Jefferson County grants non-exempt employees compensatory time off instead of payment for time worked in excess of 40 hours in a work week. Compensatory time will be granted at time-and-a-half for all time worked in excess of 40 hours.

You may use accrued compensatory time within a reasonable period after making the request if your absence does not unduly disrupt the operations of the department.

It is understood that the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department operates on a monthly pay schedule in which overtime responsibility does not attach until the employee works 171 hours in a 28-day period. 29 CFR § 553.230. Pursuant to 29 CFR § 553.230, public safety employees may accumulate up to 480 hours of compensatory time, after which they are entitled to overtime. It is anticipated that SRO's will be paid overtime compensation for this overtime entitlement (based on 171 hours, 28-day schedule) during a regular school day, parent/teacher conferences, ballgames, etc. At his discretion, the Sheriff may approve compensatory time for this overtime entitlement and that they will use compensatory time during regular school breaks (Fall, Winter, Spring), usual school holidays, snow days, etc., such that the 480 hour threshold will not be reached. In the event it is reached during the school year, Jefferson County Schools shall be responsible to reimburse the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department for any required overtime payment.

Compensatory time is cumulative to a maximum of 240 hours (160 hours of actual overtime worked) for all eligible Jefferson County employees. No hours of compensatory time may be accrued beyond the maximum of 240 hours, except under the following circumstances:

- If your additional work hours were for a public safety activity, an emergency response activity, or a seasonal activity, you may accrue no more than 480 hours of compensatory time (320 hours of actual overtime worked).
- Compensatory records will be maintained for each eligible employee by the office staff in the payroll department or their employer/department head.

EMS Interrupted Sleep and Overtime

Adequate sleeping facilities are provided for employees of the Jefferson County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) who are required to work shifts that are 24 hours or longer. Eight hours of sleeping time is excluded from compensable working time. However, interruptions to perform duties during sleep time will be considered hours worked. If the employee does not get a least five (5) hours sleep during the scheduled sleeping period, the entire eight (8) hours will be considered hours worked.

Compensation for hours worked in excess of 40 hours each week will be at time and one-half the hourly wage established for the week.

Working During Lunch Periods

All employees who work eight or more hours in a day are required to take an unpaid meal break of 30 minutes. Meal breaks are not counted toward hours worked.

A workday may not be shortened by “working through” or reducing the lunch period on a voluntary basis. Eliminating or reducing your lunch period requires prior approval from your immediate supervisor. Such approvals must be limited and will typically be for one day due to unusual or special circumstances. Working through the lunch period is not to be used as an on-going solution for scheduling issues.

Working Before/After Regular Hours

You may not voluntarily begin work early, or work after hours, to extend your workday for the purpose of accumulating compensatory time. Prior approval from the immediate supervisor is required for any adjustment to the work schedule.

General Personnel Policies

Attendance

You are an important member of the Jefferson County team. We are committed to providing the highest level of services and functions to better serve the community. In order to accomplish this, your prompt and regular attendance is required.

In case of an illness or injury that would prevent you from reporting to work at the scheduled time, you are required to contact your supervisor prior to your shift. Your supervisor may specify the method(s) of communication allowed for this type of notification, such as phone call, text message or email. If your supervisor is unavailable, you are required to contact the next-level manager, department head, or to the person designated by your supervisor.

Failure to provide notification of absence for three consecutive workdays may result in removal from the payroll as having resigned without notice. Employees who resign under such circumstances are not eligible for rehire.

Personal Appearance

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards have lasting impressions on all employees and members of the public. During business hours, it is expected that everyone has a clean and neat appearance and is dressed according to the requirements of their position.

Canvassing or Solicitation

Non-employees are not permitted to solicit, whether verbally or by distribution of written material to Jefferson County employees or the general public, for commercial purposes during work hours in work areas.

Solicitations by Jefferson County employees made to other Jefferson County employees are permitted only in non-work areas and during non-work hours. On-work areas include lobbies, hallways, elevators, stairs, sidewalks, parking areas, patios, lunchrooms or other areas not regularly scheduled for work activities. Non-work hours include before and after scheduled work hours, lunch periods and approved breaks.

Employees or outside charitable organizations who wish to solicit Jefferson County employees for charitable purposes or to schedule activities in Jefferson County offices, must submit a written request and must be approved by the County Mayor.

Emergency Closings

The Mayor or Elected Official may close county offices in the event of hazardous weather, a public health emergency, or any other emergency which presents a threat to the safety of county employees or county property.

As soon as the decision to close has been made the Mayor will notify the public media and request that an announcement be made.

In the event of an emergency that requires closure of the county offices the Mayor or Elected Official is authorized to continue to pay employees who are not able to physically report for duty as a result. These employees shall receive their regular wages. Such payments shall not exceed the number of days budgeted for each employee.

During such emergencies, the Mayor or Elected Official may designate certain employees as essential. Such employees shall work as directed whether that is by physical appearance at work or teleworking under Policy 6.5. Essential employees must use leave to be excused from work absent special permission as determined by the Mayor, Department Head or Elected Official.

Telework During Emergencies

Teleworking is a work arrangement where designated employees are allowed to perform their normal duties and responsibilities through the use of hardware and software at an alternate location from their normal work site.

The Mayor, Department Head or Elected Official may require an employee to telework if the duties and responsibilities of the position are required during times of emergency. An employee's participation in the program will be determined by the length and duration of the emergency and will be both initiated and ended at the discretion of the Mayor, Department Head or Elected Official.

Employees approved for telework shall maintain a dedicated and safe work environment.

An employee who teleworks shall not allow anyone other than county employees to utilize county provided services or equipment. Employees shall keep remote work and information confidential, in accordance with county policies, procedures, and applicable privacy laws.

Personnel Files

An individual personnel file will be maintained on each employee. It is important that you maintain up-to-date personal information. Be sure that the Finance Department always has your correct:

- Name
- Address and contact numbers such as telephone, mobile phone, and email address;
- Marital status and number of dependents;
- Beneficiary and/or dependents listed on your insurance policies, retirement, etc.; and
- Driver's license or diving record (including DUI information)
- Any change affecting Social Security records.

Promotions, Transfers and Reassignments

Jefferson County ensures that no person or groups of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, retaliation or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all programs, services, or activities including all employment practices.

Promotions: Jefferson County continually strives to promote employees and fill job vacancies on an equal opportunity basis. Promotions are based on an objective evaluation of each vacancy and the candidates involved. Generally, vacancies will be advertised and when possible, Jefferson County will promote from within and will first consider employees with the necessary qualifications and skills, unless outside recruitment is deemed to be in the best interest of the County.

Corrective Action and Progressive Discipline

In cases where an employee displays inappropriate conduct or poor performance – and the activity does not call for automatic dismissal – Jefferson County may or may not follow a progressive discipline process. This is a system that consists of corrective action, documentation, adverse action and dismissal. The three steps of progressive discipline include:

1. Verbal – The first step is usually a verbal warning from the supervisor to identify the problem and to state the corrective action needed. The supervisor documents this step (including dates, times, and details of incidents of improper conduct or poor performance) and the date the warning was given. The supervisor sends this documentation to the Department Head who will review it and place it in the employee's personnel file. The employee may submit a separate written statement for the file, if desired. If there have been no other disciplinary actions taken after one year, the employee can make a written request that the verbal warning be removed from the personnel file.
2. Written – The second step in the process is a written warning with specific examples cited. The supervisor prepares a letter or memo that states a specific time frame in which the employee must improve and gives the exact consequences of failure to improve. Prior to issuing the letter, the supervisor must review it with his/her director. A copy of the letter is held for review and placement in the employee's personnel file. The employee has the option of submitting a written statement that will also be placed in the file.
3. Adverse Action – If repeated attempts at corrective action fail to produce satisfactory results, the employee will be subject to some form of adverse action. The term adverse action means an action involving either suspension, demotion or dismissal. Before the action becomes effective, the supervisor must obtain the approval from the Department Head and approval of the County Mayor.

Any employee who receives three documented warnings in a 12-month period is subject to dismissal as is the employee who receives repeated disciplinary actions for any reason. Jefferson County is under no obligation to follow these steps in sequence or even to follow them at all.

Jefferson County reserves the right to terminate anyone's employment immediately without warning. Either you or Jefferson County may terminate your employment at will, without cause or prior notice, at any time.

Suspensions

The Department Head may suspend you for cause and without pay for a period of time not to exceed 10 working days in any three-month period. You may not take annual leave, sick leave, or compensatory leave ("comp time") while on suspension. The progressive discipline process may be followed prior to suspension, unless the situation warrants automatic suspension.

Demotions

A demotion is an assignment to a job at a lesser basic pay rate. There are two kinds of demotions: (1) demotions for cause and (2) demotions due to a reduction in workforce.

Demotion for Cause: A demotion may be made for cause including, but not limited to, violations of rules, failure to perform job duties adequately, misconduct or neglect of duty. The progressive discipline process may be followed prior to demotion.

Demotion Due to Reduction in Force: If a demotion is based on a reduction in force, you will be given consideration, based on seniority and work performance record, for future openings in higher job classifications. No progressive discipline process is necessary for a demotion based on reduction in force.

Dismissals/Terminations

Immediate dismissals may be made for cause including, but not limited to, your action or behavior that constitutes:

- Insubordination (refusal to follow supervisor's instructions);
- Endangering your own health or safety or the health or safety of other employees or citizens;
- Making fraudulent statements on employee applications or job records;
- Absence from work without authorization or notification;
- Theft, vandalism, or willful destruction of County or employee property;
- Any violation of the County Alcohol and Drug Policy;
- Falsifying a time and attendance record;
- Improper or unsafe operation of a county vehicle; and
- Any other infraction when dismissal is determined to be in the best interest of the County.

Dismissals that follow the progressive discipline process are permitted for reasons that include but are not limited to:

- Misconduct;
- Willful neglect of duties;
- Failure to perform job duties;
- Repeated tardiness or absence;
- Violation of departmental rules;
- Email abuse; and
- Internet abuse.

Any employee who receives three documented warnings in a 12-month period is subject to dismissal as is the employee who receives repeated disciplinary actions for any reason.

Jefferson County is under no obligation to follow these steps in sequence or even to follow them at all. Jefferson County reserves the right to terminate anyone's employment immediately without warning.

Resignations

If you want to resign your position, you should notify your immediate supervisor or the department head in writing no less than 10 working days before your expected termination date. Failure to provide such a notice will be recorded in your personnel file and may cause you forfeit any vacation benefits you may have earned.

Reduction in Force

A reduction in force is the release of an employee due to lack of funds, curtailment of work, or reorganization. If you are discharged because of a reduction, you are considered terminated unless you are offered and accept another position.

The department head will determine when a reduction in force is warranted and which employee(s) will be released. The decision about individual employees is made with consideration of job knowledge, skills, and work performance. If all factors are equal, seniority will govern. If you lose your job through a reduction in force, you may apply for other posted positions, now or in the future.

Safety

Jefferson County is concerned for your health and safety in the performance of your job. You must observe all safety rules. Any workplace accidents, incidents or injuries should be reported immediately to your direct supervisor. Send a report to safety@jeffersoncountyttn.gov within 48 hours. If you are injured and unable to report immediately, then you should report the incident as soon as possible.

Garnishments and Levies

In the event that a garnishment or similar proceedings are instituted against an employee, Jefferson County will deduct the required amount from the employee's paycheck.

Alcohol and Drugs – Drug Free Workplace Policy

It is the policy of Jefferson County to provide a safe and healthful environment for its employees. Therefore, the following are strictly prohibited during working hours, while on county property, or while on county business;

- a. Being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- b. The sale, possession, transfer or purchase of illegal drugs; or
- c. The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages

Any employee whose off-duty substance abuse results in on-the job impairment (including but not limited to excessive absenteeism or tardiness, carelessness or disregard for safety, or poor work), or who commits an unlawful act, or whose conduct discredits the county in any way is in violation of this policy.

The foregoing constitutes the policy of Jefferson County on substance abuse. Violation of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination from employment. The county may take all appropriate action against violators, which may include referral for legal prosecution or requiring the employee to satisfactorily complete an approved drug use/alcohol abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

ParTNER's Employee Assistance Program provides up to five no-cost counseling session per problem at no cost to you. Call or log on to talk with someone to receive a referral or for additional information. 1-855-437-3486 or www.Here4TN.com

Tobacco Use

Tobacco products, including electronic/vapor cigarettes, may only be used outside buildings in a specific area designated by the building manager. Ask your supervisor where this area is located at your facility. Additionally, tobacco products, including electronic/vapor cigarettes, may not be used in any vehicle owned or leased by the County.

Computers, Smartphones, Tablets and Other Tech Equipment

Computers, smartphones, tablets and other tech and related equipment and software are County property and are provided for the use of County employees for conducting County business. These items include, but are not limited to, smart phones and other tech equipment, hardware, software, and computer files and documents.

Electronic signatures on email must state only general information about the employee (i.e., name and contact info). Your supervisor may instruct to change text, icons, backgrounds, fonts or other information to be consistent with professional email communication.

The County has the right to monitor any and all of its electronic devices. This includes but is not limited to:

- Monitoring your internet usage;
- Reviewing your internet browser history;
- Reviewing any downloaded or uploaded material;
- Reviewing emails sent or received by you; and/or
- Monitoring the content of stored files on your county computer, smart phones, tablets or other tech and related equipment.

Passwords: All passwords used to gain access to any device owned by the County must be provided to the department head or the Information Technology department upon request. The use of undisclosed passwords is prohibited.

Jefferson County will not request or require an employee to disclose a password that allows access to the employees' personal accounts.

Prohibited Uses:

- Sending, displaying, circulating, or storing inappropriate, illegal or sexually explicit material is prohibited.

- No software or hardware may be installed or downloaded on County computers without the written permission of the Director of Information Technology.
- Playing computer games on County computers is prohibited.

The email system may not be used to solicit or to conduct personal business ventures.

Employees must comply with all software licenses, copyrights and all other local, state and federal laws governing intellectual property and online activity.

Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to legal and/or criminal prosecution. Computers, smartphones, tablets, and other tech equipment that have been used to violate this policy may be disconnected from the network until such violations are corrected. Employees must immediately notify their immediate supervisor or department head upon learning of any violations of this policy.

Electronic Communication Device Usage and Etiquette

Jefferson County understands the important and integral part smartphones and other electronic communication devices play in our everyday lives. However, the use of such devices during work hours must not interfere with an employee's job duties or performance. If an employee's use of such devices becomes disruptive or interferes with another employee executing their job duties, they may be asked to not bring the device into the workplace.

Please be respectful to those around you to minimize disruptions. This means silencing your device during work, in meetings or when engaged with constituents. Be mindful of those around you when speaking on the phone. It is best not to discuss personal matters in earshot of the general public.

Social Media

Policy Purpose

Jefferson County recognizes that online social media has become an integral part of how people communicate, express themselves and interact with others, both on and off the job. This policy outlines our expectations regarding employees' responsibilities. As an employee of the County, employees are expected to represent the County responsibly, whether on the job or in the community. By following these guidelines, employees can avoid the pitfalls of online activity that could negatively affect their employment. Because of the rapid evolving industry regarding social networking, all employees should expect periodic updates, edits and amendments to this policy. Any failure to mention a specific program or platform does not suggest or imply exclusion from this policy.

Digital Social Networking Policy

- A. Employees should understand that they are fully responsible for anything they write, publish, post or view online. Discipline or legal action can result from any employee that violates the County policy, Code of Ethics or creates a hostile work environment.

- B. Employees' digital social activity (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) should not insult, defame or attack coworkers, managers or members of the public as this would not align with our Code of Ethics.
- C. Avoid identifying, discussing or posting pictures of others unless documented permission has been obtained.
- D. Except where permitted by applicable State or Federal law, do not reveal confidential information about fellow employees, personnel issues or any other information that has not been approved for release.
- E. Some employees may have job responsibilities or job descriptions that specifically call for or prohibit digital activity. Any employee that has questions regarding how this policy applies to their respective job functions should contact his or her direct supervisor. For those employees authorized to participate in digital activity while on the job, we ask that they focus that activity on material directly relevant to their job.

Guidelines

No policy can specifically address all the ways employees might communicate, publish, interact or behave on social media applications. Any employee who is unclear on how this policy applies or does not apply is encouraged to contact his or her direct supervisor

Leave Policies

Vacation Leave

Regular full-time employees shall begin accruing vacation time as of the date of their employment. Part-time employees do not qualify for vacation leave. The following guidelines apply:

- You are eligible for vacation time off once you have completed six months of service as a full-time employee.
- You may take vacation leave anytime during the calendar year (with prior approval) Jan. 1 through Dec. 31;
- You accrue leave monthly. This number may be greater or lesser than your scheduled hours; and
- Your accrual rate increases as shown in the table below.

Years of Service	Hours Earned Per Month	Hours Accrued Annually	Maximum Accrued Hours
First Year	4	48	48
Second Year –Ninth Year	8	96	96
Tenth – Nineteenth	10	120	120
Twentieth – Retirement	12	144	160

- The minimum amount of vacation leave you can take is 15 minutes, and leave can only be taken in 15-minute increments.
- You may not take vacation leave before you have earned it.
- The number of accrued leave hours to be used for one day of leave is equal to the number of scheduled paid hours of work for that day of leave. For example, if you work four 10-hour days per work week, you must use 10 hours of vacation leave to have the entire day off. If you work 7.5 hours per day, then 7.5 is the number of hours of vacation leave you must use to equal one day.
- If you earn vacation leave in excess of the maximum amount listed on the table, the excess will be transferred to your sick leave once a year at the end of June.
- Authorized time off for vacation leave will not be considered as working time for calculating weekly overtime.
- When you terminate employment, you are entitled to payment for any unused vacation leave that has accrued. Payment is based on the rate of compensation received at the time of termination. Vacation leave payment is computed on the regular payroll day and is available at the normal time and place. No payment is issued in advance.

Annual Leave Scheduling

You may take your vacation leave at any time of the year as long as you have accumulated the time and the needs of the department are met.

You must submit your vacation leave request to your supervisor and receive approval prior to taking the leave.

Your department may have a special form or a procedure for requesting use of annual leave.

Sick Leave Accrual

Full-Time employees are eligible for paid sick leave for authorized absences as defined in this sick leave section. Sick leave is earned at the rate of eight (8) hours per month.

You may not use any hours of sick leave in advance of earning them. There is no “cap” or maximum for the amount of sick leave you can accrue. You may not convert unused sick leave into cash, personal holidays, or annual leave. In addition, unused days of accumulated sick leave are not paid when employment terminates.

Upon retirement unused sick leave is credited toward your retirement service credit. Accumulated sick leave has no value except for retirement service credit.

Sick Leave Notification and Approval

To be eligible for sick leave with pay, you must give your supervisor as much advance notice of an absence as possible. Notification must be no later than the scheduled start time of your workday. Your supervisor may specify the method(s) of communication allowed for this type of notification, such as phone call, text message or email. If your supervisor is not available, you must communicate directly with the manager, department head or to the person designated by your supervisor.

Sick Leave for Employee Illness or Injury

You may use paid sick leave for authorized absences due to your own illness, injury or medical appointments. If you are absent for less than three consecutive working days, your supervisor may or may not require that you provide a healthcare provider’s statement. In order to minimize disruptions during the workday, it is recommended employees try to schedule appointments for early morning or late afternoon.

To be eligible for sick leave with pay during a continuous period of more than three working days, you must provide a healthcare provider’s statement and expected date of return to work, or some written statement of the facts concerning the illness or injury that is acceptable to your supervisor.

If you are out on sick leave for more than three consecutive working days and qualify for protection under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), your supervisor is responsible for notifying you and ensuring that all FMLA guidelines are followed (see FMLA section for more information). Contact the Finance Office with any questions.

Sick Leave for Family Illness or Injury

Those family members include:

- Spouse
- Parent
- Son or daughter
- Step-children

In all cases of absence for more than three consecutive days because of family illness (whether FMLA or not), you must provide a healthcare provider's statement certifying that you are needed to provide care for the family member.

Sick Leave for Medical Appointment

You may use your accrued sick leave for medical appointments such as doctor, dental, or optical appointments (sick visits, preventive care, assessments or treatments prescribed by your healthcare provider). This includes medical appointments for your family members as described in the previous section on "Sick Leave for Family Illness."

Sick Leave Accounting

Sick leave may be taken in 15-minute increments. You may not consider authorized days off for sick leave as time worked for calculating weekly overtime compensation.

Sick Leave Donation Between Employees

Sick leave cannot be given or loaned to another employee.

Bereavement Leave/Funeral Leave

In the case of death in the employee's immediate family, the employee is eligible for paid leave with no deduction from your leave balances. Paid bereavement leave is for scheduled work days which normally fall between the day of the death and the day following the funeral. Additional time off without pay may be granted in certain situations.

Immediate family shall be defined as:

- Spouse
- Parent
- Children
- Brother or sister
- Mother-in-law or father-in-law
- Grandparent
- Grandchildren
- Step-relatives of the above categories
- Legal guardians or dependents.

Your supervisor will make the final decision on the number of days approved for this leave. Your supervisor must approve any bereavement period that is expected to exceed the three-day limit and you

must use vacation leave for those additional days.

Holidays

Jefferson County observes the holidays listed below. These are the traditional holidays observed and are subject to change from year-to-year.

The County Mayor will announce any additional holidays. Offices may be closed without further notice on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas (A three-day holiday: Dec. 25 and two other day's to be announced annually by the County Mayor)

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the Elected Officials will determine the day to be taken. Some positions, particularly Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services will receive eight (8) hours pay in addition to their regular pay for all approved holidays. If it is necessary to work on a holiday you may be allowed time off at another mutually convenient time. Should you be on unpaid leave of absence during a holiday, you are ineligible for that holiday.

If you wish to observe a religious holiday, contact your supervisor to make arrangements. Vacation leave will be used for time off taken for religious holidays. If you have no accrued vacation leave, you must use available compensatory time, sick leave, or leave without pay, in that order.

Leave of Absence

If you exhaust all your vacation and sick leave and still need time off for personal or health reasons, you may apply for a leave of absence for a period of up to three months if you are a full-time employee. The written request for leave must be given to your supervisor and your department head at least 30 days prior to the start of the requested leave unless the leave is an emergency.

Regardless of the reason for the leave, it is essential that the employee contact the following departments to ensure benefits are properly administered:

- Finance Department– FMLA Administrator

Your supervisor (or department head) may or may not approve your request for a leave of absence. The decision is at his/her discretion, unless the leave qualifies under the Family Medical Leave Act or the Tennessee Maternity and Adoption Care Leave Act. Some of the matters considered in approving the request are your length of service, employment record and the reason for the absence.

While you might originally request a leave of absence for a period of three months, it is possible that extensions may be granted. However, the total leave and extensions for any one cause cannot exceed one year.

You do not accrue sick and annual leave while you are on an approved leave of absence.

You must notify your supervisor of the anticipated date of your return to work prior to that date. Your supervisor is responsible for immediately notifying the Finance Department.

When you return from a leave of absence, you will be placed in your previous position or a similar position, if available. If the same or similar position is not available, you will receive preference for employment in any available position for which you are qualified.

If you are unable to return to work, you are responsible for requesting an extension (in advance) from your supervisor or department head. If you fail to return to work at the conclusion of your leave of absence, you will be terminated from employment.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Jefferson County offers leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for eligible employees.

Eligibility: If you have worked for at least one year and for 1,250 hours in the preceding 12 months, you are eligible to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave annually when the absence is necessitated by any of the following circumstances:

- The birth or placement for adoption or foster care of a child;
- Your own serious health condition that prevents you from performing the essential functions of your job; or
- The serious health conditions of a child, parent, or spouse if you are needed to help provide care.

Certification: If you request leave for your own serious health condition, or to care for the serious condition of a child, parent or spouse, you must provide Jefferson County with certification from a treating healthcare provider. Healthcare Provider Certification Forms are available from the Finance Department.

Measuring 12 Month Periods: Jefferson County has chosen the “rolling” 12-month period measured backward from the date you use FMLA leave. Under the “rolling” 12-month period, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave entitlement would be the balance of the 12 weeks which has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months.

Intermittent or Reduced-Time Leave: FMLA leave can be taken on an intermittent or reduced-time basis under certain circumstances. You may request intermittent or reduced leave for the following reasons:

- When medically necessary to care for a seriously ill family member, or because of your own serious health condition; or
- For the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care. Intermittent or reduced time leave shall not exceed 12 weeks combined if both spouses are employed by the County.

Only the amount of leave actually taken while on intermittent/reduced schedule leave may be charged as FMLA leave. If you need intermittent/reduced schedule leave for planned medical treatment, you must work with your supervisor to schedule the leave, so it does not unduly disrupt the department's operations, subject to the approval of your healthcare provider.

The County may, in its sole discretion, temporarily transfer an employee on intermittent leave to an alternative job with equivalent pay and benefits that accommodates recurring periods of leave better than the employee's regular job.

Serious Health Condition: "Serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, physical or mental condition that involves:

- Any period of incapacity or treatment connected with inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility;
- A period of incapacity requiring absence of more than (3) three calendar days from work that also involves continuing treatment by (or under the supervision of) a healthcare provider;
- Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care;
- Any period of incapacity (or resulting treatment) due to a chronic serious health condition, (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.);
- A period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective (e.g., Alzheimer's, stroke, terminal diseases, dialysis, etc.); or
- Any absences to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery) by, or on referral by, a healthcare provider for a condition that likely would result in incapacity of more than (3) three consecutive days if left untreated (e.g., chemotherapy, physical therapy, dialysis, etc.).

Health Insurance Premiums: During FMLA leave, the County will continue to pay its portion of health insurance premiums, and you must continue to pay your portion of the premium. Your contribution of health insurance premiums should be paid continually according to your pay periods (e.g., weekly, bi-weekly, monthly).

If you do not return to work at the end of FMLA leave, you will be required to pay the employer portions of your health and dental until you return to work.

You may then choose to elect COBRA coverage. Sufficient notice will be given to you at the end of FMLA when, and if, this event occurs.

You will be responsible for any other elected benefit contributions while out on FMLA.

Accrued Leave: You are required to use your leave balances during FMLA leave. Accrued leave and FMLA leave are used at the same time. You do not take your accrued leave first and then take FMLA.

An employee must use paid vacation and/or sick leave during a family medical leave of absence in accordance with the County's policies regarding annual and sick time. Once available leave is used, the remainder of FMLA leave will be unpaid.

During FMLA leave, you will accrue employment benefits, such as vacation leave, sick leave, pension (if receiving pay), etc. Employment benefits accrued up to the day on which the family leave of absence begins will not be lost.

Return to Work: If you return to work from FMLA leave before or on the business day following the expiration of the 12 weeks, you are entitled to return to your job or an equivalent position without loss of benefits or pay.

Applications: You are encouraged to discuss the FMLA process with the FMLA Coordinator when applying for FMLA leave. Applications must be submitted in writing and should be submitted at least 30 days before the leave is to start, or as soon as possible if leave is not foreseeable. You should provide the County with an appropriate medical certification when you request FMLA.

When you are on leave, you must periodically report (if possible) to your supervisor or department head on your status and indicate when you intend to return to work. Appropriate forms must be submitted to Finance to initiate family leave or to return the employee to active status.

Extensions: Family and medical leave is available only for up to 12 weeks under the FMLA or Tennessee Leave Law, unless you contact your supervisor and obtain special approval for an extended leave of absence without pay due to special circumstances. Your supervisor will consult with the Finance Department about the approval.

Any extensions must be requested, whenever possible, two weeks in advance of your scheduled return date. Jefferson County reserves the right to grant or deny such extensions in whole or part in accordance with state and federal law.

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Maternity/paternity leave is granted to employees for a maximum of 16 weeks, with the first 12 weeks of leave falling under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the remaining four weeks as maternity leave under the Tennessee Maternity and Adoption Care Leave Law. You must be employed full-time for at least 12 months to receive maternity/paternity leave.

You are required to use your accrued leave (annual, sick, comp) during maternity/paternity leave but may retain 16 hours of sick leave for use with follow up appointments or newborn illness following your return. Accrued leave and maternity/paternity leave are used at the same time. You do not take your accrued leave first and then take maternity/paternity leave.

The purpose of this leave is to provide time off for pregnancy, childbirth, nursing, and/or bonding with the infant. If the County finds that you pursued other employment opportunities or worked part-time or full-time for another employer during the period of maternity/paternity leave, then the County does not have to reinstate you at the end of your leave period.

Military Leave

All employees who are members of any military reserve component of the United States government will be granted military leave for such time as they are in the military service on field training or active duty for periods not to exceed fifteen (15) working days per calendar year. This time may not be used for weekend drills. Such requested leave shall be supported with copies of the armed forces orders. All employees who are members of a military reserve unit who have completed their military training duty for the calendar year, and are reactivated for additional training, will be allowed an additional fifteen (15) days military leave if the additional military training:

- a. Occurs during the same calendar year; and
- b. Fulfills the employee's military training obligations for the subsequent calendar year

During such time that the employee is on military training leave, the employee will receive full pay and benefits to which he or she would otherwise be entitled.

Should you enter the military on an active basis, you must present your orders to your supervisor as soon as you receive them. You will be granted an unpaid leave of absence to serve a tour of duty.

Jury Duty or Court Appearance

The County encourages all employees to fulfill their duty to serve as members of juries or to testify when called in both Federal and State courts. Therefore, the following procedures shall apply when an employee is called for jury duty or subpoenaed to court:

- a. Upon receiving a summons to report to jury duty, the employee shall on the next day s/he is working, show the summons to his or her supervisor.
- b. The employee will be granted a leave of absence when s/he is subpoenaed or directed by proper authority to appear in Federal or State Court as a witness or juror.
- c. If the employee is relieved from jury duty during the working hours after serving less than three (3) hours, the employee must report back to the employer. If the employee is relieved from being a witness during working hours, the employee must report back to the employer.
- d. If an employee summoned for jury is working a night shift or is working during hours preceding those in which court is normally held, such employee shall also be excused from his employment for the shift immediately preceding his first day of service on any lawsuit. After the first day of service, when such employer's responsibility for jury duty exceeds three (3) hours during a day then such employee shall be excused from his next scheduled work period occurring within twenty-four (24) hours of such day of jury service.
- e. Full-time employees shall receive regular compensation during time served on jury duty or when subpoenaed as a witness.
- f. The employee may retain all compensation received for serving as a juror.
- g. The above provisions concerning compensation for time in court do not apply if the employee is involved as a plaintiff or defendant in private litigation. On these occasions the employee must take vacation leave, comp-time, or leave without pay.

Voting Leave/Elections

In accordance with Tennessee State Law, you are entitled to vote in an election held in this state. If the election falls on a county designated holiday, this leave does not apply.

If your shift begins three or more hours after the opening of the polls or ends three or more hours before the polls close in the county in which you live, this leave does not apply to you.

If you need to take leave for voting, the leave must be arranged with your direct supervisor before noon of the day before the election. The supervisor may select the hours during which you may be absent for voting.

Employee Benefits

Plan Documents

Copies of the plan documents and important legal notices for benefits administered by the State of Tennessee Benefits Administration are available at <https://www.tn.gov/partnersforhealth/publications/publications.html> or by contacting Benefits Administration (free paper copies available upon request) at 855.809.0071.

Insurance Identification Cards

Insurance identification cards must be used only by you and the legal dependents you have enrolled in a benefit. Typically, insurance cards will be mailed to the home address listed on your paycheck. You can update your contact information by contacting the Finance Department.

Benefits Eligibility

This section applies to health, dental, vision, flexible spending and life insurance coverage.

Employee Eligibility

You are eligible for benefits when you work a minimum of 30 hours per week. These benefits include medical coverage, dental coverage, vision coverage, and flexible benefit options. If your hours drop below 30 hours per week on a regular basis you will lose eligibility for insurance and you and all eligible covered dependents will be offered COBRA. New employees have 30 days from their date of hire to enroll in benefits.

Dependent Eligibility

You are responsible for only listing dependents that are eligible for coverage as defined by the plan documents. If a covered dependent becomes ineligible based on the plan documents, it is your responsibility to notify the Benefits Department immediately. Making a misrepresentation of fact or committing fraud against any benefit can have serious ramifications, up to and including termination of coverage and/or employment. Misrepresentation and fraud include, but are not limited to, providing incorrect or misleading information or permitting the improper use of insurance cards.

Eligibility Start Date

Benefits Department staff will determine the effective date of coverage. Typically, it is the first day of the calendar month following 30 days of continuous employment. If an employee starts work on the first working day of the month (defined as the first workday that is not Saturday, Sunday or an official Jefferson County employee holiday), he or she is eligible for coverage on the first day of the following month. For example: If you were hired on Jan. 18, your coverage would go into effect March 1. If you were hired on February 1, your coverage would also go into effect March 1. In both instances, this means your deductions would start on your February check for March coverage.

Change in Eligibility Status/Qualifying Events

In most instances, you have 60 days after an eligibility changing event (“qualifying event”) to notify the Benefits Department and make changes to your elections. Qualifying events include: dependent status change, divorce, marriage, birth, adoption, reduction in work hours, or any other change that could affect benefit eligibility.

Some benefits may not require a qualifying event prior to a change. If a qualifying event is required, you will need to provide timely proof of the qualifying event and/or dependent eligibility.

Eligibility End Date

Generally, benefits end the last day of the month following the last month in which you actively work. In cases of death or divorce, benefits end on the date of the event. If you do not receive paychecks to cover the entire month (and have premiums deducted), you may be required to submit payment to cover your portion of benefit costs.

Continuation of Coverage (COBRA)

If you lose coverage due to a termination of employment, a reduction in work hours, or other qualifying event, you and your covered dependents may be eligible to continue coverage through COBRA for a limited period of time.

Annual Enrollment

Health plans, benefit designs, eligibility rules, and premiums are subject to change each plan year based on the previous year’s enrollment, claims experience and other relevant factors. Announcements concerning changes for the upcoming plan year are made during annual enrollment each fall. You are required to review the Benefits Guide, your notices, home mailings and department memos for information about the benefits for the upcoming year.

Typically, the enrollment period is October. It is your responsibility to stay informed of benefit changes and open enrollment dates.

Benefit Premiums/Payroll Deductions

You are responsible for reviewing your paycheck to ensure the appropriate benefit deductions have been taken. Deductions from your paycheck will be taken in the month before your coverage starts. For example: If your coverage begins on March 1, the deduction will be taken from your February paycheck. Your health, dental, vision, life insurance and flexible spending deductions will be taken out of 12 pay periods per year.

If you miss a paycheck due to work absence or unpaid time, you are responsible for contacting the Benefits Department at (865) 397-4922 to make payment arrangements.

Health Coverage

Jefferson County offers a selection of health insurance plans with various types of coverage. The County pays 100% of employee only insurance premiums as a benefit of your employment. Temporary employees, seasonal employees, and interns are not eligible for health coverage.

Dental and Vision Coverage

Jefferson County offers dental and vision insurance plans with various types of coverage. The County pays a portion of this cost as a benefit of your employment. Temporary employees, seasonal employees, and interns are not eligible for dental or vision coverage.

Flexible Spending Accounts

Flexible spending accounts allow an employee's medical out-of-pocket expenses and dependent care expenses to be paid with "before tax" dollars. Jefferson County offers a benefit option that utilizes a debit-type card to access your plan dollars.

If you elect this benefit, you choose a dollar level based on your individual or family needs and a portion of this amount is deducted from each paycheck. There are minimum and maximum deduction limits for this benefit.

You do not have to be enrolled in Jefferson County's health insurance plan in order to participate in a flexible spending account.

You may enroll during the annual open enrollment. Re-enrollment is required each year to continue participation.

Life Insurance

Jefferson County provides basic life and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance at no cost to you. For basic life, the County provides a maximum benefit of \$20,000.

You may purchase supplemental life insurance for you, your spouse or your child(ren). If you purchase supplemental life insurance, the premium will be deducted from your paycheck.

Longevity

The purpose of the Longevity Pay Policy is to provide a financial incentive to Jefferson County Government employees for years of continued service to the county.

Longevity pay will be issued in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100) per year for each year of eligible service for a maximum of fifteen (15) years. Longevity pay will be provided with the last payroll check issued in June for the eligible year.

To be eligible employees must have three (3) complete years of continued service as full-time Jefferson County employees. For the purpose of Longevity Pay one year of service shall be computed from July 1st of one calendar year to June 30th of the next calendar year. Only system wide, non-Board of Education, Jefferson County Government personnel are eligible provided they meet all requirements.

Full-time employee for the purpose of the Longevity Pay Policy shall mean an employee who is on the Jefferson County Government payroll and eligible for full benefits. Elected officials are not eligible for Longevity Pay.

It may be necessary for an employee to have a break in service due to layoffs, sickness, or other issues not anticipated. If an employee voluntarily terminated their employment with the county, then all past service credit is forfeited. In the event of a break in service for a previous full-time employee returning to full-time status, the department head shall have the discretion of bridging the lapse in service time. A break in service shall not exceed six (6) months to receive consideration.

An employee transferring from the Jefferson County School system to the Jefferson County Government will have their time in the school system recognized for the purpose of Longevity Pay eligibility.

Discounted Gym Memberships

All health insurance members have access to wellness and fitness center discounts through their health insurance network vendor (BCBS or CIGNA). Go to their websites to learn more www.bcbst.com/members/tn_state and www.mycigna.com.

Health and Wellbeing

Jefferson County believes in supporting the health and wellbeing of our employees. We encourage employees to maintain active lifestyles, make a habit of healthy eating and take steps to manage stress. Simple activities such as regularly taking a walk during lunch, choosing water instead of soda and fostering work-life balance can help make a difference in your personal health.

As an employer, Jefferson County continues to work on creating a culture and environment where health and wellbeing is supported as the norm. Departments are encouraged to work with employees to create strategies specific to their worksite for supporting health and wellbeing. This may include, but is not limited to, allowing alternative schedules to accommodate physical activity, incorporating short physical activity breaks into long meetings, holding walking meetings, creating welcoming environments for employees to eat lunch, and helping employees reduce on-the-job stress.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Jefferson County strives to promote and support the emotional well-being of its employees and their families.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free and confidential counseling and information to employees and members of their immediate family/household who are dealing with difficult issues. EAP services may not be appropriate for all needs or ages, and an EAP representative can provide you with a referral to other services upon request. The EAP also provides additional services, such as limited legal and financial counseling, at no cost to you.

Additional information about the EAP can be found at www.Here4TN.com or by contacting theParTNners for Health 855.437.3486.

Nursing Mothers

In accordance with the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, a nursing mother can take up to two paid breaks (15 minutes each) per day to express breast milk for her nursing child for up to one year

after the child's birth. The supervisor should work with the employee to schedule break time that reasonably accommodates both the mother's needs and her work responsibilities. The supervisor is responsible to help the mother identify a place to express milk, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public.

Workers' Compensation

Tennessee's Workers' Compensation Statute requires an insurance program provided by the employer, at no cost to the employee, that allows an employee injured on the job to be entitled to certain benefits. Employee Benefits can include medical care for the injury, income benefits, and rehabilitation services. Benefits are the obligation of the employer to the employee and are governed by state law. Employees who have suffered an injury or illness which the authorized treating physician has determined being work-related, may be entitled to receive the following benefits:

- Medical Treatment at no cost to the employee. This treatment must be provided by the authorized treating physician chosen by the employee from the panel of doctors on the Employee's Physician Choice form.
- Reimbursement for Mileage to and from medical treatment may be requested if travel exceeds 15 miles one way.
- Temporary Disability Benefits are 2/3 of your average weekly wages earned during the 52 weeks prior to the injury. If your average weekly earnings are reduced because of work restrictions, you may be entitled to partial disability benefits. If the authorized treating physician restricts your ability to work, such as limiting the number of hours worked or the type of work performed, it is important that the physician's instructions and restrictions are always followed. An employee taken off work by the authorized treating physician for less than 14 days is not entitled to temporary disability benefits for the first 7 days missed. If the authorized treating physician requires you to miss more than 14 days benefits are due from the first day of disability. Failure to report for light duty offered by your employer may terminate your temporary disability benefits.

If you experience an on-the-job injury or illness you are required to:

- Complete and turn in a written report of the incident to your supervisor immediately. The injury or illness report should be completed within 24 hours of the accident.
- Provide written notification of your injury within one working day of the injury.
- Complete an Employee Injury Report Packet provided to you by your supervisor. This includes a HIPPA Medical Authorization and an Employee's Physician Choice Form.
- Keep all appointments with physicians as scheduled or notify Workers' Compensation Department to have the appointment rescheduled for you.
- Notify the County Workers' Compensation Specialist and your supervisor if your authorized physician tells you not to return to work, to work with restrictions, and when he/she will release you to full duty.
- Give your supervisor a copy of Return to Work forms you receive from the physician.

HIPPA Compliance

In accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Rule for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, all information is obtained after written authorization is received from the employee. Information including but not limited to diagnosis, etiology, medical restrictions, medical impairment, and prognosis are all considered secured and private.

Retirement

New employees of Jefferson County Government will automatically be enrolled in Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System Hybrid Plan effective the first day of employment. This plan is a combination of two types of retirement plans:

1. TCRS Defined Benefit Plan – This plan has set contributions; Employer contributes 4% of salary; and Employee contributes 5% of salary on a pre-tax basis.
2. Empower – Defined Contribution Plan – This plan has set contributions for the Employer of 5%; and Employee has an optional 2% contribution.

In retirement, the TCRS Defined Benefit would be calculated and paid for the rest of your life. The Empower Defined Contribution would be paid until the funds contributed are depleted.

Appendix

Appendix A

JEFFERSON COUNTY DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

Jefferson County ensures that no person or groups of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, retaliation or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all programs, services, or activities including all employment practices.

Date of Filing: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Work Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Alleged Incident: _____

Indicate below the person(s) who you believe discriminated against you:

Name(s): _____

Work Location: _____

Work Phone: _____

Please provide a detailed description of the alleged incidence of discrimination. If there are any witnesses, please provide their contact information. Attach additional pages as necessary.

Please provide a suggested detailed plan or remedy for this complaint. Attach additional pages as necessary.

Have you filed or do you intend to file a complaint concerning this incident with any other agencies (Federal, State or Local)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, please provide the following information:

Agency Name: _____

Address: _____

Name of Investigator: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Date Filed: _____

Status of Complaint: _____

Please attach and/or provide any additional information that might be useful in processing your complaint.

The completed form must be submitted to

Compliance Coordinator
PO Box 710
Dandridge, TN 37725
Office: 8685-397-3800
discrimination@jeffersoncountyttn.gov

Signature

Date

Appendix B**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (TITLE I) REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FORM****A. QUESTIONS TO CLARIFY ACCOMMODATION REQUESTED**

What specific accommodation are you requesting?

If you are not sure what accommodation is needed, do you have any suggestions about what options we can explore? _____

Is your accommodation time sensitive? Yes No If yes, please explain: _____

B. QUESTIONS TO DOCUMENT THE REASON FOR THE ACCOMMODATION REQUEST

What, if any, job function are you having difficulty performing?

What, if any, employment benefit are you having difficulty accessing?

What limitation is interfering with your ability to perform your job or access an employment benefit?

Have you had any accommodations in the past for this same limitation? Yes No

If yes, what were they and how effective were they?

If you are requesting a specific accommodation, how will that accommodation assist you?

C. OTHER

Please provide any additional information that might be useful in processing your accommodation request:

Signature

Date

Appendix C

JEFFERSON COUNTY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT – TITLE I

This Grievance Procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provisions of employment-related complaints of disability discrimination.

The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 60 business days after the alleged violation to:

Within 15 business days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA/504 Coordinator or her designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and the possible resolutions. Within 15 business days of the meeting, the ADA/504 Coordinator or her designee will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of Jefferson County and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the ADA/504 Coordinator or her designee does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision, in writing, within 15 business days after receipt of the response to the County Mayor's Office.

County Mayor
PO Box 710
Dandridge, TN 37725
Office: 865-397-3800

ADA@jeffersoncountyttn.gov

Within 15 business days after receipt of the appeal, the County Mayor's Office will meet the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 business days after the meeting, the County Mayor's Office will respond in writing, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.

All written complaints received by the ADA/504 Coordinator, appeals to the County Mayor's Office, and responses from these two offices will be retained by Jefferson County for at least three years.

Please note, the use of these procedures does not prohibit anyone from filing a complaint or an appeal with the [Department of Justice](#), and the [Tennessee Commission on Human Rights](#).

Appendix D**JEFFERSON COUNTY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

I have received my copy of the Jefferson County Employee Handbook. I agree to read and keep my handbook for future reference, and to abide by all the present and future provisions of the handbook. I understand this handbook is intended as a guide for personnel policies, benefits, and general information, and that these guidelines are not intended to be nor should be construed as a contract of employment.

I understand the county reserves the right to make changes in the guidelines or their application as it deems appropriate and these changes may be made with or without notice. I also understand that my employment is terminable at the will of either myself or the county at any time and that no individual representative of the county has the authority to make any agreement with me which would be contrary to the provisions of this handbook.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

